



**Arizona Department of Education
Arizona Residency Guidelines
9/22/11**

INTRODUCTION

Generally, under Arizona law, only Arizona residents are entitled to a free public education. The Arizona Department of Education (“Department”) is a designated steward of state education tax dollars and is responsible for providing state aid to school districts and charter schools for students who reside in Arizona. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-823(J), a school district or charter school may not include non-resident pupils in their student count and may not obtain state aid for those pupils. The residency of a student is determined by the residency of the parent or guardian with whom the student lives. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the school districts and charter schools that receive state aid to ensure that their student/parent residency information is accurate and verifiable. The Department may audit schools to ensure that only Arizona resident students are reported for state aid. Any school district or charter school that cannot demonstrate the accuracy of any student’s residency status may be required to repay the state aid received for that student.

VERIFIABLE DOCUMENTATION

A.R.S. § 15-802(B) requires school districts and charter schools to obtain and maintain verifiable documentation of Arizona residency upon enrollment in an Arizona public school. This document is designed to assist school districts and charter schools in meeting the legal requirements of the statute.

The documentation required by A.R.S. § 15-802 **must be provided each time a student enrolls in a school district or charter school in this state, and reaffirmed during the district or charter’s annual registration process via the district or charter’s annual registration form. The documentation supporting Arizona residency should be maintained according to the school’s records retention schedule.**

In general, students will fall into one of two groups: (1) those whose parent or legal guardian is able to provide documentation bearing his or her name and address; and (2) those whose parent/legal guardian cannot document his or her own residence because of extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to, that the family’s household is multi-generational. Different documentation is required for each circumstance.

1. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that maintains his or her own residence: The parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a form indicating his or her name, the name of the school district, school site, or charter school in which the student is being enrolled, and provide **one** of the following documents, which bear the parent or legal guardian’s full name and residential address or physical description of the property where the student resides (no P.O. Boxes):

- Valid Arizona driver’s license, Arizona identification card
- Valid Arizona motor vehicle registration
- Valid United States passport
- Property deed

- Mortgage documents
- Property tax bill
- Rental agreement or lease (including Section 8 agreement)
- Utility bill (water, electric, gas, cable, phone)
- Bank or credit card statement
- W-2 wage statement
- Payroll stub
- Certificate of tribal enrollment or other identification issued by a recognized Indian tribe
- Other documentation from a state, tribal, or federal agency (Social Security Administration, Veterans' Administration, Arizona Department of Economic Security, etc.)

2. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that does not maintain his or her own residence: The parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a form indicating his or her name, the name of the school district, school site, or charter school in which the student is being enrolled, and submit a signed, notarized affidavit bearing the name and address of the person who maintains the residence where the student lives attesting to the fact that the student resides at that address, along with a document from the bulleted list above bearing the name and address of the person who maintains the residence. A model affidavit is available for schools at: <http://www.azed.gov/finance/files/2011/10/arizona-residency-guidelines.pdf> .

USE OF AND RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS BY SCHOOLS

School officials must **retain a copy** of the attestations or affidavits and copies of any supporting documentation presented for each student (photocopies acceptable) that school officials believe establish validity. Documents presented may be different in each circumstance, and unique to the living situation of the student. Documents retained by the school district or charter school may be used as an indicia of residency; however, documentation is subject to audit by the Department. Personally identifiable information other than name and address (SSN, account numbers, etc.) should be redacted from the documentation either by the parent/guardian or the school official prior to filing.