

Undocumented Students and Access to Inter-State Tuition Agreements (ITAs): Fact Sheet

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The United States is home to more than [427,000 undocumented students](#), including 181,000 DACA-eligible students, enrolled in higher education. Each U.S. state implements its own policies in terms of whether to provide access to in-state tuition and state financial aid to the state's undocumented students. This results in a patchwork of different policies in different states. Thirty-four states and D.C. [provide at least limited access](#) to in-state tuition to the state's undocumented students and/or DACA recipients. [Sixteen states and Puerto Rico](#) have either no policies, restrictive policies (policies that actively bar access to in-state tuition or state financial aid) or prohibitive policies (policies that actively bar enrollment in at least some public institutions) for the state's resident undocumented students. Some of those states may still allow DACA recipients to enroll and access in-state tuition. As a result of this national patchwork of policies, it is important to identify additional pathways that may provide undocumented students with access to higher education opportunities.

A potential avenue to expand undocumented students access to higher education are inter-state tuition agreements (ITAs), which offer students who would otherwise be charged out-of-state tuition access to an in-state tuition rate or a discounted tuition rate in a participating state. Policies that provide tuition equity generally expand access to higher education and help fuel the state's economy. Research [shows](#) positive effects of offering in-state tuition and state financial aid to undocumented students, as it increases college enrollment and improves outcomes such as academic achievement, credits attempted, and first-semester retention. ITAs could be part of the solution to expanding access to higher education and reducing the growing labor shortage in certain industries. This fact sheet answers key questions related to undocumented students and ITAs.

What is an inter-state tuition agreement (ITA)?

An inter-state tuition agreement (ITA) is an agreement between two or more states that offers students from one participating state (State A), who would otherwise be charged out-of-state tuition in another state, access to an in-state tuition rate or a discounted tuition rate in another state (State B). The agreements are reciprocal, providing students from State B access to in-state tuition or a discounted tuition rate in State A.

Are undocumented students eligible for inter-state tuition (ITA) agreements?

Given that ITAs are not uniformly implemented, an undocumented student's eligibility and ability to participate in ITAs varies by region, state, and, at times, institution. In situations where undocumented students are likely eligible for ITAs, they may need to be approved on a case-by-case basis by the institution.

A common theme among these inter-state tuition agreements is that undocumented students' eligibility is unclear and, at best, the students will likely need to be approved on a case-by-case basis. Another common challenge is that information about these programs is not readily available online.

What are some examples of inter-state tuition agreements (ITAs) that currently exist?

One example is the New England Regional Student Program. Participating states of the New England Regional Student Program include Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Under this agreement, students from any of the six participating states can attend a college or university in a different participating state, where the student will pay no more than 175 percent of the in-state tuition rate.

Other ITAs include:

Inter-State Tuition Agreements (ITAs)	Category: In-State Tuition and State Financial Aid Access for Undocumented Students						
	Comprehensive Access	Accessible	Limited	Limited to DACA	Restrictive	Prohibitive Enrollment	No State Policy
Academic Common Market Program	Maryland, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia	Florida, Kentucky	Delaware	Arkansas, Mississippi	Tennessee	Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina	Louisiana, West Virginia
Regional Contract Program		Kentucky	Delaware	Arkansas, Mississippi		Georgia, South Carolina	Louisiana
Midwestern Exchange Program	Illinois, Minnesota	Kansas, Nebraska		Indiana, Ohio	Missouri, Wisconsin		North Dakota
Western Undergraduate Exchange	California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington		Arizona	Idaho			Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming
Western Regional Graduate Program	California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington		Arizona	Idaho			Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming
Professional Student Exchange Program	Colorado, Hawai'i, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah		Arizona				Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming
Wisconsin - Minnesota Exchange Program	Minnesota				Wisconsin		
Missouri - Kansas Reciprocal Agreement on Architecture, Dentistry and Optometry		Kansas			Missouri		

- [Academic Common Market Program](#) (Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia).

- [Regional Contract Program](#) (Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina).
- [Midwestern Exchange Program](#) (Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin).
- [Western Undergraduate Exchange](#) (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, U.S. Pacific Territories, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming).
- [Western Regional Graduate Program](#) (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, U.S. Pacific Territories, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming).
- [Professional Student Exchange Program](#) (Alaska, Arizona, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Colorado, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming).
- [Wisconsin-Minnesota Exchange Program](#) (Wisconsin, Minnesota).
- [Missouri-Kansas Reciprocal Agreement on Architecture, Dentistry and Optometry](#) (Missouri, Kansas).

Which inter-state tuition agreements (ITAs) extend eligibility to undocumented students?

The Midwestern Exchange Program is the only ITA that we know [affirmatively extends eligibility](#) to undocumented students, specifically undocumented students who are state residents from Minnesota. Under this program, Minnesota students appear to be eligible for reduced tuition at a limited number of public and private schools in Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wisconsin.

Other ITA programs either do not extend access to undocumented students or do not highlight if undocumented students are eligible. Programs may require undocumented students to be approved on a case-by-case basis that depends on the institutions' and states' policies.

Are inter-state tuition agreement (ITA) programs available at both public and private educational institutions?

The Midwestern Student Exchange Program is the only ITA that has participating private colleges and universities. Generally, only public colleges and universities tend to participate in ITAs. Participating private institutions include:

- Kansas: Friends University
- Missouri: Central Methodist University, Missouri Valley College, Saint Louis University, Webster University

Each participating private institution has its own requirements regarding who is eligible to participate. Participation at some institutions might be limited to undergraduate students,

certain campuses, or based on merit scholarship award amounts. Detailed information can be found on the [MSE Program website](#).

What positive educational outcomes arise from inter-state tuition agreements (ITAs)?

Undocumented students from restrictive and prohibitive states who have access to an ITA may be more likely to enroll in college or university and do so sooner after high school. By enrolling sooner, undocumented students can realize the financial and societal benefits of a college degree in the labor market. [In-state tuition rates have been shown to increase enrollment](#) of undocumented students at postsecondary education institutions. ITAs may likely have a similar impact on enrollment rates. Lastly, in-state tuition not only leads to an increase in college enrollment, but also increases college completion rates and the attainment of associate degrees because students are more likely able to cover the cost. ITAs could similarly allow undocumented students to afford completing their degrees.

ITAs are important because undocumented students from a state where they cannot access in-state tuition could be eligible for in-state or reduced tuition in a different participating state. For example, New Hampshire has state policies that actively bar access to in-state tuition for the state's undocumented students, including DACA recipients. However, as a participating member of the New England Regional Student Program, New Hampshire's undocumented students could potentially be eligible to attend a college or university in a participating state, such as Connecticut, and access reduced tuition levels.

How many states currently have state policies that allow undocumented students to access in-state tuition and state financial aid? How many states bar undocumented students?

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia allow undocumented students to access in-state tuition. Of the 22 states, 18 states and the District of Columbia allow undocumented students to also access state financial aid or scholarships. For more information on which states offer access to in-state tuition and their policies on undocumented student's eligibility, please visit the [States](#) page on the [Higher Ed Immigration Portal](#).

Eight states actively bar access to in-state tuition or state financial aid for the state's undocumented students at some or all public colleges and universities. Depending on the state, restrictive or prohibitive policies may also apply to DACA recipients. Complete information on which states offer access to in-state tuition and their policies on undocumented student's eligibility are in the [States](#) page.

How can financial aid officers, admissions counselors, and college counselors support undocumented students' eligibility for inter-state tuition agreements (ITAs)?

As more undocumented students seek to enter higher education, ITAs need to be updated to better address the diverse needs of the undocumented student population. For example, both private and public college and universities should consider participating in ITAs so undocumented students have more options of where they could attend a college or university. Furthermore, ITAs should expand the list of eligible degrees included so that undocumented students are not limited on potential course of studies to pursue.

Financial aid officers, admissions counselors, and college counselors can support undocumented students through the following recommendations:

- At the state level, begin or continue to advocate for undocumented students' eligibility to participate in inter-state tuition agreements.
- Provide undocumented students guidance on how to determine whether they are currently eligible for inter-state tuition programs and can access in-state or reduced tuition in a participating state.
- Financial aid and admissions counselors at all higher education institutions and those working with high school students should attend trainings that keep them updated on state and institutional policies that impact undocumented and DACA students, including inter-state tuition programs.
- Continue to advocate for undocumented students' eligibility for and access to in-state tuition and state financial aid at the state level.

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