

Counseling Undocumented Students about Financial Aid

What Does It Mean to be Undocumented?

- Individual lacks documents required for immigration or legal residence
- Individuals may:
 - Have entered U.S. illegally
 - Have entered U.S. legally on a temporary basis and stayed after documents expired
 - Have been brought into the U.S. by someone else

Statistics about Undocumented Immigrants

- 90% are from Mexico and Latin America
- Two thirds live in six states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey
- Other areas have seen significant growth in undocumented population on past 10 to 15 years
- 1.6 million are children under age 18
- Three million children are U.S. citizens by birth
- Approximately 65,000 graduate from U.S. high schools each year

Eligibility for Federal Aid

Students must be:

- U.S. citizens or nationals
- U.S. permanent residents
- Citizens of the Freely Associated States: Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands
- Other eligible noncitizens
 - Refugees
 - Victims of human trafficking
 - Persons granted asylum
 - Conditional entrants
 - Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
 - Cuban-Haitian entrants

Ineligible immigration statuses:

- Family unity status
- Temporary residents
- Non-immigrant visas, such as work, students, tourists, and foreign government officials

State Aid

- 10 states have passed legislation that allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities
 - California
 - Illinois
 - Kansas
 - Nebraska
 - New Mexico
 - New York
 - Oklahoma
 - Texas
 - Utah
 - Washington
- Eligibility criteria
 - Attend state high school for two to four years
 - Complete a high school diploma or GED in state
 - Enroll in a public postsecondary institution
 - File affidavit stating intent to legalize status and become permanent resident
- Models
 - States redefine residency for purpose of tuition charges
 - States make exemptions for payment of out-of-state tuition for certain categories of students

Aid from Colleges and Universities

- Institutional scholarship, grant, loan, and work-study programs
- Varies widely among institutions
- Scholarship funds come with merit component

Aid from Private Sources

- Fast Web: www.fastweb.com
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund: www.maldef.org
- Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund: www.selef.org

Counseling Undocumented Students

- Provide safe environment
 - Non threatening
 - Not required to report status
 - Supportive
- Resources
 - Be proactive
 - Be aware of what is available at state and local level
 - Conduct counseling with family present