

AB 1540: Integrating AB 540 Affidavit and CA Dream Act Application

NEW CA DREAM ACT APPLICATION NOW INCLUDES AB 540 AFFIDAVIT

This resource is intended to guide educators and practitioners in ensuring that colleges and universities are successfully receiving and processing the AB 540 affidavits.

Overview

The new California Dream Act Application (CADAA) now embeds the AB 540 affidavit into the 2024-25 application. The goal is to streamline the application process for undocumented students eligible to receive state-based financial aid and increase paid rates for Cal Grant and other institutional aid.

Embedding the AB 540 affidavit into the CA Dream Act is due to a new law passed by Assembly Member Mike Fong and sponsored by the California Student Aid Commission. This new law, [AB 1540 \(Fong\)](#), requires the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCC) to do the following:

- Accept the AB 540 affidavit provided to the CA Student Aid Commission as part of the CADAA.
- Share the AB 540 affidavit with any departments within the institution that require an affidavit (Admissions & Records, Admissions, or the Registrar).
- Not require students to file a separate AB 540 affidavit.
- Determine if additional documents, such as school transcripts, are needed to verify attendance and degree completion at the California school.

AB 1540 also requests that the University of California (UC) and independent higher education institutions follow these requirements.

Since not all undocumented students fill out the CA Dream Act, submitting an AB 540 affidavit directly to the school will still be possible. However, combining the two applications is another reason eligible students SHOULD be encouraged to fill out the CADAA. FAFSA filers who are AB 540-eligible must submit their affidavit directly to the school.

Current (2023-24) Process for AB 540 Affidavits & CA Dream Act Applications

Students submit their CADAA online. Once the application is considered valid, it is forwarded to every school they list on the application. Students must also submit an AB 540 affidavit to every college or university they plan to attend.

Note: Each higher education system has different AB 540 affidavits ([CCC](#), [CSU](#), and [UC](#)).

Facilitating the Implementation of AB 1540

Processing an AB 540 Affidavit embedded within the California Dream Act will require active collaboration between Financial Aid and Admissions or Registrar departments. Collaborating with the Undocumented Support Personnel on campus and sharing the process with them can also be invaluable as they can support by effectively guiding students. Currently, all information from the California Dream Act (CADA ISIR) on CSAC is downloaded by individual institutions' Financial Aid Offices through their Webgrants for Institutions portal. With this new law, the CA Dream

Act ISIR will include the AB 540 Affidavit. It will also be accessible as an AB 540 affidavit report that institutions can download separately. Applicants can access the AB 540 affidavit through their CADAA Student Aid Report.

NEW 2024-25 Options for Institutions to Receive the AB 540 Affidavits

The following options for receiving the affidavit will exist:

1. Financial Aid will download the AB 540 Affidavit report and safely transfer the information to the individual(s) responsible for oversight of the affidavits within the Admissions, Admissions & Records, or Registrar's department.
2. The individual responsible for oversight of the AB 540 affidavits can be granted limited access to the WebGrants portal and safely download the AB 540 Affidavit report.
3. Students can submit their affidavit directly to the college or university they plan to attend.

Note: UC residency offices will still require the student to complete a Statement of Legal Residence. However, a majority of the campuses will accept the AB 540 Affidavit from the 2024-25 California Dream Act Application.

What You Can DO As

Admissions Department:

- Reach out to the Financial Aid Director or Cal Grant coordinator to discuss the next steps to implement AB 1540 effectively. Possible suggestions include:
 - Create a direct connection between the Cal Grant coordinator and residency coordinator.
 - Obtain limited access to Web Grants for Institutions, specifically for the AB 540 affidavit report.
- Determine how communication will be initiated with incoming students to clarify any outstanding documentation and verify receipt of the affidavit.
- Update existing communication avenues, such as webpages and auto emails to inform students.

Financial Aid Department:

- Reach out to the Director of Admissions & Records, Registrar, or Residency Coordinator to discuss safe options to share AB 540 affidavits embedded within the CADAA.

Undocumented Student Resource Centers:

- Work with your Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Enrollment, and the Undocumented Student Task Force to facilitate discussions between the Admissions and Financial Aid departments at your college and university.
- Propose possible solutions such as access to Web Grants.

Individuals or organizations that help undocumented students access higher education (college access organizations, high schools, adult schools, and noncredit programs):

- Encourage undocumented and other eligible students to fill out the CADAA.
- Let your students know that the AB 540 affidavit will now be included within the CADAA.
- Connect with the colleges or universities where most of your students attend and determine any specific procedures they must follow.

Immigrants Rising helps you make decisions based on your potential, not your perceived limits. Visit our website so you can see what's possible: immigrantsrising.org. For inquiries regarding this resource, please contact Nancy Jodaitis, Director of Higher Education at nancy@immigrantsrising.org. Released 4/2024.