



(AB 540)
The College
Guide
for
Immigrant
Students





Education within your reach!

AB 540 Undocumented Immigrant Students

This brochure is intended to provide students with information needed to be prepared for college, whether choosing to attend a community college or four-year university. We hope the information will help make applying to college an easier process. With hard work and perseverance, you can make your dreams a reality. We believe in you and know that you can achieve your goals. There are AB 540 undocumented students graduating from college every year, so it can be done! Best of luck.



Mr. Danny Tillman, President
Dr. Barbara Flores, Vice President
Ms. Louise A. Ayala
Mrs. Teresa Parra Craig
Mrs. Judi Penman
Mrs. Lynda K. Savage
Dr. Elsa O. Valdez
Arturo Delgado, Ed.D., Superintendent

Eligibility Requirements

Assembly Bill 540 allows long-term California residents, regardless of citizenship status, to pay lower in-state “resident” tuition fees at California Community Colleges (CCC), California State Universities (CSUs), and University of California (UC) institutions.

To qualify, a student must meet the following requirements:

- attend a California high school for three or more years
- graduate from a California high school or receive the equivalent of a high school diploma (such as a GED)
- register or currently be enrolled in one of three state institutions of higher learning (CCC, CSU, UC), and
- if undocumented, file an affidavit with the college or university stating that he or she will file an application to adjust their immigrant status as soon as they are eligible.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does it mean to be undocumented?

A: An undocumented person is a non-citizen without lawful immigration status who entered the U.S. without inspection or who stayed after the period he/she was authorized to be here.

Q: If I am undocumented, can I go to college?

A: Yes, you can go to any college or university in California as long as you are admitted/ accepted.

Q: Can I apply for financial aid?

A: AB540 does not allow undocumented immigrant students to apply for or receive state or federal financial aid. Some private organizations and non-profit entities may offer financial assistance. Visit your college's financial aid and scholarship offices to find out. Look for scholarship lists that do not ask for a Social Security number or require legal permanent residency to apply.

Q: Where else can I go to find out about scholarships?

A: The following websites include scholarship lists:

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

www.maldef.org

Latino College Dollars

www.latinocollegedollars.org

Salvadoran American Leadership and Education Fund (SALEF)

www.salef.org/salef/fulfilling.html

Adelante! California Scholarships and Stipends

www.adelante-ca.org

Fondo Futuro Scholarship

www.fondofuturo.com

The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute

www.trpi.org

Scholarship List (Continued)

L.A. Cash for College

www.lacashforcollege.org

Q. How do I apply for AB540?

A: For all UCs and most CSUs, you must apply by November of the year before you plan to enroll in school. Two sections of your application must be left blank if you are undocumented:

1. The box where you would put a Social Security number should be left BLANK
2. The Immigration Status box should be left BLANK.

Q. What else can I do to improve my chances of being admitted to college?

A: There are several items you should be aware of: **Grade Point Average (GPA) and rigor of courses**: college admissions counselors consider your GPA and how challenging your courses were, including AP and honor classes; **Standardized Test scores**: scores on standardized tests (such as the SAT I, SAT II, and ACT) can be included among the criteria; **Letters of recommendation**: some colleges and universities will require two to three; **Community service/extra curricular activities**: it is not only important to maintain good grades but also to be involved in your community; **Check with your counselor**: Don't hesitate to make an appointment to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

Your rights under AB 540

- *You cannot be denied admission to a California college or university based on your immigration status.*
- *You are not required to show a state-issued ID and social security card to apply for admission to a California college or university.*
- *You are not required to pay out-of-state, international, capital outlay, or penalty fees to enroll at a California public college or university if you qualify for AB 540. You will pay the same fee as documented residents.*

San Bernardino City Unified School District
English Learner Programs Department
777 North F Street
San Bernardino, CA 92410
(909) 891-1013

Adapted from Colton Joint
Unified School District and
MALDEF AB540 brochures