

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Refugee Eligibility, Documents & Aid

With the expanding use of a greater variety of immigration protections for displaced persons in the U.S. and emerging state legislation expanding access to in-state tuition for forcibly displaced students, it can be challenging for students and staff to understand what they are eligible for. Below is a breakdown of different statuses displaced students may present, a round up of resources that can help refugee and other displaced students, college and university staff, and refugee-serving organizations understand refugee eligibility for higher education admissions, financial aid, and in-state tuition, and finally, examples of types of documentation students may use to demonstrate their status when seeking financial aid or in-state tuition.

STATUS	Origin/Journey	Documents	Access to Federal Financial Aid?	Clear Pathway to US Citizenship?
Refugee	Resettled in the US via the US Refugee Admissions Program	I-94, SSN, EAD	Yes	Yes
Parolee	Temporary status- mostly Afghans, Ukrainians, Venezuelans, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Haitians	Foreign passport with CBP PAROLED stamp; EAD with C11 parolee category; I-94	Varies*	No
Asylee	Approved or granted asylum while in the US	Form I-94 with a stamp or notation of “asylum granted indefinitely” or with an admission class of “AY”; USCIS Approval Letter.	Yes	Yes
Asylum- seeker	Applied for asylum upon arrival in the US and still awaiting approval	Receipt of asylum application, EAD with C8 asylum-pending category	No	Varies
Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holder	DHS may designate a foreign country for TPS due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely. USCIS may grant TPS to eligible nationals of certain countries, who are already in the US.	Approval notice with an I-94, Arrival/Departure Record, EAD with A12 TPS category	No	No

* “Parolee” : must be paroled for at least one year, and must be able to provide evidence from the USCIS that they are in the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a U.S. citizen or permanent resident)

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Documentation

Below are examples of documentation that each population may have to indicate their status and depending on the states they are located in. Note that every case is different and a student may present other valid forms of documentation.

Refugees will have an I-94 (see photo), social security card, and Employment Authorization Document (EAD) that can serve as and should be accepted as identification. Eventually, they may also have a state ID or Driver's license and, after one year of arrival they may apply for a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

Examples of I-94 documents



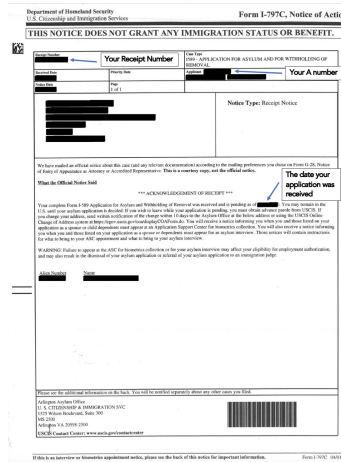
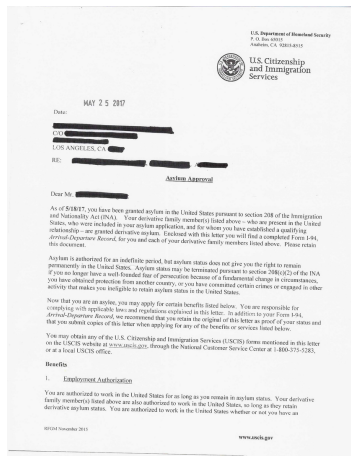
Parolees- Those granted humanitarian parole may have a foreign passport with CBP PAROLED stamp and/or parole COA notation; EAD with C11 parolee category; Electronic Form I-94 with OAR, PAR or DT COA;



Asylees- Those who have been granted asylum may have a form I-94 with a stamp or notation of "asylum granted indefinitely" or with an admission class of "AY"; and, USCIS Approval Letter. Similarly to refugees they may have a social security card, and EAD with a AO5 category, a state ID or a Driver's License.

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Asylum-Seeker- Once an individual applies for asylum, they will receive a receipt of asylum application and later they may have an EAD with C8 asylum-pending category, a social security card and eventually a state ID or Driver's License.



Temporary Protected Status (TPS holders)- Once approved, TPS holder will receive approval notice with an I-94, Arrival/Departure Record. They may have an EAD with a A12 category. Countries with TPS Designation can be found [here](#).

Employment Authorization Documentation (EADs) and Permanent Resident Cards (Green Cards)

- EADS include a “category” and you can look up what immigration status that “category” is associated with [here](#)
- A lawful permanent resident (LPR) or “green card” recipient will also include a “category” that indicates their “Immigrant Class of Admissions” and you can determine those [here](#)



Additional Resources

- [How to look up the I-94](#)
- [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Access to Financial Aid & In-State Tuition

Federal Financial Aid- There are certain eligible non-citizens, including refugees and asylees, who can access federal financial aid, see [FSA](#) for more information.

Types of Federal financial aid available to eligible non-citizens:

- Federal Grants: Pell Grant, FSEOG and TEACH ([More information here](#))
 - Federal Pell Grant and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) are both available to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need and students who **have not earned** a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree. These grants can be combined.
 - In some cases, students enrolled in a post baccalaureate teacher certification program may receive a Federal Pell Grant.
 - Pell Grant has a **lifetime eligibility limited to 12 semesters** or the equivalent.
 - Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant. This grant is accessible to **undergraduate, post baccalaureate, or graduate students** enrolled in programs designed to prepare them to teach in a high-need field at the elementary or secondary school level.
- Loans
 - Direct Subsidized Loans are available to eligible undergraduate students with demonstrated financial need.
 - Direct Unsubsidized Loans to eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.
 - Direct PLUS Loans are loans made to graduate or professional students and parents of dependent undergraduate students.
 - Direct Consolidation Loans to combine all eligible federal student loans into a single loan with a single loan servicer.
- Work-Study funds
 - Available to **undergraduate, graduate, and professional students** with financial need.
 - WSF can be used by full-time or part-time students and, administered by schools participating in the Federal Work-Study Program.

Below are additional resources to support certain populations of displaced students in applying for federal student aid.

- NASFAA- [Tip Sheet for Financial Aid Administrators Working with Refugee and Asylee Students](#)
- Switchboard Toolkit: Accessing Federal Student Aid for Refugee Youth and Adults: [Resources and Tips for Successful Application Processing](#)
- For Afghan arrivals, see the [Dear Colleague Letter](#) from FSA and related [FAQs](#)
- There is special guidance for Ukrainians in the [FSA Handbook](#)
- The Department of Ed. Brochure presenting the types of federal aid available to eligible non-citizens for Graduate & Professional Students

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

- NOTE, if an individual has already [completed a professional or Bachelors' Degree](#) they are NOT eligible for **most** federal financial student aid.

In-State Tuition- Each state has a unique set of laws and policies that regulate access to in-state tuition. For some states it is a law or legislative regulation, while for some states there are policies of the state board of education or state system that regulate in-state tuition eligibility. A growing number of states have implemented statewide policies expanding access to in-state tuition to individuals with refugee and other humanitarian status. [Refugee Advocacy Lab](#) created a comprehensive list of access to in-state tuition, broken down by state and immigration status. For refugee access to in-state tuition, there is also state by state data on the [Higher Ed Immigration Portal](#). The Portal also includes information about access for undocumented students.

In-state Financial Aid -Some states may offer need or merit financial assistance for undergraduate, graduate or professional school in the forms of grants and work-study funds. Find all the States Higher Education Agencies contact information [here](#)