

College Access for Undocumented Students

Undocumented students are allowed to go to college in Kentucky, and they are eligible for in-state tuition rates.

However, undocumented students are not eligible for federal student aid through the FAFSA. They should not file an electronic FAFSA because the information they put on it can be shared with immigration services. They can file a paper FAFSA, though, in order to be considered for institutional aid and other scholarships. They can also ask the college or scholarship committee if they would accept the CSS Profile provided by the College Board to determine need.

Students with DACA **can** use their social security number to fill out the FAFSA online to be considered for institutional aid and other scholarships, but they are still not eligible for federal financial aid. DACA students filling out the FAFSA

- Should answer the question, “Are you a U.S. citizen?” with “No, I am not a citizen or eligible non-citizen.”
- Should choose the state in which they currently reside when asked “What is your state of legal residence?” This and other questions about state of legal residency will appear if a student indicates that they have not lived in their state of current residence for at least 5 years. In these questions, “legal residency” is referring to state residency status, not immigration status. However, if students are offered state financial aid based on their answers to these questions, they should not accept it if their immigration status makes them ineligible for such aid.
- Should have their parents use a 000-00-0000 SSN if they are undocumented. Undocumented parents should not use their ITIN in place of a SSN. They will not be able to get a PIN to electronically sign the FAFSA without a SSN, so they will have to print it out, sign it, and send it in to Federal Student Aid Programs, P.O. Box 7006, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0076.

When filling out an application for a college or scholarship, undocumented students

- Should not lie. They should not say they are LPRs or in the process of becoming LPRs if it is not true because it could lead to deportation or count against them if a future opportunity for legalization arises.
- Should avoid giving indication that they are undocumented as much as possible.
- Should correct admissions officers who try to classify them as international or “legal foreign students.” If they have to disclose their undocumented status to do so, that is acceptable.
- Should fill out the domestic application at public universities and the international application at private universities.
- Should leave questions related to immigration status (such as “what is your SSN?” or “what is your visa status?”) blank. If the online application will not allow these questions to be left unanswered, students should fill out a paper application.

- Should tell admissions officers that they do not hold a B-2 or F-1 visa if they are asked about their visa status. B-2 and F-1 visas are what admissions officers are most concerned about; students should avoid saying that they have no visa.
- Should not show admissions officers their original passports. Instead, they should present a photocopy of the first page (the one with the picture) if an ID is requested.
- Should not become concerned if schools ask for proof of permanent residency or application for permanent residency. Failure to provide such documents should **not** affect admission status.

If a scholarship application asks for a SSN, it may only be for identification purposes, not to verify immigration status. Undocumented students should ask if they can submit the SSN of a relative instead of their own; if they can, then the SSN is only needed for ID purposes and the scholarship is open to everyone regardless of immigration status.

There are some [scholarships](#) specifically for undocumented students and others for immigrant students that have no citizenship or residency requirement:

- CORE's Que Lluvia Café Scholarship
http://www.ca-core.org/que_llueva_cafe_scholarship_program
This scholarship is available to undocumented students to help them pursue their educational goals. Awards are based on each applicant's personal story, extra-curricular involvement, and academic promise.
- Golden Door Scholars
<http://www.goldendoorscholars.org/apply-now.html>
The goal of this scholarship is to help high-achieving, DACA-eligible students to attain higher education. The scholarship pays for full tuition, room, and board for four years.
- Geneso Migrant Center Scholarship
<http://www.migrant.net/migrant/scholarships/>
The Geneso Migrant Center offers a number of scholarships to migrant farm workers and their children to help them achieve post-secondary education.
- Migrant Network Coalition Scholarship
<http://mnclex.org/>
Awarded by an organization that seeks to coordinate services for immigrants throughout Kentucky, this scholarship is open to immigrant and refugee students and includes four short essay questions. At least two awards of \$700 each are given each year.
- Kentucky ESL Student Scholarship Recognition Awards
http://kylesol.org/awards_scholarships
ESL students graduating from a Kentucky high school with a 2.5 GPA can submit an application that includes a personal essay, two letters of recommendation, high school transcripts, and a college acceptance letter to win this \$1000 award.
- Hispanic Scholarship Fund General College Scholarships
<https://hsf.net/en/scholarships/programs/general-college-scholarships>

If you are of Hispanic heritage, you can submit one application and be considered for several scholarships of various amounts from this scholarship fund. You must be a citizen, LPR, eligible non-citizen, or have DACA.

- Students should also look for other scholarships geared toward any minority group with which they identify and check with the colleges to which they have applied to see what scholarships they offer.

Loans may be available to undocumented students as long as there is a citizen or LPR co-signer.

Private colleges have no restrictions on their need-based aid, so they may be able to give it to undocumented students.

When writing essays for college and scholarship applications, there are pros and cons to disclosing undocumented status.

- Pros: Shows challenges student has overcome, financial need, and student's motivation
- Cons: Can become the only variable that defines a student, overshadow a student's accomplishments, make student sound like a victim, or alienate a reader who does not understand immigration issues

Undocumented high-school students should take advantage of dual-enrollment programs if possible since they allow them to obtain college credit for free.

To find out more information about college access for undocumented students, see these [resources](#):

- <http://unitedwedream.org/about/projects/education-deep/>
- <https://chooseyourfuture.cps.edu/high-school-college-career/undocumented-students/>
- http://www.e4fc.org/images/Access_to_Education_Guide_Eng1_LR.pdf