



SENATE BILL 421: CC/In-State Tuition & Board Elections.

2021-2022 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	February 28, 2022
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Kara McCraw Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	S.L. 2021-133		

OVERVIEW: *S.L. 2021-133 (SB 421) authorizes in-state tuition rates at a community college for the school year immediately following a student's graduation from high school for an individual who meets all of the following:*

- *Is a United States citizen.*
- *Satisfied the qualifications for assignment to a public school in the State.*
- *Was enrolled in a North Carolina public school unit for the entire final school year before receiving a high school diploma.*
- *Was unable, due to lack of evidence, to establish residency for tuition purposes through the RDS.*

This act became effective August 25, 2021.

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 115D-39 requires that students attending community colleges must meet in-state residency requirements under G.S. 116-143.1 (requiring one-year of domicile in the State) to receive in-state tuition rates, unless the students meet certain exceptions. Exceptions include:

- Employer-paid tuition for employees working at business in the State.
- Certain out-of-state students whose families were transferred by business, industry, or civilian families transferred by the Armed Forces.
- Certain emergency personnel with permanent duty stations in the State who do not qualify for other waivers for courses to support their organizations' training needs.
- Refugees who have lawfully entered the United States and are living in the State.
- Nonresidents of the United States who have resided in the State for 12 months and have filed an immigration petition.
- Persons lawfully admitted to the United States graduating from a public school in the State.
- Persons lawfully admitted to the United States sponsored by nonprofit entities accepting financial responsibility for the student's tuition and fees.

G.S. 116-143.1 establishes the process for determining resident status to receive in-state tuition, and requires an individual to submit information to the Residency Determination Service (RDS) administered by the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) to show proof of residency. To qualify as a resident for tuition purposes, a person must have established legal residence (domicile) in North Carolina and maintained that legal residence for at least 12 months immediately prior to his or her classification as a resident for tuition purposes. There is a presumption that an individual with living parents has the same legal residence, though this can be rebutted by evidence of age and general circumstance, including evidence of graduation from a North Carolina high school.

Jeffrey Hudson
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

Senate Bill 421

Page 2

G.S. 115D-2.2, as enacted by S.L. 2021-90, establishes the process for electing the members of the State Board of Community Colleges.

BILL ANALYSIS: Section 1 of SB 421 authorizes in-state tuition rates at a community college for the school year immediately following a student's graduation from high school for an individual who meets all of the following:

- Is a United States citizen.
- Satisfied the qualifications for assignment to a public school in the State.
- Was enrolled in a North Carolina public school unit for the entire final school year before receiving a high school diploma.
- Was unable, due to lack of evidence, to establish residency for tuition purposes through the RDS.

Section 2 changes the word "select" to the word "elect" in the State Board of Community Colleges election statute.

EFFECTIVE DATE: SB 421 became effective August 25, 2021.

BACKGROUND: Under North Carolina common law, an individual under the age of 18 cannot establish domicile independent of the individual's parent, because a minor is non sui juris (lacking the legal capacity to act on his or her own behalf). Thayer v. Thayer, 187 N.C. 573 (1924).