

The **New** Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law

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On July 31, the Massachusetts legislature passed Tuition Equity legislation, after 20 years of advocacy. The Governor signed the budget legislation on August 9, 2023. This is a huge win for our communities! This law would give immigrant students access to an affordable college education. The new law will not be effective immediately, since the state government's education department will need to implement it. This could take several months. See below for details!

What will the Tuition Equity law do?

The new Tuition Equity law will give nearly all undocumented Massachusetts high school graduates access to in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities in Massachusetts.

It will also make these students eligible for state-funded student financial aid to attend a public or private Massachusetts college or university!

Who is eligible for in-state tuition? To be eligible, you must:

- Have attended a Massachusetts high school for at least 3 years
- Have received a high school diploma or a GED (General Education Diploma) in Massachusetts
- Be admitted to a Massachusetts public college or university (for in-state tuition)

Who is eligible for state-funded financial aid? To be eligible, you must

- Have attended a Massachusetts high school for at least 3 years
- Have received a high school diploma or a GED (General Education Diploma) in Massachusetts
- Be admitted to either a Massachusetts public college or university, or a Massachusetts private, non-profit college or university

*Note that people visiting the U.S. on temporary non-immigrant visas (like tourist visas, student visas, exchange visitor visas, or temporary work visas) will not be eligible for in-state tuition rates or state financial aid. This exclusion does not apply to people here on U- and T- visas - these WILL be eligible for both in-state tuition and state-funded financial aid!

What documents will students need to prove they are eligible?

You will need to provide only ONE of the following documents.

- A sworn affidavit that you will apply for legal permanent residence or citizenship if and when you become eligible for it, within 120 days of eligibility, OR
- A valid Social Security Number, OR
- Evidence that you were issued an ITIN (it is not yet clear whether this needs to be current), OR
- Documentation that you have registered with the selective service (the military draft), if you are eligible.**

**In the US, eligibility for selective service applies to all non-disabled or otherwise exempt males, 18-25 years of age

When can we expect the law to be implemented?

We can't say for sure. Several steps are required before it will be implemented:

- The Department of Higher Education (DHE) will issue proposed regulations for the public to submit comments
- DHE will hold a public hearing so that people can voice their support, concerns, or recommendations for improvement
- DHE will then issue final regulations



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