



Sacramento Cal-SOAP Consortium

A California Student Opportunity Access Program

A program of the
California Student Aid Commission and the
Sacramento County Office of Education

Financing College for Undocumented Students

What does it mean to be undocumented?

An undocumented person is a non-citizen who entered the U.S. without legal immigration status or who stayed after the period he/she was authorized to be here.

If I am undocumented, can I go to college?

YES, as long as you are admitted/accepted.

If I am undocumented, can I apply for Financial Aid?

Undocumented students are NOT eligible for state and or federal financial aid (i.e., FAFSA, BOG Fee Waiver, Pell Grant, Cal Grant). In fact, undocumented students are required to pay “out-of-state” or “non-resident” tuition. These fees are much higher than “in-state” or “resident” tuition fees. Students who can meet the AB 540 requirements can avoid paying out of state tuition. Some colleges and private organizations may offer financial assistance to undocumented students. Visit your school’s financial aid and scholarship offices to find out.

Then how do I pay for college?

First you should see whether you qualify for AB 540. Students who qualify for AB 540 can drastically lower the cost of college. For instance:

College System	Non-AB 540	AB 540
California Community College	\$201 per Unit	\$20 per Unit
California State University (CSU)	\$10,170 in Fees	\$3048 in Fees
University of California (UC)	\$20,608 in Fees	\$9496 in Fees

How do I qualify?

1. You must have attended a California high school for three (3) or more years;
2. You must have graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent of a high school diploma (*note: if you did not pass the exit exam, a certificate of completion or a High School Equivalency Certificate will meet this requirement*);
3. You must be registered or currently be enrolled at an accredited institution of higher education in California;
4. You must have filed or will file an affidavit as required by individual institutions, stating that you will apply for legal residency as soon as possible; and
5. You may NOT be a non-immigrant holding a valid lettered non-immigrant visa.

How does it work?

→Apply to the school, leaving the Social Security Number and Immigration Status slots BLANK.
(Note: Do not falsify your Social Security Number or Immigration Status. If you already have then you should seek legal advice about how to correct the information).

→Once you have been accepted then you must complete an AB 540 affidavit (California Non-Resident Tuition Exemption Request form) at the college/university that you will attend. (Contact the individual school for more details). If you are applying to a community college then submit the AB 540 form with your application.

Additionally Funding Options and Additional Information

There are scholarship lists which do not require you to be a US citizen or legal permanent resident, and that do NOT ask for a Social Security Number. They can be found at www.maldef.org, www.salef.org, www.fastweb.com, www.futuros-california.org, www.usc.edu/dept/chepa and www.latinocollegedollars.org.