
**The college application process:
For undocumented students and immigrant families
in Massachusetts**

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For MEFA - April 2024

Part 1

Introduction



¡Hola!

- Work at Excel Academy Charter HS in East Boston - in College and Career Counseling
- 12th year in the field
- Was born in México - I am a proud immigrant and first-gen college student.
- Ally and advocate
- Stay in touch! I'm a resource for you!
- Akeenana@excelacademy.org



You are not defined by your immigration status!

- It is an important part of your life – it affects so much of our day-to-day lives. But **YOU ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN YOUR STATUS.**
- You are your goals. Your likes. Your dislikes. Your strengths, your passions, your people, your work, your stories, your beliefs, your fight, your voice... and so much more.
- As a counselor, I often tell students and families that a complex immigration status or no status... makes it so that we simply have to get **MORE CREATIVE** with the ways in which we work to achieve your goals.

A lot of roads... one destination

- There is no RIGHT PATHWAY to reach your goals. Find people you trust, and ask for help. Share this presentation with people you know that may Benefit from this information.
- Get creative and learn about resources! You are not alone.



Part 2

The landscape - national
and local!



**Can undocumented
students apply to
college?**

Yes. Yes. YES! There is **no federal law** that prohibits the admission of undocumented immigrants to U.S. colleges.

Federal or state laws do not require students to prove their citizenship to enter private institutions of higher education. However, some public campuses have different policies....

The difficult part often becomes the question of how to pay for it....



**Various
immigration
statuses and
important terms.
Do you know your
status?**

**Knowledge is
power!**

- US National Naturalized citizen
- Paper I-94/Computer-generated Form CBP I-94A
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee
- TPS (Temporary Protected Status)
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
- Humanitarian Parole
- Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (CHNV)
- T Visa
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA self-petitioner
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- DACA
- Undocumented



¿What is your status?

No one should ever ask you what your immigration status is. Especially at your high school.

But... there are certain times when it might benefit you to disclose your status to someone. It's scary, but if you know how to do it, you'll stay safe AND get the help and resources you need (like application help, scholarships, legal resources).

Who can you disclose your status to? Why should you disclose your status?

How to *safely* self-disclose your status

1. Colleges: Yes! It's safe!
 - Be honest about your immigration status. Colleges are prohibited from releasing information unless by court order. Your information is protected by FERPA (a federal law).
2. If you feel comfortable, you can disclose to your school counselor. Your counselor can be a good resource for you, especially if you need help applying to college. Don't go it alone!
3. A trusted immigration attorney.

What else?



1. **Advocate:** If you want to join other immigrant students, join your local advocacy organization. In Massachusetts - it's SIM! Draw strength from being able to tell your story.



2. **Organize** other undocumented/immigrant youth at your school to watch this presentation or read more about the resources. Help each other and spread the word!



3. Seek legal resources for you and your family. There may be options for you!

MIRA has a good legal directory for Massachusetts
City of Boston offers free **legal** consultations.

Stay up to date and know your rights!

<https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards>

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/de-rechos-de-los-inmigrantes>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: WHAT TO DO IF IMMIGRATION OR THE POLICE COME TO YOUR DOOR



STOP AND THINK TWICE WHEN SOMEONE COMES TO YOUR DOOR

You're not normally required to open the door to anyone. Immigration and the police can't come into your home without a warrant signed by a judge.



REMAIN SILENT

You have the right to remain silent. Immigration can use anything you say against you.



STAY CALM AND DO NOT RUN

Use your phone to take photos and notes about the raid, but stay calm and do not run.



ASK TO SPEAK TO YOUR ATTORNEY AND THINK TWICE BEFORE SIGNING ANYTHING

Do not sign forms you don't understand or don't want to sign. A lawyer who knows deportation defense may be able to help you fight your case.

*This information is not intended as legal advice.



iAmerica has a list of legal services if you need a lawyer.
Visit iAmerica at: [iAmerica.org/LegalHelp](https://www.iAmerica.org/LegalHelp)

Part 3

Financial aid and applying
to college



What is Financial Aid?



Financial aid is money to help students pay for college.

There are 3 types:

- FREE MONEY:
 - Federal grants (Pell Grant) \$0-7,395.
 - If your immigration status does not allow you to apply for the FAFSA, you miss this part of the aid
 - College Grants and Scholarships
 - State grants (Mass Grant) and State aid!
 - Private Scholarships
- Federal work-study program
- Federal student loans

Students MUST APPLY for financial aid to be eligible to receive \$\$.

The statuses in YELLOW are eligible for Federal Aid

- US National Naturalized citizen
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee
- TPS (Temporary Protected Status)
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
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- Family sponsored visas
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- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (can lead to a pathway to citizenship!)
- DACA
- Undocumented

Two types of cards you should know about

Permanent Resident Card



Eligible for
Federal
Financial Aid

Employment authorization card



Not eligible for
Federal Financial aid,
but might be eligible
for in-state aid at
public college
campuses.

NOW...

1. As of August 2023, there are two very big changes for undocumented students!
 - a. Reduced tuition fees at public universities.
 - b. Additional financial aid from the state

Celebrating Tuition Equity for Massachusetts Students

Massachusetts has now expanded eligibility for in-state tuition to students who have attended Massachusetts high schools for at least three years and earned a Massachusetts diploma, an expansion which will ensure that many non-U.S. citizens are able to access in-state tuition and financial aid rates at public higher education institutions in the Commonwealth.

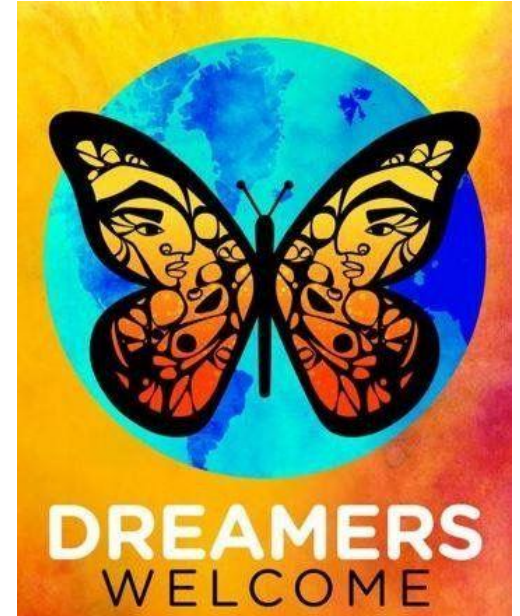


Photo credit <https://www.mass.edu/tuitionequity/home.asp>:

TUITION EQUITY in Massachusetts!

This is a historic happening for the state! [Official communication explaining all the updates](#)

“Effective July 1, 2023, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts created a new, additional pathway and expanded access to the in-state tuition rate, as well as to state financial aid (See Section II below) by allowing all students, including some non-U.S. citizens, who have attended high school in the Commonwealth for at least three years, earned a diploma or the equivalent (a GED/HiSet) in the Commonwealth, and have met other documentation requirements (listed below) to be eligible to pay the in-state tuition rate at public institutions of higher education www.mass.edu/tuitionequity”



Change #1: In-state tuition for Massachusetts residents

Example #1: 2-year university (public!)

# of credits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Usually, one class is 3 credits</u>• <u>Full-time is ~12 credits per semester</u>	Out of State tuition <u>Total cost for non-residents of MA (before, undocumented students paid this)</u>	In-state tuition
1	\$456.00	\$250.00
3	\$1,368.00	\$750.00
6	\$2,736.00	\$1,500.00
12	\$5,472.00	\$3,000.00
15	\$6,840.00	\$3,750.00 por semestre

Note: if the student takes more than a certain number of credits (depending on the university, usually 9 credits), he/she must show proof of health insurance. If you have masshealth or other, you do not have to pay for university health insurance.

Change #1: In-state tuition for Massachusetts residents

Example #2: Sample 4-year colleges in the Boston areas

Not including housing and food (room and board)

Type of institution <i>Examples - average tuition</i>	# of credits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Usually, one class is 3 credits</u>• <u>Full-time is ~12 credits per semester</u>	Out of State tuition <u>Total cost for non-residents of MA (before, undocumented students paid this)</u>	In-state tuition
<i>State university</i>	12 (tiempo completo)	\$8,683.00	\$5,643.00
Universidad estatal <i>UMASS</i>	12-15 (tiempo completo)	\$18,585.50	\$7,747.50
Sample private university	12-15 (tiempo completo)	\$22,690	\$22,690

Note: if the student takes more than a certain number of credits (depending on the university, usually 9 credits), he/she must show proof of health insurance. If you have masshealth or other, you do not have to pay for university health insurance.

How do I access these benefits?!?

Students must meet certain stipulations to be considered for this benefit, under the status of “High School Completer” THIS IS NEW under the Tuition Equity Law.



HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETER STATUS - eligibility criteria

In order for a student to qualify for the in-state tuition rate with “High School Completer” status, the student must:

- (1) Have been admitted to a public institution of higher education within the Massachusetts system of public higher education as defined in M.G.L. c. 15A, Section 5; and
- (2) Not be a nonimmigrant alien within the meaning of 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(A) to (S), inclusive¹; and
- (3) Have attended at least three academic years at high school in Massachusetts; and
- (4) Have graduated from high school in Massachusetts or have received the equivalent of a high school diploma (for example, a GED) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and

Change #2: Additional STATE financial assistance

It follows the same process as Change 1 - you need to have High School Completer status. In effect, the new Tuition Equity Act has expanded access for undocumented students to Massachusetts state financial aid programs:

1. The student must meet all eligibility requirements and deadlines specific to each MA state financial aid program that is intended to award; and
2. The student must submit a FAFSA or the state alternative form (the MAFSA), if applicable; and
3. The institution or the Department, as applicable, determines that the student is eligible to receive a specific amount.

Change #2: Additional STATE financial assistance

How do I access this benefit?

- 1) **Complete the MASFA (create an account first!)**
- 2) Fill out and sign the affidavit form. It only needs to be completed once for each college.
- 3) You must also provide copies of all required documents to get your “high school completer status.” However, documents already submitted to the institution, such as a high school diploma/high school transcript or HS transcript showing attendance in high school for at least 3 years, do not need to be resubmitted if they were already submitted as part of your application for admission.

Each Massachusetts public college and university is responsible for determining and verifying eligibility status for their respective students in accordance with these application procedures. Students will be classified as “eligible or “ineligible.

Creating a MASFA Account is easy!

Registration Step 3 of 3: Student Account Validation



Financial Aid Account

Please complete the following registration form.

First Name

i If you have a Social Security, DACA, or ITIN Card, your first/last name should match that document. If you don't have a Social Security, DACA, or ITIN Card, your first/last name should match the name you provided to your college(s).

Last Name

i If you have a Social Security, DACA, or ITIN Card, your first/last name should match that document. If you don't have a Social Security, DACA, or ITIN Card, your first/last name should match the name you provided to your college(s).

LOGOUT

DONE

Look out for an email verification

Verify your email for madhestudentxprod  Inbox x



noreply@madhestudentxprod.regenteducation.net

to me ▾

12:52 PM (12 minutes ago)



Reply



Hello,

Follow this link to verify your email address.

<https://madhestudentxprod.regenteducation.net/success?mode=verifyEmail&oobCode=Z7FF6AUPGwFHqY7atqWMnjwL0jiqH16JKCbMsDGCYCsAAAGNE2d4kQ&apiKey=AlzaSyAKnl6z1bi0aXalYfr7aRzXIVhmZ-LNqQ&lang=en>

If you didn't ask to verify this address, you can ignore this email.

Thanks,

Your madhestudentxprod team


 Reply

 Forward






 Dashboard

 Documents

1

Welcome to the MASFA Portal!

The Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA) dashboard will allow you quick access to useful information and resources. Please continue to work with your designated financial aid office to confirm all documents have been completed to keep your application and financial aid process moving forward. Please submit any outstanding items at your earliest convenience to prevent unnecessary delays through the MASFA application process.

 Documents 1

MA Application for State Financial Aid 2023-2024

NEEDED

today

Status: Needed (1) Submitted (0) Satisfied (0) Unsatisfied (0)

Show All Documents



Documents

MASFA Application Status

Welcome Student! Thank you for taking the time to complete the Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid. We are not collecting documents at this time. All form(s) and information requested for processing your MASFA application should be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid at your designated institution. To check the status of your pending MASFA application, please contact your financial aid office.

My Documents

MA Application for State Financial Aid 2023-2024

2023-2024 Federal Award Year

NOT STARTED

Status as of 01/16/2024

Instructions

Complete the 2023-24 MA DHE Financial Aid Application if you are planning on being enrolled in college (as a new student or continuing student) 2023-2024 Academic Year.

 **START, EDIT OR COMPLETE A FORM**

Close

You have the option to have the app in Spanish

Exit

Parent 1 Information Información del padre 1

Please provide the following information about your father/mother/stepparent.

Brinde la siguiente información sobre su padre, madre, padrastro o madrastra.

Parent 1 SSN *
Número de seguro social, DACA o ITIN del padre 1

This field is required

i Indicate your father's/mother's/stepparent's Social Security Number. If your parent does not have a Social Security Number, please enter all zeros (000000000). No dashes are necessary.

Indique el número de seguro social, DACA o ITIN de su padre, madre, padrastro o madrastra. Si no tiene ninguno de estos números, ingrese todos ceros (000000000). No es necesario incluir guiones.

Parent 1 Last Name *
Apellido del padre 1




Another opportunity if
you're a Boston
resident!

Tuition-free community college (TFCC) plan



What is it?	Requirements
<p>TFCC is a City of Boston program that pays for up to three years of tuition and fees after other financial aid has been applied for all Boston residents who are 18-24 years old pursuing an associate degree or an eligible certificate program at a partner college.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Be a Boston resident (w/ Boston zip code).● Be 18-24 years old (students who received it last year got grandfathered in) without a degree.● Enroll in an associate degree or short-term certificate program at a partner college.● Complete the FAFSA or MAFFSA.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Students who are undocumented, DACA students, or have TPS who can't complete the FAFSA or MASFA will work with their college to complete an institutional form.

Tuition-free community college (TFCC) plan

02108	Beacon Hill/Downtown		02129	Charlestown
02109	Financial District/North End		02130	Jamaica Plain
02110	Financial District	  	02108	Beacon Hill/Downtown
02111	Chinatown and Surrounding Areas		02109	Financial District/North End
02113	North End		02131	Roslindale
02114	Beacon Hill/West End		02132	West Roxbury
02115	Fenway		02134	Allston
02116	Back Bay		02135	Brighton
02118	South End		02136	Hyde Park
02119	Roxbury		02163	Allston
02120	Mission Hill		02199	Prudential Center
02121	Roxbury		02203	Government Center
02122	Dorchester		02210	South Boston Waterfront
02124	Dorchester		02215	Fenway/Kenmore
02125	Dorchester		*02467	Boston/ Other
02126	Mattapan			
02127	South Boston			
02128	East Boston			

Federal Updates:

What if the student qualifies for FEDERAL Aid but parents are undocumented?

The statuses in YELLOW are eligible for Federal Aid

- US National Naturalized citizen
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee
- TPS (Temporary Protected Status)
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
- Humanitarian Parole
- Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (CHNV)
- Paper I-94/Computer-generated Form CBP I-94A
- T Visa
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA self-petitioner (can lead to a pathway to citizenship via a permanent resident card!)
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (can lead to a pathway to citizenship!)
- DACA
- Undocumented

There is a new process for undocumented parents without a SSN to create a federal FSA ID and with that, complete and sign the FAFSA.

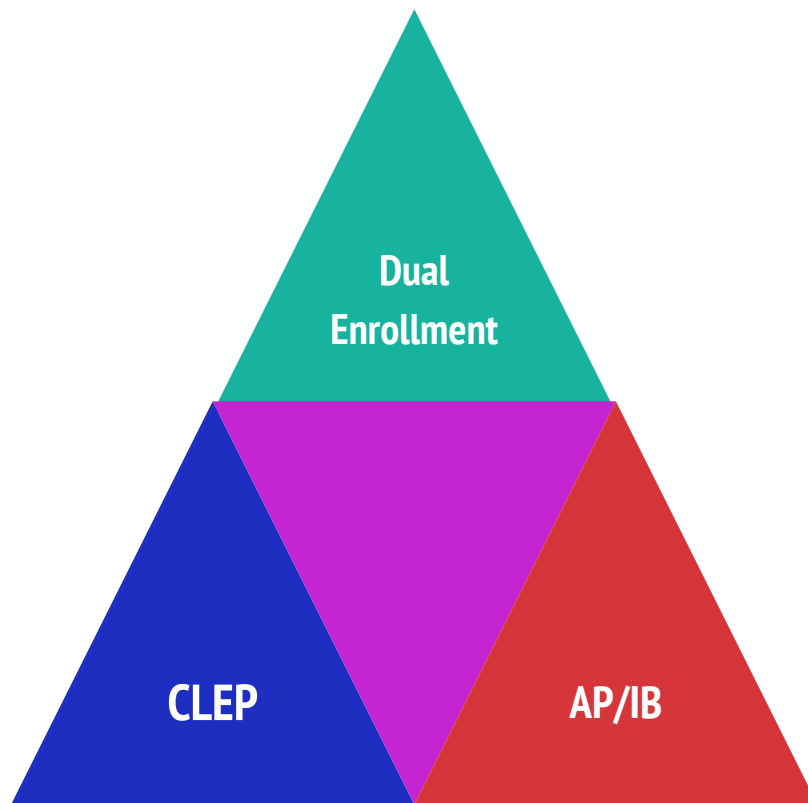
I know it is difficult to share your immigration status. There is a Federal law, FERPA, that protects any information you share with colleges. Colleges will never report your status to any other federal agency such as DHS, USCIS, or ICE. In my 12 years as a counselor, it has never happened :)

**So now that I know
about my options, what
else should I know
about applying to
college?**



Tips while in high school

Did you know you can earn college credit?



**How do I figure out
where to apply to?**





What are my interests? What makes me happy?



Have I thought about my future career ? Is there a college program or other program that will help me prepare?



Does my ideal career path need a work permit? Do I have one? If not, have I considered going to a legal screening to see if there are any options for me? Are there ways for me to become self-employed person for my chosen career?



What about financial support? Have I been working and saving? Will I have support from others? If not – there may be private scholarships you can apply for!

Ask yourself these 4 questions

Tactical information for students

Institutional Aid (financial aid from the colleges) may be available. Policies vary from school to school, but some may give students merit awards.

Be honest about your immigration status. Colleges are prohibited from releasing information unless under court order. Your information is protected by FERPA (A Federal Act)

Connect with someone in the Admissions office/scholarship offices who works with Multicultural Students. Don't get discouraged if someone at a college doesn't know the answer... keep trying and ask your high school counseling office for help.

You might be considered "Domestic" for Admissions and "International" for Financial Aid at colleges. Very confusing!!



3.8-4.0 = Great job! This is a great GPA! your essay, showing interest in colleges, and interview become VERY important. Is your application telling your story of who you are (including and NOT including your immigration status*)?**



4.0+ - the biggest hurdle here is making sure you and your families ASK questions! Being a first generation AND an immigrant is tough. Your advice can help - what's important to you? BUT ALSO, take risks!



Read the "undocufriendly college" lists and ask your counselor if he or she knows of colleges that often help undocumented students with "need based aid" scholarships.

**I have a GPA
of 3.8 or
higher, what
are my
options?**

My GPA is between 3.0 and 3.7, what are my options?

- Think about applying to colleges at all levels, and colleges that give “merit aid” scholarships.
- Can you live at home? If so, saving \$ on room and board can make a difference.
- Do you have relatives in other parts of the state or country?
- Ex. California, smaller private colleges that give good merit aid.
- Spend time getting feedback on your college applications and your essay.



YOU CAN STILL MAKE YOUR GOALS A REALITY!



College is GREAT! And also, there are so many types of colleges – certificates, 2-year programs, 4-year programs! Ready for a variety of GPAs.



This is true regardless of GPA: but always think about this question:

WHAT ARE MY CAREER ASPIRATIONS? What are my skills? What are my interests?



2-4 year program in MA: ALL community colleges with the in-state tuition benefit! AND some other options like: DUET, Endicott Boston, Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology, Quincy College, UMASS Online



If you have a *work permit*: Think about *vocational programs, career and technical apprenticeships*. Example: Year up



If you're thinking about career education, did you know that if you don't have a work permit, you can still work as an "independent contractor"?

What if my GPA isn't "very high"... what are my options?



Part 4:

Private Scholarships

PEACE MIGRATES

Scholarship tips for undocumented students

(or students with a complex
immigration status)



1. Check the “eligibility criteria for a Scholarship.” **AND THE FINE PRINT.** Does it mention that you must be a citizen or a permanent resident? If not, then it **MAY** be open to students with other immigration statuses. Always double check and ask your counselor for help checking if you’re unsure.
 2. Always meet the deadlines.
 3. Check for both **NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS** and **LOCAL Scholarships**. Do you know the difference?
-

National scholarships

- Will be open to students in all or many states
- More students apply
- Often times, larger sums of money, but more competitive

Local scholarships

- Accepts applications from applicants who are residents of specific towns near you
- Less students apply
- Often, smaller amounts of money (still great! Every little bit helps!)

Some scholarship resources

1. MALDEF's Scholarship Resource Guide
2. Different states have their own resource guides via community based organizations- [check out this guide as an example for Latino's in Indiana](#)
3. Immigrants Rising's [scholarship resource guide](#) for undergraduates - their list [is great!](#)
4. A great app to search for scholarships!
<http://dreamersroadmap.org/>

References

- <http://www.iacac.org/undocumented/>
- <http://www.mass.edu/aboutus/documents/2012-11%20DACA%20In-state%20Tuition%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- <http://www.bls.gov/>
- <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/young-lives-on-hold-college-board.pdf>
- <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>
- http://e4fc.org/images/GIN_NACAC_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf
- <http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca>
- <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/KnowledgeCenter/Documents/UndocumentedStudentUniversityResources.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf>
- <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbprofallRT?Rep=DE14A>
- <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/two-years-and-counting-assessing-growing-power-daca>
- United We Dream's DEEP curriculum
- MIRA coalition