

Minnesota Dream Act Fact Sheet

What is the MN Dream Act?

The MN Dream Act (also known as the MN Prosperity Act) was introduced by Senator Sandra Pappas (SF723) and Representative Carlos Mariani (HF875) and was included in the omnibus higher education bill passed by the 2013 Minnesota Legislature and signed into law by Governor Dayton on May 23, 2013.

The MN Dream Act provides certain benefits to undocumented students who meet the following criteria:

- Attended a Minnesota high school for at least 3 years; and
- Graduated from a Minnesota high school or earned a GED in Minnesota; and
- Complied with Selective Service registration requirements (applies only to male students born 1960 or after); and
- Provide documentation to show they have applied for lawful immigration status but only if a federal process exists for a student to do so (does not include applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). There is currently not a federal process in place, so this documentation is not currently required.

Students who meet the criteria in the MN Dream Act will be eligible to apply for the following benefits:

- In-state resident tuition rates at Minnesota public colleges and universities.
- Minnesota state financial aid available to students who meet state residency requirements.
- Privately funded financial aid through Minnesota public colleges and universities.

Is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) the same thing as the MN Dream Act?

No. DACA is a federal immigration policy deferring action against certain undocumented individuals who entered or stayed in the United States without authorization. The MN Dream Act is a state law providing education benefits to undocumented students who meet all the requirements in the state law. Having DACA is not a requirement under the MN Dream Act, but will allow the student to be considered for a State Work Study job on campus.

How do undocumented students apply for state financial aid under the MN Dream Act?

- Don't complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.
- Apply using the MN Dream Act application at: www.ohs.state.mn.us/MNDreamAct once each school year.

How do undocumented students apply for in-state tuition rates under the MN Dream Act?

- Apply for admission to the public college or university they want to attend.
- Minnesota State campuses will determine student eligibility for resident tuition rates.
- U of M campuses will rely on the results of the student's MN Dream Act application.

What documentation will be needed after completing the MN Dream Act application the first time?

After the student submits the [MN Dream Act application](#), the student will receive an email letting the student know the following information will need to be submitted to the MN Office of Higher Education to prove the student meets the requirements in the law.

- Minnesota high school transcripts showing attendance at a Minnesota high school for at least 3 years and a graduation date (do NOT have to be certified or official copies)
- Males 18-25 must provide proof of registration with the [Selective Service System](#).
- Males who have not yet registered should download the registration form from www.ohs.state.mn.us/MNDreamAct and submit the original to the MN Office of Higher Education with all other MN Dream Act documentation. The Office will make a copy of the form and mail the original to the Selective Service System office on the student's behalf.
- Copy of the student's DACA letter or work authorization card (this is optional and only needed if the student is interested in a State Work Study job on campus).

What other documentation will be required after applying each year to receive state financial aid?

- Copies of federal income tax returns (1040) from two years ago (2017 tax year for 2019-2020 application; 2018 tax year for 2020-2021)
 - If the student is applying as dependent, both student and parent forms are needed.
 - If the student is applying as independent, only student (and spouse's, if married) forms are needed
- If the student and/or parents were not required to file a federal tax return due to income earned below the required filing threshold, then copies of the student's and/or parents' W-2 forms from two years ago
- Copies of college transcripts for students who have already attended college for three or more years

What type of state financial aid is available to students qualifying under the MN Dream Act?

- Minnesota State Grant, which is a need-based grant available to students attending college in Minnesota.
- Postsecondary Child Care Grant is awarded to low-income students with children in child care while they attend college and requires both the MN Dream Act application and a separate application available from the college financial aid office.
- Tuition reciprocity reduces the non-resident tuition rate charged to Minnesota residents attending a public college or university in Wisconsin, North Dakota or South Dakota and requires an additional online tuition reciprocity application available at: www.ohe.state.mn.us.
- State Work Study jobs, if the student has work authorization. Students should contact the college financial aid office if they are interested in a work study job.
- The state SELF student loan, which does not require the student borrower to have legal immigration status, but does require a co-signer who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. More information is available at: www.selfloan.state.mn.us.
- Minnesota Teacher Candidate Grant, which provides post postsecondary financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in Minnesota teacher preparation programs during **one** term in which the student is completing a required 12-week or more student teaching experience.
- PIPELINE Program: Dual Training Grants, which intend to help employers and partnering training providers deliver a dual-training program for employees lacking industry-developed occupational competency standards.

Does meeting MN Dream Act criteria mean a student is guaranteed state financial aid?

No. Financial aid programs have other requirements all applicants must meet, such as demonstrating financial need. It simply means these students are eligible to apply for and receive state financial aid on the same basis as U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens.

Will MN Dream Act or DACA students be eligible for federal financial aid?

No. The MN Dream Act is a state law that provides state benefits to Minnesota residents regardless of federal immigration status. Federal financial aid programs require students to be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens to apply for and receive federal financial aid

What other types of financial aid are available to undocumented students?

- Many private scholarships are available to undocumented students. There is a list available at: www.ohe.state.mn.us/MNDreamAct
- Scholarships offered by your college may be available to undocumented students.

When will students be notified of their state financial aid eligibility?

- We begin sending *estimated* State Grant award letters via email in late February or March. Final award letters are emailed after the legislative session, typically beginning in May or June. Funds arrive on campus each term after the end of the drop/add period.
- All other state financial aid is awarded by the college financial aid office on a schedule determined by each college.

Will my MN State Grant cover my tuition and fee charges?

- In most cases, no. Most students will need to enter into a payment plan with the college to pay tuition and fees not covered by State Grant or other types of financial aid. Check with your school's financial aid office about other types of aid from the school.