



NCSEAA
RESIDENCY DETERMINATION
SERVICE (RDS)

Just the Basics

North Carolina law has made it easier for students to receive a consistent residency status whether you decide to attend a public, private, or community college. Over **300,000 students** each year are served by RDS, allowing many to qualify for in-state tuition and state financial aid.

Why?

Completing RDS gives you the opportunity to qualify for in-state tuition at NC public colleges and universities, which can save thousands of dollars on tuition. It also gives you the opportunity to be eligible for North Carolina scholarships, including the Next NC Scholarship and the Need-Based Scholarship for Private College Students, which is money that does **not** have to be paid back.*

What?

The RDS is an online application that provides students with a determination as to whether they qualify for in-state tuition at NC public colleges and universities, along with their Residency Certification Number (RCN). For those with more complex circumstances, there is an appeal process where an RDS specialist works one-on-one with you to gather further information to reach a determination.

When?

RDS should be completed **before** you complete your college admissions applications and within 15 months of when you plan to enroll in a college. Most students will typically complete the process near the beginning of their senior year of high school.

Where?

Go to NCResidency.org to complete the RDS application. You can log in with your College for North Carolina (CFNC) account. Don't have a CFNC account? Create one at CFNC.org

Required Information

RDS verifies the information you provide with other government databases to confirm your residency. You may need your Social Security Number (SSN), NC tax filing status, vehicle registration, driver's license, voter registration, and other information about you or your parents' residency in NC. Once complete, you will receive an **RCN**, which is a unique identifier for you. When you apply for admission at any NC college, the college may ask for your RCN to request data from RDS verifying your residency status.

**Certain restrictions apply*



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Special Circumstances

Some students may have unique or special circumstances that prevent the RDS system from determining your residency status. If you receive a non-resident determination, but you believe you should be considered a resident of NC, you may **appeal** the RDS determination. You will have the opportunity to show RDS additional documents and proof of residency in NC.

Parents

For dependent students, it is their parents' information that will determine in-state residency. Dependent students will need their parents'/legal guardians' information to complete the RDS, including their permanent address, tax return information, vehicle registration, driver's license, and other specific residence information.

Financially Independent Students

Students that are at least 19 years of age and that support themselves financially will not need their parental information. Students that support themselves financially will need to prove they are **financially independent**, including providing at least one-half of the support needed by the student to live and pay tuition and fees. They also need to provide their W2s, 1099s, or paystubs documenting wages for the last 18 months; proof of address and living continuously in NC the last 12 months; and other information about their residence in North Carolina.

Pro Tips

Complete RDS first – North Carolina colleges will need your RCN number to know whether you are an in-state student, so complete RDS before starting your college applications.

Take your time – RDS verifies the information you enter with other government agencies, so the information needs to match. Double check the information you enter for accuracy.

Students and parents should work together – For dependent students, you will need your parents' information to demonstrate residency, so it is easier when students and parents complete the application together.

Save your RCN number – You may need it at a later time for future college applications.

Made a mistake or failed to provide complete information? Submit a Reconsideration to correct errors or to provide parent information that you did not include previously.

Have a unique circumstance? Complete RDS and submit an appeal to work with an RDS specialist who can assist you. A student may request an appeal within 10 calendar days of receiving a determination. After requesting the appeal, the student has 25 calendar days to submit the documentation requested.

For more information, go to NCResidency.org