

# Eligibility for In-State Tuition, Fee Waivers, Financial Aid, and Scholarships in California

Last updated JANUARY 1, 2023

	General Requirements	Refugees and Afghan/Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa Holders	Granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)	Survivors of Serious Crimes: U Nonimmigrant Status	Trafficking Survivors: T Nonimmigrant Status	Prima Facie or Approved VAWA Self-Petition
<b>In-State Tuition Rates</b> (exemption from out-of-state rates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident<sup>1</sup></li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB 540<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident, or</li> <li>Refugee exemption<sup>3</sup></li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB 540</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident</li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB 540</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident, or</li> <li>Refugee exemption<sup>3</sup></li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet AB 540 criteria<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident, or</li> <li>Refugee exemption<sup>3</sup></li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet AB 540 criteria<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State resident or</li> <li>UC Policy<sup>3</sup></li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB 540</li> </ul>
<b>California College Promise Grant<sup>5</sup></b>	State resident or AB 540	State resident or AB 540	State resident or AB 540	State resident or meet AB 540 criteria	State resident or meet AB 540 criteria	State resident or AB 540
<b>State Financial Aid (Cal Grants)</b>	State resident and “eligible noncitizen” <sup>6</sup> (use <a href="#">FAFSA</a> form), or AB 540 (use Calif. <a href="#">Dream Act Application</a> ) <sup>7</sup>	State resident or AB 540 (use <a href="#">FAFSA</a> form)	AB 540 (use California <a href="#">Dream Act Application</a> )	State resident or meet AB 540 criteria (use California <a href="#">Dream Act Application</a> )	State resident or meet AB 540 criteria (use <a href="#">FAFSA</a> form)	State resident or AB 540 (use <a href="#">FAFSA</a> form)
<b>Federal Financial Aid</b>	“Eligible noncitizen” <sup>6</sup>	Eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Eligible <sup>8</sup>	Eligible
<b>Institutional Aid</b>	Generally, state resident or AB 540	Generally, state resident or AB 540	Generally, state resident or AB 540	Generally, state resident or meet AB 540 criteria	Generally, state resident or meet AB 540 criteria	Generally, state resident or AB 540

<sup>1</sup> **State resident** = lawfully present in California for 366 days. Individuals granted DACA, U or T status, a *prima facie* case determination, or an approved VAWA self-petition are among those considered lawfully present in the U.S. However, for this purpose, students may not have a currently valid nonimmigrant status that requires individuals to maintain a residence abroad.

<sup>2</sup> **AB 540** = 3 years of high school coursework, provided that the student attended a total of 3 years at a Calif. elementary or secondary school, or any combination. Students also may count attendance or credit at an adult school or up to 3 years’ attendance or credit at a community college toward the 3-year total. Must graduate from a Calif. high school, obtain a G.E.D. or an associate degree from a Calif. community college, or minimum transfer requirements for University of Calif. or Calif. State University. All students regardless of immigration status may be eligible, except that nonimmigrants are excluded. See note 4 regarding students with T or U nonimmigrant status.

<sup>3</sup> Refugees and Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants are eligible to pay in-state tuition rates immediately at California Community Colleges if they settle initially in California ([AB 343](#)). Refugees, T and U nonimmigrants and VAWA petitioners are eligible to pay in-state tuition rates immediately at [University of California](#) campuses. Under [AB 1899](#), T and U nonimmigrants are eligible to pay in-state tuition rates on the same basis as refugees.

<sup>4</sup> Although AB 540 technically does not apply to nonimmigrants, under [AB 1899](#) students with T or U nonimmigrant status who meet the other criteria of AB 540 are eligible for in-state tuition, fee waivers, scholarships, and institutional and state financial aid.

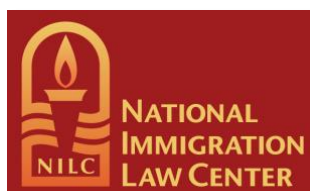
<sup>5</sup> This grant was formerly known as the Board of Governors Fee Waiver.

<sup>6</sup> For **federal financial aid** purposes, **eligible noncitizens** include lawful permanent residents, refugees, asylees, parolees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, victims of trafficking, and “qualified” domestic violence survivors. Citizens of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, or Palau are eligible for certain programs.

<sup>7</sup> FAFSA form: <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>; California Dream Act Application: <https://dream.csac.ca.gov>.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to those granted T status, trafficking survivors who are certified by or have an eligibility letter from the Office of Refugee Resettlement are eligible for federal financial aid.

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