

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Florida House Bill 851 (H.B. 851)**What is H.B. 851?**

H.B. 851, passed during the 2014 legislative session, is a law that, in part, gives students who attended a Florida secondary school for three consecutive years before graduation—regardless of immigration status—the opportunity to pursue higher education at in-state tuition rates, should they apply for admission within 24 months after graduation. Previously, certain Florida students were required to pay out-of-state rates to attend Florida's colleges and universities. Not necessarily. Many immigrants already qualify for in-state rates if they reside in Florida. Please contact your individual school's admissions office for more information.

What is in-state tuition?
In-state tuition is the rate charged to students who reside in Florida.

It is unclear whether you will be eligible. Although H.B. 851 does not take effect until July 1, 2014, if you applied for enrollment in a college or university within 24 months of your graduation, you may still qualify. You should contact your individual school's admissions office as soon as possible to apply and/or inquire further.

What is a secondary school for purposes of H.B. 851? Will other types of schooling, such as Florida Virtual School, homeschooling, or G.E.D. programs qualify

H.B. 851 does not define secondary school, but Florida Statute 1003.413 defines secondary schools as "schools that primarily serve students in grades 6 through 12." It is unclear whether other types of schooling would allow a student to qualify. The law requires that a student attend school for three consecutive years and provide an official high school transcript. Florida Virtual School or a homeschool program, which are both recognized by the state and regulated by the Department of Education, may qualify. At this time, it is unclear if a student with a G.E.D. certification can apply. Students in these situations should contact their individual school's admissions office for more information.

A. You are still eligible for in-state tuition rates, but you will not be reclassified. H.B. 851 treats qualifying students as nonresident students but allows them to be eligible for an out-of-state fee waiver, making them eligible for the in-state rate. You must contact your individual school's admissions office to obtain information on the waiver.

It is a waiver given to nonresident students that reduces the out-of-state tuition rate to in-state rates.

A. There are a few restrictions. Under the Florida Board of Governors' regulations, the number of nonresident students cannot exceed 10% of the system-wide student body. If the number of nonresident students, which includes those who qualify under H.B. 851, exceeds 10%, then even students who qualify for in-state rates may still be required to pay the nonresident rate. Additionally, H.B. 851 requires that veterans who are eligible for out-of-state fee waivers receive preference over other eligible students. Nonresident veterans will also be considered part of the 10% limit and will be prioritized over other students who qualify under H.B. 851.

B. 51. At this time, it is unclear whether colleges and universities will request proof on a yearly basis. Until further guidance is issued, you should maintain documentation of your eligibility until you finish your post-secondary program.

D. No, eligibility under H.B. 851 does not make you eligible for state financial support. You may be eligible for private scholarships, however. Please contact your school's financial aid office for more information.