

# All about immigration status & financial aid eligibility in MA

Unsure how your immigration status might affect your eligibility for financial aid for college in Massachusetts? Here's everything you need to know.

And remember - every person's situation is unique, so make an appointment with your guidance counselor or email [studentsupport@uaspire.org](mailto:studentsupport@uaspire.org) for individualized advice!

**Disclaimer:** [uAspire, your school guidance counselor, and colleges will not share your immigration status with anyone.](#)

## FAFSA completion & immigration status: uAspire's recommendations

Immigration status:	FAFSA Completion Recommended:	In-State Tuition:	Boston TFCC*	Aid you can receive		
				Federal	State	Institutional*
Permanent Resident (Green Card holder)	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DACA**	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Valid TPS	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Asylum Granted	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Asylum Seeker (not yet granted)**	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, TN, TD, U Visas	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Valid T, T-1 Visas	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No Status**	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\*See more information about TFCC on page 3

\*\* If you have three years of attendance at a Massachusetts high school and graduated from a Massachusetts high school or attained the equivalent in Massachusetts. See more information on page 2

# Eligibility for in-state tuition & state-funded financial aid

As of August 2023, some undocumented students in Massachusetts will be able to pay in-state tuition at public community colleges and four-year colleges and universities, and will have access to state-funded financial aid like the MASS Grant. In order to meet eligibility requirements, students must have:

- attended high school in Massachusetts for not less than 3 years; **and**,
- graduated from a high school or attained the equivalent in Massachusetts

## How to qualify for in-state tuition:

Students must provide the public college/university they attend or plan on attending with a high school transcript or certificate demonstrating completion of the equivalent in Massachusetts **and have:**

- a valid social security number, **or**
- a document reflecting their individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), **or**
- if the student is not a citizen or legal permanent resident of the U.S., **sign an affidavit** affirming that they will apply for citizenship if and when they become eligible to do so under federal law, **or**
- documentation of registration with the selective service (if applicable)

## How to apply for in-state tuition:

Students should apply using the [MA Department of Higher Education Tuition Equity Eligibility Form and Affidavit for High School Completers](#) and submit it to the college/university they attend or plan on attending.

- If approved, the student's in-state status can be applied to any terms that begin after July 1, 2023

The process students should take to apply for state-funded financial aid has not yet been released. In the meantime, contact your financial aid office about getting in-state tuition.

# The Tuition-Free Community College (TFCC) Plan

The TFCC plan pays for up to three years of tuition and fees for Boston residents who are pursuing an associate degree or short-term certificate programs at a partner college, regardless of **age**, **income** or **immigration status**.

## What are the eligibility requirements?

- Must be a resident of the city of Boston, MA (to figure out if you qualify as a resident of Boston [see the TFCC website](#))
- Enroll in an associate degree or short-term certificate program at a partner college
- Complete the FAFSA\*

*\*Note: Students who are undocumented, have DACA, or have TPS do not need to complete the FAFSA*

## Which colleges are eligible?

- Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology
- Bunker Hill Community College
- Massasoit Community College
- MassBay Community College
- Roxbury Community College
- Urban College of Boston

## What costs are covered?

- Tuition and mandatory fees after any other applicable financial aid has been applied
- \$250 each semester for up to three years of college-related expenses (such as books, transportation, etc.)
- Debt of up to \$2,500 for students with an outstanding balance at a partner college that is preventing a student from re-enrolling at that school

## How to apply?

Students simply need to apply for their program and the partner colleges will apply the funds as part of their financial aid process.

**The deadline to apply for the 2023 TFCC cohort has passed.  
[Sign up online here to be notified about the 2024 application!](#)  
*Funding is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis***

## Legal services

**Meeting with an immigration lawyer is important.** They can help you and your family identify your immigration status and explore potential immigration remedies. If you have already met with a lawyer but didn't feel confident about the legal advice that you received please refer to the list of contacts below:

- Students enrolled in Boston Public Schools, Malden, & Somerville:
  - Schedule a free consultation for free and low-cost legal services at the Rian Immigrant Center [here](#)
  - Contact Greater Boston Legal Services at 617-603-1700 to see if you qualify for free or low-cost legal services
- Residents of Fall River: Reach out to Catholic Social Services at 508-674-4681
- Residents of Cambridge: Reach out to De Novo (formerly *Community Legal Services and Counseling Center of Cambridge*) at 617-661-1010
- DO NOT seek immigration advice from a notary public. Notary publics don't have the legal expertise that an immigration lawyer will have.

## Notes & suggestions

- Although your parents' immigration status doesn't affect your eligibility for federal financial aid, it may affect the steps you take in the application process.
- If you are eligible to complete the FAFSA, both you and your parents will need to create an FSA ID. [See our resource on how to create an FSA ID here.](#)
- Instead of FAFSA, you may be asked to complete the **CSS Profile** (*See more information about CSS Profile on page 5*).
  - For some colleges requiring this form, you can be eligible for need-based institutional financial aid. Check with the specific school website or your uAspire advisor to see if your colleges require you to fill out this form.
- Searching “Undocumented Students” on individual colleges’ websites can you give a better idea of resources available on that specific campus.
- Apply for as many scholarships as possible and apply early! Be sure to read all eligibility requirements carefully and never misrepresent your status on any applications.
- If your immigration status changes while you're applying for financial aid or while you're in college, your eligibility for financial aid may also change.

# Community supports

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## **United We Dream**

The largest immigrant youth-led community in the country. They create welcoming spaces for young people – regardless of immigration status – to support, engage, and empower them to make their voice heard and win! Their website has resources and information for undocumented students and allies. Find more information at [unitedwedream.org](https://unitedwedream.org)

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## **SIM (Stories Inspiring Movement )**

MA-based statewide immigrant youth-led organization. They develop a network of immigrant youth organizers in high-density immigrant communities. They organize youth, provide political education, leadership training, protection, guidance, mentorship, and safe healing spaces: [bit.ly/joinSim](https://bit.ly/joinSim)


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## **BTU Unafraid Educators**

Boston Teachers Union has organized a scholarship for undocumented students in Boston Public Schools called the Unafraid Scholarship. Their website has educator resources, student & family resources, along with the scholarship information. Find this at [unafraideducators.org](https://unafraideducators.org)

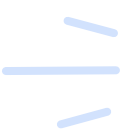
# Key terms

## **FAFSA:**



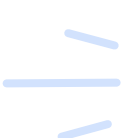
Free Application for **F**ederal **S**tudent Aid, the main financial aid form that colleges request and most require before they can grant any financial aid to students.

## **CSS Profile:**



A financial aid form that only some colleges require (mostly private colleges). It does not require a Social Security Number, and anyone can fill it out if they're applying to one of those specific colleges.

## **In-state tuition:**




Public colleges cost less for residents of that state than for out-of-state students. Some colleges will consider students who are not eligible for federal aid as out-of-state students required to pay the out-of-state cost. See chart above

## **Federal & state aid:**




This financial aid is awarded through the U.S. and state governments, based on financial information from the FAFSA.

## **Institutional aid:**




Financial aid distributed by the college and can be need-based or merit-based. Colleges have differing policies on how they award their aid. If you have a valid non-immigrant visa, you may be classified as an international student which can impact eligibility for institutional aid.

## **Need-based:**



Aid awarded based on a family's financial need, using information from the FAFSA, CSS Profile, and/or institutional financial aid forms.

## **Merit-based:**



Aid awarded without regard for financial need. Usually awarded for a student's academic achievements, as well as for special talents and unique traits like musical or athletic skills.