

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NONRESIDENT TUITION EXEMPTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

The California State University (CSU) Nonresident Tuition Exemption is available for certain nonresident students (including U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and undocumented individuals) who have attended, graduated, or achieved the equivalent from a California school. These students may be exempted from paying nonresident tuition but must remain classified as “nonresidents” for residence classification and financial aid eligibility purposes. The exemption originated with the passage of Assembly Bill 540, Assembly Bill 2000, and Senate Bill 68.

ELIGIBILITY

The CSU Nonresident Tuition Exemption is open to CSU students enrolled as undergraduate or graduate students who are:

- U.S. Citizens
- Permanent Residents
- Undocumented Students (including TPS, DACA, asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile, VAWA)
- T and U Visa Holders Only

MUST MEET THE EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS (Attendance and Graduation Requirements)

Attendance requirement (must meet one)

- Attended a high school (public or private) in California for three or more years, OR
- Attained credits earned in California from a California high school equivalent to three or more years of full-time high school course work and attended a combination of elementary, middle and/or high schools in California for a total of three or more years.
- Attended or attained credits at a combination of California high school, California adult school,* and California community college for the equivalent of (3) years or more.

*A year’s equivalence of attendance at a California community college is either a minimum of 24 semester units of credit or 54 quarter units. Only two (2) years of full time attendance in credit courses at the California community colleges will count towards the three (3) or more years of attendance. Full time attendance at a California adult school is a minimum of 420 hours of attendance for each school year.

Graduation/Degree Requirement (must meet one)

- The student must have graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent from a California high school prior to the start of the term (for example, passing the GED or California High School Proficiency exam) or
- Completed or will complete (before the first term of enrollment at the CSU) an associate’s degree from a California community college; or
- Completed or will complete (before the first term of enrollment at the CSU) the minimum requirements at a California community college for transfer to the California State University. The student must file an affidavit with the college or university stating that he or she has filed an application to legalize his or her immigration status, or will file an application as soon as he or she is eligible to do so.
- The student must file an exemption request including a signed affidavit with the campus that indicates the student has met all applicable conditions described above. Student information obtained in this process is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required under law.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Students eligible for this exemption who are transferring to another California public college or university must submit a new request (and documentation if required) to each college under consideration.
- Nonresident students meeting the criteria will be exempted from the payment of nonresident tuition, but they will not be classified as California residents. They continue to be “nonresidents.”
- The California Dream Act extends Cal Grant A and B Entitlement awards, Cal Grant C awards, Chaffee grants, and institutional financial aid to students that meet these criteria as well as the applicable criteria for eligibility for specific types of financial aid.
- AB540 does not provide federal student financial aid eligibility for undocumented students. These students remain ineligible for federal financial aid.
- Undocumented students who are eligible for AB540 will remain ineligible for federal financial aid.
- Students who take adult school or community college courses while concurrently enrolled in a CSU to qualify for the AB540/SB68 exemption will continue to be charged out of state tuition as nonresidents until the exemption requirements are fulfilled.
- Students who already earned a high school diploma or the equivalent from another state may not take courses to obtain a California high school diploma or the equivalent in order to be granted the exemption.

DEADLINES

It is the responsibility of the students to verify all fee balances prior to the start of the term. Out-of-state tuition will be charged if the student did not meet the residency or non-resident Tuition Exemption (AB540). If a student paid out-of-state tuition in previous terms, the CSU cannot grant retroactive requests or change residency status as evidence of California residency was not provided to the campus by the stated deadlines.

Where to submit: Students will not be considered for this exemption unless the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request form is completed and submitted along with supporting documents (i.e., official transcripts, proof of attendance at a California school) to the campus Admissions and Records Office.

Current CSU Students: If you are a current student and are submitting the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request form for the first time, you must submit the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request form with official transcripts from all institutions previously attended in California by the last day of the term. Any documents received after the last day of the term will be processed for the following term. If a student has a break in enrollment requiring an application for readmission or a student applies to a graduate program, you will need to resubmit a new AB 540 form at the time of reapplication.

New Student Applicants: It is important to contact the campus Admissions Office to know when the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request form (AB 540 form) with official transcripts can be submitted to the campus Admissions Office. All 23 CSU campuses will offer “conditional admission” based on transcripts or work-in-progress. It is the applicant’s responsibility to submit transcripts from all institutions previously attended in California. A final transcript will be requested prior to enrollment.

If you think your status is an error, please contact the campus Admissions Office or refer to the California State University website, www.calstate.edu/residency, for additional information.

FINANCIAL AID

California Dream Act (California Financial Aid for those Granted AB 540)

The California Dream Act allows certain students who have been granted the AB 540 Exemption to qualify for California financial aid. Students wanting to be eligible for the California Dream Act must have a California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request Form on file and remain classified as nonresidents. It is encouraged for students, particularly students with DACA or TPS, to review the eligibility requirements and seek financial aid advice from the campus Financial Aid Office to learn more about the California Dream Act.

Contacting your Campus Financial Aid Office

It is encouraged for students to review the eligibility requirements and seek financial aid advice from the campus Financial Aid Office to learn more about the California Dream Act or FAFSA.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Below is a list of frequently asked questions. Please note that while the term AB540 is used it also refers to AB2000 and SB68 all of which are based on California Education Code Section 68130.5.

Is the AB540 exemption only for undocumented students?

NO. The AB540 exemption is available for U.S. citizens, permanent residents, undocumented students and T or U Visa holders.

I am a DACA student. Is the exemption available for me?

Yes, the exemption is available for DACA students that meet the exemption requirements.

If a student was in a visa status other than T or U during attendance at a California school, can that attendance and/or graduation count towards fulfillment of the exemption requirements?

Yes; however, with the exception of students holding a T or U visa, the visa status (e.g. F-1) cannot be active at the time the student applies for the exemption.

What documents do I need to apply for the exemption?

Students must complete and submit the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request (affidavit) and provide supporting documentation (e.g. official transcripts).

Where can I find the Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request (affidavit)?

This form may be obtained from the Office of Admissions at the campus of planned attendance or from the CSU website www.calstate.edu/residency under Find Forms. Supporting documentation such as official school transcripts should be submitted with the form.

Where should I submit the form?

The completed form should be submitted to the Office of Admissions at the campus of planned attendance.

How many forms do I submit?

You must submit one form with supporting documentation for each campus of planned attendance.

Who determines whether a student qualifies for the exemption?

The campus Office of Admission.

Once approved, do I need to submit a new form for each semester?

NO. Once you have been approved for the exemption, it continues for subsequent terms as long as continuous enrollment is maintained.

Does AB540 status mean that I am a California resident?

NO. AB540 students are still classified as nonresidents. AB540 status merely exempts students from the payment of nonresident (out of state) tuition so that students pay in-state tuition.

Can I be both AB540 and California resident?

NO. While you may be a California resident who qualifies for AB540, you may hold only one classification in the system at a time; therefore, for tuition purposes you will be classified as either AB540 or California resident.

Can I change from California resident to AB540 or vice versa?

YES. However, the campus Office of Admissions cannot advise you of which status to choose. As each status determines your eligibility for certain types of financial aid, it is strongly suggested that you consult with the campus financial aid department in order to understand how such a change will affect you.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I am not approved for the exemption can I appeal the decision?

NO. There is no appeal process for a denial of the AB540 exemption.

Can a student who has 3 years of attendance at a California school but left California and obtained a high school diploma or equivalent from another state, take courses to obtain a California high school diploma or equivalent to meet AB540 requirements?

NO. Once a student has a diploma, the student cannot earn a duplicate in California in order to be granted the AB540 exemption.

If a student attends a California Community College for 3 years is that attendance alone sufficient to fulfill the attendance requirement for the exemption?

Noncredit and credit coursework from a California community college will meet the attendance requirements. However, only two years of credit coursework will be accepted, and there is no limit on the number of noncredit courses. Students can meet the three years of attendance requirement if they complete two years of credit and one year of noncredit courses.

After enrolling at a CSU should a student take adult school courses to meet exemption attendance requirements in order to use the exemption for the next term of enrollment at a CSU?

The purpose of the exemption is to save the student money by allowing the student to pay in-state (resident) fees. Enrolling at the CSU prior to completion of all exemption requirements is not a good idea for it means that the student will be responsible for out of state tuition (nonresident) fees until all exemption requirements are met.

If I have the AB 540 nonresident status can I apply for financial aid?

Yes, students who are Permanent Residents and US Citizens may apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA). Undocumented students may apply for the Dream Act.

I have been attending the CSU and didn't know about the AB540 exemption. Can I submit a retroactive request to have my past nonresident fees refunded?

No, retroactive requests for a previous term will not be accepted. Students will not be considered for this exemption unless the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption request form is completed and submitted along with supporting documents prior to the last day of the semester for which the student is requesting the exemption.

Summary of Requirements

Attendance (3 years)	Attendance at a California elementary and/or secondary school
	Attendance at a California adult school
	Attendance at a California community college (unlimited noncredit courses to meet the 1-year attendance requirement, and 2-year's max of credit courses)
Graduation	Graduation from a California community college
	Attainment of an associate degree at a California community college
	Fulfillment of the minimum CSU transfer requirements at a California community college
Registration	Registration at a California public institution of higher education (i.e., CCC, CSU or UC)
Affidavit	Submission of the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request and Affidavit