



HCC

Florida Residency Guidelines How to Apply for In-State Tuition

The HCC College online application includes a **Florida Residency** section which must be completed to determine residency for tuition purposes. Applicants who provide insufficient documentation in the Florida Residency section of the online application will be classified as out-of-state for tuition purposes and will have to present additional documentation to the Student Services department on campus. All documentation must be submitted by the end of the drop/add period for the semester in which you are enrolled. Applicants who do not qualify for Florida residency do not need to provide any documentation of their out-of-state status.

What this means: *It is **your responsibility** to prove you are a Florida resident.* Living in Florida does not automatically qualify you for in-state tuition. Even if you were born and raised in Florida your whole life, you will need to provide proof of residency. Hillsborough Community College will determine your status based on the documentation you provide, according to Florida statutes and the <http://www.fldoe.org/cc/educators/Disability/residency.asp>.

Information Resources

DHSMV Database – HCC has access to the Division of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle (DHSMV) Database which can be used for the purpose of verifying residency documents such as driver's license and vehicle registration histories for students and their parents.

Why it's important: You will be charged out-of-state tuition if you do not supply this information by the end of the drop & add period for the semester for which you are enrolled. **The out-of-state rate is approximately three times the in-state rate.**

What to do: In order to be classified as in-state for tuition purposes, you must help HCC to determine:

1. Whether you are dependent or independent
2. A Florida resident
3. Documents to verify the information

Verify with your home campus AR&R office that your documentation has been confirmed and you are classified as an "in-state" resident.

Note that some categories of students are exempt from the residency process. The most common of those are active duty military members stationed in Florida, students using Florida Pre-Paid, and students transferring within a year as Florida residents from another public Florida higher education institution, students who are documented homeless, or students who were in the custody of DCF at age 18. Other exemptions may apply. For a list of the exceptions, see Sections 2.0 and 4.0 of the [Guidelines on Florida Residency for Tuition Purposes](#). These students will still be required to provide documentation of their exemption eligibility.

Bright Futures students are not exempt from this process. Florida **Pre-Pay is exempt!**

STEP 1: Determining If You Are Eligible to Establish In-State Residency

To be eligible to establish Florida residency for tuition purposes, you must be a U.S. Citizen, permanent resident alien or legal alien. For other eligible non-citizen categories, see Section 2.4 of the [Guidelines on Florida Residency for Tuition Purposes](#).

STEP 2: Determining Your Dependency Status

Your dependency status is important because it determines whether the documentation you provide is yours; or your parent's, step-parent(s), or legal guardians. You will be asked to provide documentation to confirm that you meet the independency or dependency criteria. This documentation is not the same as the documentation that will be required to prove your residency status.

Independent Student. You will be considered independent for tuition purposes if you meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. You are at least 24 years of age or older by the first day of classes of the term for which residency status is sought at a Florida institution.
2. You are married.
3. You have children who receive more than half of their support from you.
4. You have other dependents who live with and receive more than half of their support from you.
5. You are a veteran of the United States Armed Forces or are currently serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
6. Both of your parents are deceased, or you were (until age 18) one of the following: (a) a ward/dependent of the court or (b) in foster care.
7. You are determined an unaccompanied homeless by a school district homeless liaison, emergency shelter or transitional housing program.
8. You are working on a master's or doctoral degree during the term for which residency status is sought at a Florida institution.

Dependent Student. You will be considered dependent for tuition purposes if you are eligible to be claimed by one of your parent(s), step-parent or legal guardian whether or not living with them according to the federal income tax code.

In general, the IRS requires that a "qualifying child" or "dependent" meet six tests:

1. The child must be the claimant's son, daughter, or stepchild.
2. The child must be
 - (a) under age 19 at the end of the year and younger than the claimant or spouse (if filing jointly),
 - (b) under age 24 at the end of the year and a full-time student and younger than the claimant or spouse (if filing jointly), or
 - (c) any age if permanently and totally disabled.
3. The child must have lived with the claimant for more than half of the year subject to IRS exceptions.
4. The child must not have provided more than half of his/her own support for the year.
5. The child is not filing a joint return for the year (unless that joint return is filed only as a claim for refund).

6. If the child meets the rules to be a qualifying child of more than one person, the person claiming residency must be the person entitled to claim the child as a qualifying child.

STEP 3: Determining Your Residency Status

Applicants who are independent according to the criteria above will be required to submit documentation supporting their own residency. Applicants who are dependent according to the criteria above will be required to submit documentation to confirm their parent, step-parent, or legal guardian's residency.

DHSMV Database – HCC has access to the Division of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle (DHSMV) Database which can be used for the purpose of verifying residency documents such as driver's license and vehicle registration histories for students and their parents.

Acceptable Documents for In-State Tuition Application:

You will have to submit documentation that you (or your parent, step-parent, or legal guardians if you are a dependent) have been a Florida resident for at least 12 months prior to the first day of classes of the regular term for which you are enrolling (the "12-month qualifying period"). **At least two of the following documents must be submitted with dates that evidence the 12-month qualifying period.** Additionally, there must be no information contradicting your residency claim.

First Tier (at least one of the two documents submitted must be from this list)

1. A Florida voter's registration card.
2. A Florida driver's license.
3. A State of Florida identification card.
4. A Florida vehicle registration.
5. Proof of a permanent home in Florida which is occupied as a primary residence by the individual or by the individual's parent if the individual is a dependent child.
6. Proof of a homestead exemption in Florida.
7. Transcripts from a Florida high school for multiple years (2 or more years) if the Florida high school diploma or GED was earned within the last 12 months.
8. Proof of permanent full-time employment in Florida for at least 30 hours per week for a consecutive 12-month period.

Second Tier (may be used in conjunction with one document from First Tier)

1. A declaration of domicile in Florida.
2. A Florida professional or occupational license.
3. Florida incorporation.
4. A document evidencing family ties in Florida.
5. Proof of membership in a Florida-based charitable or professional organization.
6. Any other documentation that supports your request for resident status, including, but not limited to, utility bills and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; a lease agreement and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; or an official state, federal, or court document evidencing legal ties to Florida.

Unacceptable Documents

- Hunting/fishing license

- Library card
- Shopping club/rental card
- Birth certificate
- Passport

Although your documentation must be dated at least 12 months prior to the first day of classes in the regular term, you must submit your documentation and have your residency status resolved before the end of the drop/add period for the earliest starting class for which you are registered within that semester. Check your schedule to find the drop/add period for each of your classes. Documentation submitted after the drop/add period will not become effective until the following semester, and must follow the Reclassification guidelines described in the next section.

Reclassification

If you have been paying out-of-state tuition because you **were not** a Florida resident and believe you are now eligible, you must provide HCC with at least **three** documents from the lists above. At least one of the documents must come from First Tier. The documentation must show that you (or if you are a dependent according to the criteria above, then your parent, step-parent, or legal guardian) have been a resident for at least 12 months prior to the first day of the class for which you are seeking in-state tuition. Your documentation must convincingly demonstrate that the establishment of permanent legal residence in Florida is not for the sole purpose of pursuing a postsecondary education. At that time, you will be asked to complete a new affidavit!

To discuss or change your residency, please visit the Student Services Department on any campus.

Please note that this document is intended to be a summary of Florida Department of Education <http://www.fldoe.org/cc/educators/Disability/residency.asp> and are subject to change without prior notice. HCC adheres to state statute, rules of the two higher education governing boards in Florida, and statewide guidelines developed by college and university administrators in conjunction with the Statewide Residency Committee and the Florida Department of Education.