



CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT WASHINGTON STATE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Residency policies are set by the State of Washington (RCW 28B. 15) and applied uniformly throughout Washington's public colleges and universities. At Central Washington University, the Office of Admissions processes applications for a change in undergraduate/graduate residency status.

The information in this pamphlet is intended to serve as a general guide to residency requirements. Washington law is subject to change. To the extent any statement in this pamphlet conflicts with any provision of the law, the law will override this pamphlet.

Only students that are admitted to CWU will have their Residency Questionnaires reviewed.

Reviewing Residency questionnaires is a time consuming and cumbersome process, therefore Residency Questionnaires will not be accepted **more than one quarter** prior to the quarter for which a change in status is being requested (example: seeking a change in residency status for Fall quarter should be turned in Spring quarter). The deadline for submission of the questionnaire and documentation is the 30th calendar day of the quarter.

This document contains answers to eight of the most commonly asked questions about establishing residency in the State of Washington. It also explains the residency policy for students who are **FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT** from their parents or legal guardians'.

Financially Dependent students

Any student that is claimed on their parents' or legal guardians' federal income tax return or receives a significant portion of their cost of living expenses from a parent or legal guardian.

The dependent student is a resident of the state in which their parents' or legal guardians' are. Therefore, if the state is other than Washington the student is not eligible for Washington State residency.

A **financially dependent** student who has one or both parents or legal guardians that have maintained a Washington domicile for at least one year immediately prior to commencement of the semester or quarter for which the student has registered may qualify as a WA resident. The parent that has a bona fide domicile in the state of Washington should fill out section 2 of the Residency Questionnaire.

Financially Independent students

Please be aware that in order to meet the residency requirement for establishing a domicile (a person's true, fixed and permanent home and place of habitation) in Washington, **there is a one-year waiting period, which does not begin until you have changed all supporting, documents to Washington State.** These documents include vehicle and voter registration, driver's license, bank accounts, lease or home purchase agreements, and income statements. Additionally, students seeking to establish residency as an independent person must demonstrate income of at least 51% of their cost of living for the prior and current calendar years and may not be claimed as a dependant by a parent or guardian during the year in which they apply for residency or the year prior to applying for residency.

Establishing Residency

1. What are the requirements to be considered financially independent?

First, you cannot be claimed as a dependent on your parents' tax return for the prior and current calendar years.

Additionally, you must also be able to document enough income, in the prior and current calendar years, to show that you have been paying a significant portion of your expenses in that period. For example, if you were applying for a change in residence classification effective fall quarter 2006, you would have to show that you had been paying over half your expenses for 2005, and for the first eight months of 2006.

Income can include the following: employment, financial aid, scholarships, and irrevocable trust funds (if the trust was set up before you entered high school). If you are a nonresident student, the amount of income required for financial independence is based upon your ability to pay a significant portion of the estimated cost of education determined by the Office of Financial Aid.

2. What is required to establish a bona fide domicile in the state of Washington for tuition purposes?

An independent student must prove that he/she has been both physically present in the state, and has become permanently domiciled in the state primarily for purposes other than education. The establishment of domicile must have occurred twelve months prior to the beginning of the quarter in which he/she is seeking residency status. (WAC250- 18- 020).

If the student is **enrolled for more than six credits per quarter**, the student is presumed to be in the state primarily for educational purposes, and that period of enrollment cannot be counted toward the establishment of a permanent domicile. The student can overcome this presumption by providing evidence sufficient to prove that he/she has established a domicile in Washington primarily for purposes other than education. (WAC 250- 18-030)

3. What factors are considered in determining whether a student has established a domicile primarily for purposes other than education?

CWU considers the following factors in determining whether an independent student has established a bona fide domicile in Washington primarily for purposes other than education:

- a) Registration or payment of taxes or fees on any motor vehicle, mobile home, travel trailer, boat, or other item of personal property owned or *used* by the student. This registration or payment of fees must have occurred 12 months prior to commencement of the quarter for which application is made;
- b) Valid Washington driver's license for the one year immediately prior to the commencement of the quarter;
- c) Permanent full- time employment during the year immediately prior to commencement of quarter;
- d) Address and pertinent facts listed on a true copy of federal and state income tax return for the calendar year prior to the year in which application is made;
- e) Location of voter registration for one year immediately prior to the quarter application is made;
- f) Purchase of primary residence, lease agreement, or monthly rental receipts for one year prior to quarter application is made;
- g) Residence status of student in schools attended outside the state of Washington;
- h) Location of checking, savings accounts, and/ or safety deposit box one year prior to quarter application is made. Additional factors may be considered, at the request of a student, as supporting documentation of one- year domicile. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Address listed with selective service
 - b) Location of membership in professional, business, civic or other organizations.

Applications are considered on a case- by- case basis. **The student bears the significant burden of proving establishment of domicile in WA primarily for purposes other than education.** WAC 250- 18- 030.

Immigration Issues

4. I have Permanent Resident immigration status. Can I qualify for Washington state residency?

Yes, if your application for adjustment to Permanent Resident status was filed at least 12 months prior to the beginning of the quarter for which you are requesting classification as a Washington resident, and if you meet the requirements listed under question #3 (with the exception of registering to vote).

5. What types of visa are accepted for establishing residency in Washington?

You can establish Washington State residency for tuition and fee purposes if you are on an A, E, G, I, or K visa and fulfill the requirements listed under question #3 (with the exception of registering to vote).

The Application Process

6. If I think I qualify as a Washington resident, how do I apply?

Pick up a Residency Questionnaire in the Office of Admissions, Mitchell Hall

OR online at <http://www.cwu.edu/~cwuadmis/readmissions.html>

OR call toll free 866/298-4968 or 509/963-2461 to have one mailed to you.

7. When should I submit my application and documentation?

No earlier than the quarter prior to the one for which you are applying, and no later than the 30th calendar day of the quarter for which you are applying. If you want a decision before tuition is due, you should submit your application at least 6 weeks before tuition is due.

8. What happens if a decision is not made by the time tuition is due?

You must pay (no later than the end of the 5th day of the beginning of the quarter) the resident portion of your fees while awaiting a determination of your residency status. If you are determined to be a resident for fee-paying purposes, your student account will be credited.

A student may be classified as a resident for tuition and fee purposes if: student can prove financial independence; and has established a bona fide domicile in the state of Washington, primarily for purposes other than education. Proof of both financial independence and establishment of a bona fide domicile must be shown for a period of one year immediately prior to the first day of the quarter for which the student has registered.

For rules pertaining to financially dependent students, see Revised Code of Washington 28B. 15.012 and Washington Administrative Code 250- 18- 020 and 250- 18- 040. These codes can be found on the CWU Admissions web page, <http://www.cwu.edu/~cwuadmis/residency.html>

Central Washington University
Office of Admissions
Mitchell Hall
400 E University Way 98926-7463
Telephone 866/298-4968 or 509/963-2461
[http:// www/cwu.edu](http://www.cwu.edu)