



# California Dream Act FAQs



The California Dream Act is a combination of three bills, Assembly Bill (AB) 540, AB 130 and AB 131. Together, these bills allow undocumented and nonresident documented students who meet certain provisions to be treated the same as resident students. Together these are called the California Dream Act and they allow these students to pay the resident fees at public colleges and universities, apply for and receive private scholarships funded through public universities, state-administered financial aid, university grants, community college fee waivers and Cal Grants.

**Q What is AB 540, and what does it have to do with the California Dream Act?**

**A** AB 540, passed in 2001, allows students meeting all of the following criteria to pay the same tuition and fees as resident students at California public colleges and universities. The California Dream Act extended Cal Grant A & B Entitlement awards, Cal Grant C awards, institutional grants, and community college fee waivers to students that meet these same criteria. To receive CA Dream Act aid, AB 540 and AB 131 students must:

- Have attended a California high school for a minimum of three years
- Graduate from a California high school or pass the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) or get a General Equivalency Diploma (GED), also called General Educational Development test)
- Enroll in an accredited California institution of higher education
- In the case of students without legal immigration status, fill out an affidavit stating that they have filed or will file an application to legalize their immigration status as soon as they are eligible to do so
- To get a Cal Grant, they must also meet all other Cal Grant eligibility criteria

**Q I saw that AB 540, AB 130, and AB 131 guarantee confidentiality, but what about my parents' information?**

**A** CA Dream Act students without legal immigration status will be required to fill out the California Dream Act Application instead of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- Like all other dependent Cal Grant applicants, CA Dream Act students will be required to submit parental income and asset information. The demographic information students will provide on the CA Dream Application is largely the same as the information that students have already supplied to their high schools and colleges
- There are no checks and matches between the CA Dream Act Application and any federal databases
- CA Dream Act students' and their parents' information is protected by the same privacy and information security laws and safeguards as all other Cal Grant applicants

**Q I am a high school senior and fit the AB 540 criteria above. For what financial assistance might I be eligible when I enter college?**

**A** You may be eligible for:

- AB 540 In-State Tuition Assistance
- AB 130 private scholarships (see your intended college or university for applications and deadlines)
- AB 131 Institutional grants like the UC “University Grant” or the CSU “State University Grant” (see your intended college or university for applications and deadlines), California Community Colleges Board of Governor’s fee waiver (BOG fee waiver) (see your local community college for application) Cal Grant (apply every year between January 1 and March 2)
- Other State-administered financial aid (click [here](#) for detailed eligibility requirements)

**Q I am in middle school. I am undocumented. What can I do now to get ready for college?**

**A** There is a lot that you can do right now:

- Stay in school and work hard to get good grades
- Go to a California high school and graduate or pass a graduation equivalency exam
- Talk with your parents and family about seeking information to apply for citizenship

**Q I am a foster youth, and I don’t have a Social Security number or any paperwork about my biological parents. Can I get any financial aid for college?**

**A** You may qualify for:

- Chafee Foster Youth aid
- AB 540 in-state tuition assistance
- AB 130 private scholarship aid offered through California public colleges and universities
- California Dream Act Cal Grants or institutional grants
- Board of Governors fee waivers at California community colleges

**Q I am currently in college. I am AB 540. What kind of aid can I receive?**

**A** You may be eligible for:

- AB 540 In-State Tuition Assistance
- AB 130 private scholarships (see your college or university for applications and deadlines)
- AB 131 Institutional grants like the UC “University Grant”, the CSU “State University Grant”, the CSU Extended Opportunity Program (EOP) or the California Community College Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) (see your intended college or university for applications and deadlines), community colleges Board of Governors fee waivers.
- California Community Colleges Board of Governor’s fee waiver (BOG fee waiver) (see your local community college for application)
- If you are attending a California Community College and plan to eventually transfer to a 4-year institution, you may qualify for a Community College Transfer Entitlement Cal Grant
- If you are enrolled or expect to enroll in a career technical program at your college, you may qualify for a Cal Grant C

***Learn more about the California Dream Act***

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<https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>

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