

TUITION EQUITY & FINANCIAL AID

September 27, 2024

UMass Dartmouth - Guidance Counselor Conference

FAFSA ISSUES

FAFSA form did not open till 12/31. During January, the form was open sporadically for students/families to use.

Financial Aid office did not start to receive FAFSA information till April 2024. This delayed the awarding of all incoming students.

Students who submitted a paper FAFSA or signature page were not scheduled to be processed till the end of August.

25/26 FAFSA will not be available for Oct 1.

FAFSA KNOWN ISSUES

- Parents/ Contributors could not receive the application invitation when they did not have an SSN.
- Parents/ Contributors were unable to open the application to make corrections.
- Assets are incorrectly removed when making a correction to their application.
- Students who are invited to the FAFSA form by the Parent/ Contributor are not able to see the invitation.

HELPFUL HINTS:

- Complete your FAFSA Application as soon as possible.
- Monitor your emails for additional requests.
- Remember to put the College Code. (Up to 20 Schools are allowed.)
- Check your progress by logging into your account at StudentAid.gov and going to your FAFSA Dashboard.

- Visit StudentAid.gov for more info

WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHY?

TUITION EQUITY LAW



University of Massachusetts

Amherst • Boston • Dartmouth • Lowell • Medical • Law

WHAT IS TUITION EQUITY LAW?

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, for the purpose of determining eligibility for in-state tuition rates and fees at public institutions of higher education and for state-funded financial assistance, **any individual admitted to such institutions of higher education, other than a nonimmigrant alien within the meaning of 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(A) to (S), inclusive, who attended high school in the commonwealth for not less than 3 years and graduated from a high school in the commonwealth or attained the equivalent thereof in the commonwealth**, shall be eligible to pay in-state tuition rates and fees at public institutions of higher education and shall be eligible on the same terms as other individuals for state-funded financial assistance at state-funded public and state-approved private, independent nonprofit institutions of higher education.

No individual qualified for in-state tuition rates and fees under this chapter shall be denied in-state tuition and fees as a result of the granting of eligibility under this paragraph. To receive in-state tuition at a public institution of higher education or state-funded financial assistance at an institution of higher education under this section, an eligible individual shall provide the institution of higher education where the eligible individual is or plans to become enrolled with a **high school transcript or certificate demonstrating completion of the equivalent thereof in the commonwealth and: (i) a valid social security number; (ii) a document reflecting issuance of an individual taxpayer identification number; (iii) if that individual is not a citizen of the United States or a legal permanent resident of the United States, an affidavit signed under the pains and penalties of perjury stating that the individual has applied for citizenship or legal permanent residence or will apply for citizenship or legal permanent residence in accordance with federal statute and federal regulations within 120 days of eligibility for such status; or (iv) documentation of registration with the selective service, if applicable.** The board of higher education shall issue regulations for the implementation of this paragraph. Student or family information obtained in the implementation of this paragraph shall be protected from disclosure consistent with subclause (c) of clause (26) of [section 7 of chapter 4](#), [chapter 66A](#), [chapter 93H](#), and other applicable privacy laws.



HISTORY

- July 2007:
Residency Status Policy
- November 2008:
Lawful Immigrant Illustrative List
- November 2012:
Inclusion of DACA Recipients
- July 2023:
Tuition Equity Law
- July 2024
Tuition Equity Law 2.0

TWO DOORS - ONE HOUSE

- Two Pathways to In-State Tuition at a Massachusetts Public Institute of Higher Education
 - 2007 Residency Status Policy
 - 2024 Tuition Equity Law
- Neither pathway preempts the other, but the requirements and analysis for each are different.



Who is eligible?

- Attended a high school in Massachusetts for three or more years and presented a transcript/certificate of competition
- Graduated from a Massachusetts high school or attained the equivalent in Massachusetts
- Is not an ineligible “non-immigrant”
- Presented the necessary documentation



WHAT DOCUMENTS DO YOU NEED?

- **Tuition Equity Eligibility Form & Affidavit for High School Completers/High School Seniors**
 - The Board of Higher Education has created a mandatory document for all IHEs to use.
 - It is a single document that is a form *and* affidavit.
 - Within the Form/Affidavit, the individual is making certain attestations under penalty of perjury, including that they are not an ineligible non-immigrant
- **High school transcript or certificate demonstrating completion of the equivalent thereof in the commonwealth**
- **One of the following:**
 - A valid social security number (number only);
 - A document reflecting issuance of an ITIN;
 - If not USC/LPR, an affidavit signed under the pains and penalties of perjury stating that the individual has applied for USC/LPR or will apply for USC/LPR within 120 days of eligibility
 - Documentation of registration with the selective service, if applicable.

	2007 BHE Residency Policy	2024 Tuition Equity Law
Eligibility	Key Element is Residency	See Slide 5 – Key element is attendance and competition of high school in MA.
Massachusetts Residency	12 months preceding entry as a student (with exceptions); For unemancipated student, also consider parent’s residency.	Neither the student, not the parent’s residency is relevant.
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of MA Residency • Documentation of “Lawful Immigrant,” if not USC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA High School transcript/certificate of completion • BHE Form/Affidavit • One of four enumerated items. See Slide 6
Immigration	<p>Only USCs and “lawful immigrants” are eligible.</p> <p>Must review immigration documents to make sure folks are lawful immigrants.</p>	<p>Anyone is eligible, except for certain non-immigrants classifications.</p> <p>No review of immigration documents.</p>

ACCESS TO STATE FINANCIAL AID

- Complete the Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA) OR the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
 - MASFA is the state approved form and used by the school to determine eligibility for need-based state financial aid only.
 - While TEL does not have a residency requirement, most state aid programs have a 12 month MA residency requirement.
 - Only complete one form. Students who are eligible to complete the FAFSA should do so.

KEY IMMIGRATION TERMS

- Non-Immigrant: Federal term for someone who holds a visa issued for a valid temporary purpose which allows one to be present in the US for a fixed purpose and duration (i.e., F-1 International Student; B-1 Visitor). With certain exceptions, these folks are not permitted to apply for a Green Card
- Immigrant: Federal term for someone who holds legal permanent residence (Green Card). Note that persons who have applied for LPR, but whose cases remain pending, would not be considered immigrants
- Lawful Immigrant:
 - This term does not exist within federal immigration law.; only within the context of the 2007 Residency Status Policy
 - IHEs review immigration documents and conduct a 3-step analysis to determine whether student is a “lawful immigrant”
 - An immigrant (as defined by federal law) = a lawful immigrant (as defined by the 2007 Residency Status Policy)
 - A non-immigrant (as defined by federal law) sometimes is a lawful immigrant (as defined by the 2007 Residency Status Policy)
- Humanitarian Classifications: There are certain other humanitarian classifications that do not fall squarely within the non-immigrant or immigrant camp (i.e., TPS, asylee, refugee, DACA).
- Undocumented: Someone who holds no lawful status in the US. Some of these folks may have entered with lawful status, which has since lapsed. Some may have entered without inspection through a land border.

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES

[2007 Residency Status Policy](#)

- [Lawful Immigrant Illustrative List](#)

[2024 Tuition Equity Law](#)

- [Implementation Procedures](#)
- Tuition Equity Form/Affidavit for [High School Completers](#) and [High School Seniors](#)