

## APPLYING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONS GRADUATE PROGRAMS

### GUIDE FOR PRE-HEALTH DREAMERS STUDENTS

#### *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals*

#### *DACA or Dreamers*

**Dreamers** or recipients of the **Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals** Policy (DACA) are students that are protected from deportation as a result of having immigrated to the United States at a young age without US government authorized papers. Students currently holding this classification are considered lawful members of society and are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number, work permits and driver's and professional licenses.

#### ***PLEASE NOTE:***

The Supreme Court of the United States issued a decision on June 18, 2020, that found the Trump Administration's termination of DACA violated federal law. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is still accepting DACA renewals; however, the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) recommends that renewal applicants seek legal representation from an attorney or an Office of Legal Access Programs-accredited representative before applying for renewal.

According to the NILC, USCIS should begin to accept first-time DACA applications; however, the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) recommends that renewal applicants seek legal representation from an attorney or an Office of Legal Access Programs-accredited representative before applying.

#### ***DACA status must be renewed every two years:***

(<https://www.nilc.org>)

(<https://www.as-coa.org/articles/explainer-what-daca>)

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deferred\\_Action\\_for\\_Childhood\\_Arrivals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deferred_Action_for_Childhood_Arrivals))

([https://americasvoice.org/blog/daca-supreme-](https://americasvoice.org/blog/daca-supreme-court/?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ_1BRBZEiwAv73uwBjxXeGMOVPidA1MsNA_a2zcnS_54K-eIgwDKRXaF2aOAz30AjCaJR0CbW0QAvD_BwE)

[court/?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ\\_1BRBZEiwAv73uwBjxXeGMOVPidA1MsNA\\_a2zcnS\\_54K-eIgwDKRXaF2aOAz30AjCaJR0CbW0QAvD\\_BwE](https://americasvoice.org/blog/daca-supreme-court/?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ_1BRBZEiwAv73uwBjxXeGMOVPidA1MsNA_a2zcnS_54K-eIgwDKRXaF2aOAz30AjCaJR0CbW0QAvD_BwE))

#### ***General Questions for DACA students:***

##### **Q: Can DACA students take the MCAT?**

**Yes.** When registering for the MCAT, DACA students are eligible to receive a free placeholder social security number (SSN) to use for registration purposes. You may call the AAMC, who administers the MCAT (Phone: 202-828-0400) and let them know that you do not possess a SSN, and they will assign you an identification number (you do not need to reveal your status). This assigned identification number is also used with your AMCAS application:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b453764f93fd480d1fcc9f9/t/5bac29c5e79c70397ee8aa26/1538013119971/PHD-MedSchoolFAQ-ver.2.pdf>

##### **Q: Are DACA students eligible for the AAMC's Fee Assistance Program?**

**A: Yes.** Each fee assistance award includes access to the Medical School Admission Requirements website, reduced fees for MCAT registration, waived MCAT Official Prep product fees, waived AMCAS application fees for one application cycle, and more. To learn more about this program, click on this link: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/eligibility/>

##### **Q: What resources are available to DACA students on the AAMC's website?**

The AAMC offers several great tools that DACA students can take advantage of:

- Money Management:
  - AAMC Financial Wellness Program: Get access to financial calculators, articles, and videos for how to create a budget and track spending: <https://aamcfinancialwellness.com/>
  - MedLoans Organizer and Calculator (MLOC) - Assists students with managing educational debt: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/article/medloans-organizer-and-calculator-mloc/>
  - AAMC FIRST Videos and Webinars - Topics include: paying for medical school, cost of residency interviews, postponing loan repayment, etc.
    - <https://students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/article/first-videos-webinars/>
- Other Tutorials and Webinars can be accessed using this link: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/amcas-tools-and-tutorials/>

**Q: Which medical schools are currently accepting DACA students?**

**A:** Please click on this link to view the full AAMC list of all medical schools currently accepting DACA applicants: <https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2019-08/gsa-msar-daca-policies-2020.pdf>

**Q: Can DACA students receive federal financial aid?**

**A: No.** DACA students are not eligible to receive federal aid, including Pell Grants. *DACA students should not file the FAFSA.*

**Q: Can DACA students receive state aid from New York?**

**A: Yes.** The New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is a grant and does not have to be repaid. TAP helps eligible New York residents pay tuition at approved schools in New York State. Depending on the academic year in which you begin study, an annual TAP award can be up to \$5,165. Again, because TAP is a grant, it does not have to be paid back. To see if you may be eligible for a TAP award, click here: <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/nys-grants-scholarships-awards/tap.html#horizontalTab2>

To see if you are eligible for additional aid through the *NYS DREAM Act*, please visit this website: <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/dream/>. All information provided will be used ONLY for determining eligibility for and administering awards. If eligible, you can apply for one or more grants and scholarships.

**Q: Can DACA students receive private financial assistance.**

**A: Yes.** Some private schools offer financial assistance. To be eligible for private financial aid, DACA students must complete and submit a *College Scholarship Service Profile*. A CSS profile may be used to apply for non-federal financial aid from the university. The fee for the initial application is \$25 and additional reports can be purchased for \$16.

To learn more about the CSS profile, you may view this link:

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/getting-started-your-css-profile-application>  
<https://cc-seas.financialaid.columbia.edu/ask/faq/question/4744>

**Q: As a DACA applicant, should I apply to private or public graduate programs?**

**A:** Since New York State offers financial assistance to DACA students, applying to both public and private schools is acceptable. In general, private schools are less restricted to whom they can award scholarships and tend to have greater financial resources for low income students.

The Medical School Admissions Requirement Guide (MSAR) indicates which medical schools offer institutional aid to their students:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b453764f93fd480d1fcc9f9/t/5bac29c5e79c70397ee8aa26/1538013119971/PHD-MedSchoolFAQ-ver.2.pdf>

**Q: What scholarships are available to DACA students?**

**A:** Hunter College features the Dreamers scholarship on its website. This scholarship is only available to holders of DACA status: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/deanofstudents/student-affairs-scholarships/dreamers-scholarship>

Below are additional resources for locating scholarships: <https://www.suny.edu/attend/get-started/undocumented/faq/>:

- MALDEF Scholarship Resource Guide 2019 – 2020: <https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resource-guide/>
- Dr. Juan Andrade Jr. Scholarship for Young Hispanic Leaders: <https://www.uskli.org/dr-juan-andrade-scholarship-for-young-hispanic-leaders/>
- Immigrants Rising: List of Graduate Scholarships: [https://immigrantsrising.org/wp-content/uploads/Immigrants-Rising\\_List-of-Graduate-Scholarships.pdf](https://immigrantsrising.org/wp-content/uploads/Immigrants-Rising_List-of-Graduate-Scholarships.pdf)
- Golden Door Scholars: <https://www.goldendoorscholars.org/future-scholars>
- The Dream US: <https://www.thedream.us/scholarships/>
- College Greenlight - Scholarships for Undocumented Students: <http://blog.collegegreenlight.com/blog/scholarships-for-undocumented-students/>
- Dreamer’s Roadmap: <http://www.dreamersroadmap.com/scholarships/>
- Harvard’s Act on a Dream Scholarship Database: <https://www.actonadream.org/scholarship-database>

**Q: Are there any successful student profiles from DACA recipients that I can read about?**

**A: Yes.** You can read about several DACA students’ journeys into medicine here: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/choosing-medical-career/article/cesar-eber-montelongo-hernandez/> and here: <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/daca-students-risk-everything-become-doctors>

**Q: What is the national Pre-Health Dreamers (PHD) organization?**

**A:** As featured on the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) website, Pre-Health Dreamers is a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping DACA and undocumented students navigate the complexities of pursuing careers in medicine, dentistry, and physical therapy: <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/daca-students-risk-everything-become-doctors>. PHD is an information-sharing network and consist of a community of undocumented students around the country. Visit: <https://www.phdreamers.org/> to learn more about their mission to empower undocumented students.

They answer such questions including, but not limited to:

- What are medical schools’ policies on accepting undocumented students?
- What are common obstacles undocumented students face pursuing medical school?
- As an undocumented applicant, how do I select which schools to apply to?
- Should I talk about or reveal my undocumented status in my application?
- Does my DACA status change my ability to pursue medical school?
- Are there any programs that will help me cover the medical school application fees?
- How do undocumented students fund medical school? What are the options?

To view the answers to these questions and others, you may click on this link:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b453764f93fd480d1fcc9f9/t/5bac29c5e79c70397ee8aa26/1538013119971/PHD-MedSchoolFAQ-ver.2.pdf>

Members of national Pre-Health Dreamers have also developed a pathway chart for undocumented students interested in pursuing medicine, nursing, dentistry, and pharmacy. You may access their pathway chart by clicking on this link:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b453764f93fd480d1fcc9f9/t/5b687fc703ce649b2d3d9e19/1533575114994/PHDCareerPathway-1-25-14.pdf>