The California Dream Act
Fact Sheet AB 540, AB 130 and 131

History

**AB 540**, signed into law in October 2001, allows students meeting all of the following criteria to pay the same in-state tuition and fees as resident students at California public colleges and universities:

- The minor was brought to the United States before age 16
- Attended a high school in California on a regular basis
- Completed three full academic years between grades 9-12
- Satisfied GPA criteria
- Student is a High School graduate, earned a GED (General Equivalency Diploma) certificate, or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE).

The California Dream Act became law with the authorization of two Assembly bills authored by Assembly Member Gil Cedillo (Los Angeles). This expanded the allowable sources of financial aid to include private grant and scholarship sources. This bill provides that, on and after January 1, 2012, a student attending the California State University, the California Community Colleges, or the University of California who is exempt from paying nonresident tuition under AB 540 would be eligible to receive a scholarship derived from non-state funds received, for the purpose of scholarships, by the segment at which he or she is a student.

**AB 130** An act to amend Section 68130.7 and to add Section 66021.7 to the Education Code (EC), relating to student financial aid allows students who meet AB 540 criteria (EC 68130.5(a)) to apply for and receive non-state funded scholarships for public colleges and universities.

**AB 131** An act to amend Section 68130.7 of, and to add Sections 66021.6, 69508.5, and 76300.5 to, the Education Code, relating to student financial aid allows students who meet AB 540 criteria to apply for and receive state-funded financial aid such as institutional grants, community college fee waivers, the Cal Grant and the Chafee Grant.

Starting on January 1, 2013, the California Dream Act extends 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 Dream Act aid, AB 540, AB 130 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 CHSPE or the GED
- 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

Deferred Action

On June 15, 2012, the Obama administration, through Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, announced deferred action for eligible youth to temporarily protect them from deportation. Persons who show eligibility would receive deferred action for a period of two years and will be eligible to apply for work permits. Those in removal proceedings as well as those not in removal proceedings will be eligible to apply for deferred action if they meet certain requirements.
Eligibility Requirements for Deferred Action

Persons meeting the following five criteria will be eligible to apply for deferred action:

1. They must have arrived in the United States before they turned 16 years of age.
2. They are not above 30 years of age.
3. They have resided in the United States for 5 consecutive years prior to June 15, 2012 and were present in the country on June 15, 2012 (the date of the announcement).
4. They are currently in school, have graduated from high school, have obtained GED certification or they have been honorably discharged from the Coast Guard or the Armed Forces of the United States.
5. They have not been convicted of a felony, a significant misdemeanor, multiple misdemeanor offenses, and they must not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

What Happens With Deferred Action

Deferred action is temporary protection from deportation and lasts for two years. Before the end of the two years, individuals can apply for a renewal after getting their cases reviewed by the agencies. When granted deferred action an individual can also apply for work authorization.

What Does Not Happen With Deferred Action

Those granted deferred action are only given protection from removal proceedings for two years and allowed to apply for work permits. They cannot apply for and will not be considered for green cards or citizenship.

Dream Act Dates and Timelines:

2012-13 School Year

Check with your institution's financial aid office to see if you need to complete the 2012-13 California Dream Act Application.

January 1, 2013


March 2, 2013

This is the 2013-14 priority filing deadline for most state funded colleges and universities and the absolute deadline for submission of your Dream Act Application and school certified GPA for the Cal Grant program.

May 1, 2013

If you submit a Dream Act Application and school certified GPA by the March 2 deadline, you should receive an email or letter from the Student Aid Commission on your application status. If you are not contacted, email caldreamact@csac.ca.gov or call 888-224-7268.

Important Links and Resources:

AB 540
AB 130
AB 131
Dream Act Application
Application Instructions
College & Financial Aid Guide for AB 540 Students
Immigration Policy Center
Dream Activist, Students Resource Network
Connecting Our World
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration (800) 375-5283