

Frequently Asked Questions

Regarding the University System of Maryland's Policy on Student Classification for Admission and Tuition Purposes

Please note: These FAQs are not intended to be a restatement or comprehensive explanation of the University System of Maryland's residency classification policy, and they do not supplant or amend any part of the Policy or procedures. They are offered informally only to answer questions asked most frequently by students. The USM *Policy on Student Classification for Admission and Tuition Purposes (VIII-2.70) (the "Policy")* is the only complete and authoritative source of information about residency classification for the USM. Students who wish to understand their residency status or petition for reclassification are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the USM Policy and their institution's applicable procedures.

<http://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionVIII/VIII270.html>

Q1. I maintain a Maryland mailing address. Is this enough for me to qualify for in-state tuition?

A. No. If you came to Maryland from another state, simply living in Maryland for 12 consecutive months or having mail delivered to you in the State does not entitle you to in-state status. A continuous physical presence in Maryland is certainly important, but it is only one of several requirements established by the Policy. Equally important, for example, are the circumstances that brought you to Maryland and the extent to which you have taken other actions that objectively demonstrate that you are not in Maryland just to attend college and that you intend to remain in Maryland indefinitely following graduation.

Q2. What are all the criteria I must fulfill to meet the Policy definition of 'in-state' status?

A. There are 6 criteria that must be fulfilled for at least 12 months. As set forth in greater detail in the Policy, you must show that:

1. You have continuously maintained substantially all personal property and primary living quarters in Maryland.
2. You (or the person on whom you are Financially Dependent) have paid Maryland income tax on all taxable income, including all taxable income earned outside Maryland.
3. If you own or lease any motor vehicle, it is registered in Maryland.
4. If you possess a driver's license, it is issued by Maryland.
5. Receive no public assistance from a state other than the State of Maryland or from a city, county, or municipal agency other than one in Maryland.

6. Have the ability under Federal and Maryland law to live permanently and without interruption in Maryland.

In addition to the 6 listed criteria above, depending on your personal circumstances, additional evidence may be required during the Initial Determination. For example, if you are Financially Dependent on a person living outside of Maryland or if you are attending school or living outside of Maryland at the time of your application. Additional evidence submitted should establish your intent to reside in Maryland indefinitely and for a primary purpose other than to attend school. Evidence provided may include, for example:

1. Evidence showing source of financial support.
2. Evidence of substantial participation as a member of a professional, social, community, civic, political, athletic, or religious organization in Maryland, including professionally related school activities that demonstrate a commitment to the student's community of to the State of Maryland.
3. Registration as a Maryland resident with the Selective Service, if applicable.
4. Evidence that the student is married to a Maryland resident.
5. Evidence that the student attended schools in Maryland for grades K-12.
6. Evidence showing the student uses the student's Maryland address as the sole address of record for all purposes, including, for example, health and auto insurance records, bank accounts, tax records, loan and scholarship records, school records, military records, leases, etc.
7. An affidavit from a person unrelated to the student that provides objective, relevant evidence of the student's conduct demonstrating that the student's intent to reside in Maryland primarily for a purpose other than that of attending an educational institution in Maryland.
9. Voter registration in Maryland; and/or
10. A Maryland MVA-issued identification card.

Q3. I applied to the University while attending college in another state. I had not previously lived in Maryland. I was admitted as an out-of-state student. Time has passed, my circumstances have changed, and I believe I now meet the criteria for in-state status. Am I eligible to be considered for reclassification?

A. Yes. A reclassification decision is based on the facts as they exist at the time you submit your petition for reclassification ("Petition"). At the time you were admitted, you were assigned out-of-state status. With the passage of time, your personal, professional, and/economic circumstances may have changed. Thus, an examination of the facts in your Petition may now demonstrate that you are residing in Maryland for a more complex set of reasons. You may no longer be here primarily to attend a Maryland university. For example, you may hold a job in the community, have bought a house here, have a Maryland spouse, or have children in Maryland public schools.

Your original out-of-state classification is not permanent. You may present evidence in your Petition establishing the 6 criteria and supporting your intent to reside indefinitely in Maryland and for a primary purpose other than to attend an educational institution. You should outline your reasons for living in Maryland as part of your Petition. Institutions may also request additional evidence to clarify an unclear point, but the burden of proof is on the petitioner to provide clear and convincing evidence.

Q4. When I applied to the University, I was living in another state. Until last year, I was claimed as dependent on my parents' taxes, and they are not residents of Maryland. How can I demonstrate my intent to reside in Maryland indefinitely and for a primary purpose other than that of attending an educational institution?

A. You must demonstrate that you intend to make Maryland your permanent home and reside in Maryland indefinitely. The Policy's section on "Additional Evidence" provides some examples of objectively verifiable conduct upon which a university bases its decision regarding in-state status. You must provide clear, convincing, and objective evidence of your primary reason for living in Maryland (e.g., full-time employment or the presence of family). The evidence provided will be evaluated on how completely the criteria are addressed; the reliability, authenticity, credibility, and relevance of the evidence; and the totality of facts known to the university.

Q5. I applied to a University System of Maryland institution while residing in another state attending college. Before college, however, I lived my entire life in Maryland. I went to high school in Maryland. My parents have always lived in Maryland. I am financially independent but will live at home with them. Will I be admitted with in-state status?

A. Possibly, but not necessarily. Because if you were residing in another state at the time of application, you may be required to submit additional evidence, as outlined in the Policy, to demonstrate your intent to reside in Maryland. Your status will depend on your ability to establish, by clear and convincing evidence, that you are not residing in Maryland primarily for the purpose of attending a USM institution. Such factors as family circumstances, personal relationships, and employment separate from the campus will be considered by the university when assessing your primary reason for residing in the state.

Q6. I meet most of the criteria for being an in-state student. I do not qualify for in-state status in any other state. So, in these circumstances, will I be granted in-state status here? After all, a person must be considered in-state somewhere.

A. It depends. However, you cannot be classified in-state by default. The process for attaining in-state tuition status varies by state. Although classification policies across the country commonly employ the term "resident," they may define the term differently. Classification policies seldom rely on traditional notions of "residency," i.e., physical presence or domicile. They present a more rigorous set of objective tests, varying in emphasis depending on the purpose and philosophy of each state's system. If your application or Petition, including any additional

information requested, present clear and convincing evidence that you are a Maryland resident (as defined by the policy requirements), you will be classified as in-state.

Q7. My employer or guardian's employer has transferred me to Maryland. In this situation, am I still required to meet all criteria for a full 12 consecutive months (or for a shorter period indicated in the Policy) before qualifying for in-state status?

A. Yes. Generally, there is no advantage for a person who relocates to Maryland because of a change in employment location.

Q8. How important is it for me to obtain a Maryland driver's license and register my motor vehicle in Maryland?

A. These are two of the six requirements in the Policy for in-state status. If you maintain a driver's license or own/lease a motor vehicle, your license and registration must be issued by Maryland. If you maintained a license or registration in another state before relocating to Maryland, it must be changed to Maryland if you wish to be eligible for in-state status. These documents need to be changed within the time required by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA)—generally within 60 days of moving to Maryland. Plus, registering on time prevents you from paying MVA fines that may be charged.

Q9. Can my classification be affected by my finances or my financial dependency on another person?

A. Yes, it can. If you are financially dependent on a person who is not a resident of Maryland, you may be required to present additional evidence to demonstrate that you intend to reside indefinitely in Maryland for a primary purpose other than to attend school. If you are not successful, you will be assigned out-of-state status. Please review the definition of financially dependent in [Policy VIII -2.70 - VI. Definitions](#).

Q10. Is it true that some international students have in-state status?

A. Among the criteria that must be satisfied by a student desiring in-state status is the "legal ability under Federal and Maryland law to live permanently and without interruption in Maryland." Many international students entering the United States on a visa are not permitted to live permanently and without interruption in Maryland under the terms of their visas. For example, Students holding "F" or "J" visas do not have this legal ability. Most international students are residing in the state of Maryland primarily to attend an educational institution and are therefore classified as out-of-state under the Policy.

However, if you are an international student and you are able to meet all Policy criteria, including the legal ability to live in Maryland permanently and without interruption, you are eligible for in-state status. Students should consult with their university about whether their status allows them to meet all Policy criteria.

Some individuals also may be eligible for in-state status through the Maryland non-resident tuition exemption if they meet all the criteria in § 15-106.8 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

Q11. When and how is my in-state and out-of-state classification determined?

A. Your residency classification is first established at the time of admission to your USM institution, based on information you provide as part of the application process. Because the burden of demonstrating entitlement to in-state status rests with you, if you have not provided this information or if it is incomplete, you will be assigned out-of-state status. If you think you have been misclassified, contact the appropriate office managing residency determinations at your institution. Depending on circumstances, you may be asked by the institution to provide clarifying information. If there remains a question about your classification, your institution may require you to file a petition for change in classification.

Q12. What is the deadline for filing a Petition for Change in Classification for Tuition Purposes form?

A. The due date is based on the deadline set by the USM institution at which you seek to enroll (or are enrolled). If that institution has not set a deadline, the due date is the last published date to register for the forthcoming semester/term for which the change in classification is sought.

Q13. I do not meet all criteria listed in Section III of the Policy to be eligible for in-state status. Are there other bases to qualify besides meeting all the criteria in Section III?

A. You may still qualify for in-state status if you are a member of a category eligible for temporary in-state status . These categories include:

1. A full-time or part-time (at least 50 percent) regular employee of USM or a USM institution.
2. The spouse or Financially Dependent child of a full-time or part-time (at least 50 percent) regular employee of USM or a USM institution.
3. An Active Service Member, or the spouse or Financially Dependent child of an Active Service member, who is stationed in Maryland, currently residing in Maryland, or is domiciled in Maryland. Spouses and children who qualify for exemption under this provision will retain in-state status for tuition purposes as long as they are continuously enrolled, regardless of whether the Active Service Member's station assignment, residence, or domicile remains in Maryland.
4. Veterans currently living in or domiciled in Maryland who provide documentation that they were honorably discharged.

5. Individuals currently residing in Maryland who are pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30, 31, 33, or 35 of Title 38, or chapter 1606 of Title 10, of the United States Code. An individual so described will continue to retain in-state status if they remain continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters, or terms) at the same school.

6. Anyone who lives in Maryland and is using transferred Post-9/11 G.I. Bill® benefits (38 U.S.C. § 3319) and enrolls after the transferor's discharge or release from a period of at least 90 days of service in the active military, naval or air service. An individual using transferred Post-9/11 G.I. Bill® benefits (38 U.S.C. § 3319) and the transferor is a member of the uniformed services who is serving on active duty; the child or spouse of a person who died while serving on duty in the Armed Forces, on or after September 11, 2001 and is entitled to benefits under 38 U.S.C. § 3311(b)(8)-(9). An individual using benefits through the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA) (38 U.S.C. chapter 35); or is entitled to rehabilitation under 38 U.S.C. § 3102(a). An individual described in this paragraph will continue to retain in-state status if the individual is using any of the above educational benefits and remains continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters, or terms) at the same school.

7. A member of the Maryland National Guard, as defined in the Public Safety Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, who joined or subsequently serves in the Maryland National Guard to: (i) provide a critical military occupational skill; or (ii) be a member of the Air Force Critical Specialty Code as determined by the National Guard. (Maryland National Guard members may also qualify if they meet the criteria in paragraph C above.)

8. For UMGC only: a full-time active member of the Uniformed Services of the United States on active duty, or their spouse.

9. A graduate assistant during the term of their appointment at a USM institution.

10. A full-time public-school teacher in the first year of employment by a Maryland local education agency, who resides in Maryland and meets the criteria for a residency waiver in § 15-106.2 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

11. The child of a Maryland public safety employee who is eligible for the Edward T. Conroy and Joan B. Cryor Scholarship under § 18-601(d)(3)(ii) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

12. The spouse of child of a state or local Public Safety Employee (as defined in as defined in § 18-601) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland) who died as a result of or in the performance of duties.

13. A person who has completed all service hours in an AmeriCorps Program in Maryland or who has completed a service program under the Maryland Corps Program, pursuant to Title 9, subtitle 28 of the State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, as provided in § 15-106.9 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

14. A person who has been certified by the Director of the Peace Corps as having served satisfactorily as a Peace Corps volunteer and who is domiciled in Maryland, as provided in § 15-106.11 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

15. Individuals, including undocumented immigrants, who do not meet the definition of nonimmigrant alien within the meaning of 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15) and who meet all the criteria in § 15-106.8 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

16. Members of the U.S. Foreign Service who are on active duty for a period of more than 30 days and whose domicile or permanent duty station is in Maryland, and their spouses and dependents. Members and their spouses and dependents who qualify for in-state status will continue to hold in-state status while continuously enrolled at the institution, notwithstanding a subsequent change in the permanent duty station of the member to a location outside Maryland.

17. Members of the Intelligence Community, as defined in 50 U.S.C. § 3003(4), who have served in that position of employment for a period of more than 30 days and whose domicile or permanent duty station is in Maryland, and their spouses and dependents. Members and their spouses and dependents who qualify for in-state status will continue to hold in-state status while continuously enrolled at the institution, notwithstanding a subsequent change in the permanent duty station of the member to a location outside Maryland.

18. Citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau, as provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, Pub. L. No. 118-42, Div. G, Title II, § 209(b)(1)(E).

Q14. Is it true that all members of the Uniformed Services of the United States may be eligible for in-state tuition? Can you tell me which branches of the military participate and what are the guidelines for in-state tuition?

A. Members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, Marines, the Public Health Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or its predecessor, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, including the reserve components thereof, may be eligible for in-state tuition. For example, if you are an active, full-time member of the Uniformed Services, are stationed in the state of Maryland, and have the appropriate documentation, you can be eligible for in-state tuition charges. Please refer to the Policy for specifics.

Q15. If I have a residency decision pending for in-state status, and I pay out-of-state charges while the decision is pending, and then I am granted in-state status, will I be reimbursed for any out-of-state charges paid?

A. Should a change in your status be made, the tuition during the semester of the petition will be adjusted on your student account.

Q16. How do you complete the expense table in section 3, question 4 of the residency petition?

A. The expense table should outline the student's expenses, income, and sources of financial support during the entire 12-month period prior to the last day to register for the semester in which the student seeks reclassification. A "source of financial support" is how the student covered their expenses, such as income from employment, student loans, scholarships/grants, money from another person, an investment plan, etc.

For each instance of financial support, students should provide appropriate documentation that explains and documents the source of support, as indicated in the table. Documentation types include, but are not limited to, paystubs, W-2s, bank or investment statements, loan promissory notes, affidavits, or financial aid disbursement letters. Affidavits submitted for documentation purposes must be notarized and clearly state who is writing the affidavit, their relationship to the student, and the type of support provided.

Note: If a student is financially dependent for tax purposes (as defined in the Policy), completion of this table is not required. Students may indicate "N/A" or "see information for the person upon whom I am financially dependent" in the table. Any student who is not claimed on another person's tax return must complete the expense table.

Q17. Why does my university need all the documentation listed on the petition form?

A. Residency offices need all the documentation listed on the form to verify the statements you have made in your petition.

Q18. My parents provide some support, and the rest comes from scholarships and loans. Will I be considered financially dependent on my parents when I apply for in-state tuition?

A. Maybe, it depends on the proportion of educational and/or living expenses you receive from your parents. According to the Policy, a Financially Dependent student is one who has been claimed as a dependent on another person's prior year tax returns and/or receives fifty percent or more in educational or living expenses from another person.

Q19. I depend on my spouse's income for a lot of my support. Since my spouse lives with me in Maryland, and I depend on them for financial support, does that mean I'm entitled to in-state tuition?

A. Possibly, but not necessarily. You may qualify for in-state tuition status in this situation if you have satisfied the other criteria as outlined in Section III of the Policy.

Q20. I lived in a neighboring state before enrolling here two years ago, and I cannot provide any of the evidence listed in the policy for additional information that I am not an out-of-state resident. I believe that there are other facts-not listed in the policy-to provide additional evidence for my case. Will you consider those facts, even though they are not mentioned in the policy?

A. Yes. See Section III.C of the Policy: Additional Evidence. Other evidence may be provided; however, that too will be evaluated on its reliability, authenticity, credibility, and relevance.

Q21. When I joined a campus organization for prospective teachers, I became really involved with a group that tutors local children, put in many hours each week there as a volunteer, and plan to continue during the summer and after I graduate. Since I started volunteering there as a school activity, does this mean that none of it counts as evidence of commitment to my community to show that I am living in Maryland for more than my education?

A. Joining a campus organization and participating in activities typical of its members is not strong evidence of intent to live in Maryland primarily for non-educational purposes. However, if the student then becomes involved in specific activities that show an extraordinary commitment of time and effort to the student's community or the State, those activities can be stronger evidence that a student is not primarily in Maryland to attend an educational institution.

Q22. How can I learn more about my institution's residency classification information?

A. If you are interested in learning about a specific institution's classification information, you may contact that institution directly at the number and the email address listed below:

1. Bowie State University

Email: residency@bowiestate.edu

Phone: 301-860-3415

2. Coppin State University

Email: admissions@coppin.edu

Phone: 410-951-3700

3. Frostburg State University

Email: reginfo@frostburg.edu

Phone: 301-687-4736

4. Salisbury University

Email: tuitionresidency@salisbury.edu

Phone: 410-543-6547

5. Towson University

Email: admissionsresidency@towson.edu

Phone: 410-704-2113

6. University of Baltimore

Email: residency@ubalt.edu

Phone: 410-837-4825

7. University of Maryland, Baltimore

Email: residency@umaryland.edu

Phone: 410-706-7480

8. University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Email: admissions@umbc.edu

Phone: 410-455-2500

9. University of Maryland, College Park

Email: resclass@umd.edu

Phone: 301-314-9596

10. University of Maryland, Eastern Shore

Email: emse@umes.edu

Phone: 410-651-6414

11. University of Maryland, Global Campus

Email: residency@umgc.edu

Phone: 240-684-2107