

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:
In-State Residency Classification for Students Displaced by Hurricane Maria (2017)**

1) Who will qualify for the in-state tuition benefit?

Individuals who have evacuated to Massachusetts from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are eligible for a temporary in-state tuition rate through the Spring, 2018 semester.

2) Will student evacuees from PR/USVI also qualify for financial aid?

As U.S. citizens, students from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands will continue to remain eligible to participate in federal financial aid. However, students will not be eligible for state financial assistance because they will not have established full residency in the Commonwealth.

3) How much will the average student save?

Savings will vary by institution, but here are some examples:

Campus	2017-18 In-State Tuition Rates (Exclusive of Fees)	2017-18 Out of State Tuition Rates (Exclusive of Fees)
Bunker Hill Community College, Boston	\$72.00 per 3-credit course	\$690.00 per 3-credit course
Holyoke Community College	\$72.00 per 3-credit course	\$690.00 per 3-credit course
Westfield State University	\$485.00 per semester	\$3525.00 per semester
University of Massachusetts Lowell	\$7,400 per semester	\$15, 932.50 per semester

Tuition and fees are listed on the web sites of individual campuses. Campus links and a map of the Massachusetts public higher education system are available [here](#).

4) What verification of enrollment at PR/USVI institutions will students need to provide?

Students may be asked to provide any of the following:

- ✓ Proof of residency in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or the US Virgin Islands
- ✓ Verification that the student and/or his or her family was displaced by Hurricane Maria
- ✓ A completed FAFSA (federal financial aid form)
- ✓ Proof of citizenship or lawful immigrant status, consistent with Section 3.2 of the BHE's policy on residency status for tuition classification purposes

5) Will in-state tuition be available to PR/USVI residents who were not previously enrolled in a post-secondary institution, but wish to enroll during their stay in Massachusetts?

Yes, provided they can document their displacement due to Hurricane Maria.

6) How many students do you estimate will be eligible for the in-state tuition rate under this policy?

At this time it is believed that the number of evacuees will be in the hundreds, not thousands. Although more evacuees are expected to arrive in Massachusetts and other states after the holidays, there are currently fewer than three hundred evacuees attending classes and programs

at our public campuses. Many are enrolled in English Language Learner (ELL) programs and lack the English proficiency needed to participate in for-credit college programs covered by the in-state tuition benefit.

7) What will this initiative cost Massachusetts taxpayers?

If we assume that an evacuee from Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands would have been unlikely to enroll as an out-of-state student, then his or her in-state tuition payments would constitute net revenue for the state or campus. Indeed, the number of students from Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Island who enrolled in Massachusetts public colleges and universities as out-of-state students prior to Hurricane Maria hitting the islands was very small; 45 students at UMass campuses, 10 at the state universities and none at the community colleges for the Fall 2016 semester.

8) Does the benefit cover all of a student's college costs?

No. The in-state tuition benefit only applies to tuition. There is no discount or waiver of academic fees that comprise a substantial part of the cost of attendance.

9) Does the benefit extend to graduate students, as well as undergraduates?

Yes.

10) Will the in-state tuition benefit expire after this academic year?

The Board of Higher Education has granted the Commissioner the authority to extend the in-state tuition benefit into the Fall 2018 semester "as circumstances warrant."

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