

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 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**	No (MASFA)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Valid TPS	No (MASFA)	<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 (MASFA)	<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 (MASFA)	<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

MASFA: In-state tuition and need-based financial aid

Eligibility Requirements:

- Attended high school in Massachusetts for not less than 3 years; **and**,
- Earned a high diploma or equivalent in Massachusetts
- Must not be a U.S. Citizen, eligible noncitizen, or nonimmigrant alien
- Have registered with the Selective Service, if eligible
- Attend or plan to attend an eligible public or private institution in Massachusetts
- **And submit one of the following:**
 - a valid social security number, **or**
 - a document showing issuance of an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), **or**
 - **a signed affidavit** affirming the student has already applied or will for citizenship or legal permanent residence within 120 days of becoming eligible for such a status, **or**
 - documentation of registration with the selective service (if applicable)

How to apply:

1

To be considered for in-state tuition, complete the [MA Department of Higher Education Tuition Equity Eligibility Form and Affidavit for High School Completers](#) and submit it to your college.

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

2

To apply for need-based financial aid such as the MassGrant, complete and submit the [MASFA](#) application. It will require personal and tax information for you, the student applicant, and your parent(s).

- *MASFA is currently accepting applications for the 2023-2024 and the 2024-2025 school year.*

If you are unsure about your eligibility or need help with the application process, speak to your guidance counselor, uAspire Advisor, or financial aid office.

The Tuition-Free Community College (TFCC) Plan

The TFCC plan pays for up to three years of tuition and fees for Boston residents **ages 18-24** who are pursuing an associate degree or an eligible certificate program at a partner college. Funding is available on a first-come first-serve basis.

What are the eligibility requirements?

- Must be a 18-24 year old Boston resident without an advanced degree (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, MAFA, or alternative form offered by the partner colleges.*
- Submit any requested documentation from the partner college.

**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.

Funding is available on a first-come first-serve basis. Each partner college will make a determination on applying for financial aid packages and students are accepted on a rolling basis with a priority deadline of July 1. Students are encourage to apply early.

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

United We Dream

A decorative graphic consisting of three horizontal blue lines of varying lengths, with the middle line being the longest and the top and bottom lines being shorter and angled slightly upwards.


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

SIM (Stories Inspiring Movement)

A decorative graphic consisting of three horizontal blue lines of varying lengths, with the middle line being the longest and the top and bottom lines being shorter and angled slightly upwards.

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

BTU Unafraid Educators

A decorative graphic consisting of three horizontal blue lines of varying lengths, with the middle line being the longest and the top and bottom lines being shorter and angled slightly upwards.

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

Key terms

FAFSA:

Free Application for Federal Student 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.