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ABSTRACT

The process of determining student's residency status for fee payment at the University of Nevada-Reno is described and supplemental information forms that are used at the university are included. At the University of Nevada-Reno, residency decisions are the responsibility of admissions office professional staff. The university has a formal nonresident fee appeal procedure to address exceptional cases. The supplemental information forms that are used to make residency decisions are particularly helpful with military dependents and spouses and family dependents. These forms have improved processing and decreased the number of cases being referred to the residency appeals board. The forms concern: requests to meet with the Residency Appeals Board, Residency Appeals Board Brief, information on student full-time employment, and military dependent supplemental information. (SW)

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RESIDENCY DECISIONS: ANOTHER LOOK

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RESIDENCY DECISIONS: ANOTHER LOOK

An important issue to admissions and records officers at many state supported institutions of higher learning is proper determination of each student's residency status for fee payment. Individuals responsible for residency decisions review a myriad of applications for resident fees and for changes in tuition fee status. From the financial perspective, proper residency classifications are critical to an institution. From the viewpoint of the individual making the residency decisions, clear guidelines can alleviate personal frustration and help one deal more effectively with stressful determinations. The placement of the responsibility for residency decisions varies depending on institutional philosophy. At the University of Nevada-Reno, residency decisions are the responsibility of the professional staff in the admissions office.

Research indicates that in most states residency requires physical presence for at least 12 months prior to the date of matriculation, although a few states require only a six month waiting period to establish residency. This action must be for purposes other than avoidance of out-of-state tuition. Examples of some minimal evidence of intention to become a bona fide resident may include registering to vote in the state, obtaining a driver's license if the student drives an automobile, filing a federal income tax return in the state, and registering in the state any vehicles owned by the student. Ordinarily, without more evidence, the above may be insufficient to establish the requisite intention to become a bona fide resident in

some states.

Most post-secondary institutions have a policy to cover atypical inquiries on an individual basis. Special consideration is sometimes afforded to active military personnel stationed in the state and their dependents. Others seeking resolution on residency issues may include family dependents who have resided in the state for a period less than required by law, as well as spouses of residents. It is appropriate for state-supported institutions of higher learning to have an established formal nonresident fee appeal procedure to address exceptional cases.

From the public relations aspect it is important to adequately communicate the regulations governing nonresident tuition charges to constituents. In order to expedite and alleviate any misunderstanding of current rules for determining residency status or guidelines for determining change in tuition status, many institutions include information in either their general catalog or special brochures. In states like Nevada, where approximately 25% of the population is very mobile, the volume of routine inquiries on residency regulations is large. The University of Nevada-Reno has more than 10,000 students of which approximately 15% are nonresidents. The annual number of residency applications reviewed at UNR is approximately 2,500 of which over 500 are applications for change in tuition status. The quantity of residency applications at the University of Nevada-Reno led to the development of supplemental forms to acquire additional information prior to making a final residency decision. Applications needing further

information often involve military dependents, spouses and family dependents. A verification form addressing student employment status has also been helpful in eliminating conflict situations. These supplemental information forms have improved processing and decreased the number of cases being referred to the residency appeals board. Also, information provided on these forms has helped in responding more professionally to the numerous student requests for residency review.

It is important for residency classification officers to gather as much data as is needed to make timely decisions. One must work on developing communication, investigation, and interpersonal skills based on the number and complexity of cases reviewed. An interview with the applicant provides valuable insight into residency cases. Employers, as well as applicants, can provide needed additional form information. Contact with colleagues at other institutions and in other state system offices is sometimes necessary. Institutional legal counsel should be consulted when appropriate.

At the University of Nevada-Reno consistency regarding residency decisions is maintained by having one admissions professional who responds to all written and telephone inquiries. This individual makes the initial decisions on all undergraduate, graduate, and medical school residency applications as well as reviewing requests for change in nonresident tuition status. The director of admissions and registrar may be contacted for file review if a second opinion is needed prior to an appeal being filed for consideration.

In order to provide a forum for exceptional cases, where a strict application of residency regulations appears unjust, there is an appeal process. The board of regents, governing all University of Nevada System institutions, approved the forming of an appeals board for each campus. The appeals board at the University of Nevada-Reno is comprised of students, faculty, administrators, and emeritus personnel. The board functions as an informal hearing to review individual cases.

An admissions and records representative attends all board meetings serving as a nonvoting, exofficio member with the specific responsibility to brief all cases before the board review. Prior to each scheduled meeting of the appeals board, a thorough analysis is conducted of all residency appeals by an admissions representative. Key points of contention are summarized on a formalized residency appeals board brief form which accelerates and focuses discussions at board meetings. Each member of the residency appeals board has one vote; the chairman tallies and records responses to be forwarded to the president of the university for final action. The appeals board has the jurisdiction to recommend that applicants be classified as in-state students as authorized exceptions to policy. If the recommendation is approved by the president, the student is classified as a resident.

In a highly mobile society, state-funded post-secondary institutions have an increased interest in improving and streamlining the residency classification process. After reviewing residency fee

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determination policies and procedures, University of Nevada-Reno admissions and records professionals have made minor adaptations in form and procedure which have expedited the residency appeals process for new, returning, and currently enrolled students.

TABLE 1

REQUEST TO MEET WITH THE RESIDENCY APPEALS BOARD

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY. COPIES WILL BE MADE.

Name _____ SSN _____

Address _____ Birthdate _____

_____ Phone _____

1. List the minimal evidence submitted documenting your intention to become a legal, bona fide resident of Nevada (give the date each item was accomplished):

_____ Registered to vote in Nevada;
_____ Obtained a Nevada driver's license;
_____ Filed Federal Income Tax Return in Nevada;
_____ Registered vehicle in Nevada;
_____ Other evidence. Specify.

2. Identify the clear and convincing evidence you believe substantiates your intention to become a permanent, legal, bona fide resident of Nevada. Check each item that applies to your situation:

_____ Verification of 12 months of full-time (40 hrs./wk.) continuous employment in Nevada during the year for which residency is claimed.
_____ Marriage to a long-time bona fide Nevada resident.
_____ Ownership of a home with the intention of making Nevada your permanent, legal, bona fide residence.
_____ Legal long-term lease with financial commitments extending beyond school years.
_____ Special circumstances. Describe briefly:

3. I certify that all information provided is true, accurate and complete.

_____ Date _____ Applicant's Signature

TABLE 2
RESIDENCY APPEALS BOARD BRIEF

1. Name _____ Birthdate _____
2. Date of physical arrival in Nevada _____
3. Date first registered at UNR as a nonresident student _____
4. Semesters registered at UNR as a nonresident student _____

5. Married: No _____ Yes _____ Date _____
 - a. Spouse has physically resided in Nevada since _____
 - b. Spouses' parents have resided in Nevada since _____
6. Full-time employment in Nevada: No _____ Yes _____
_____ Annual earnings _____
7. Own home in Nevada: No _____ Yes _____ Date of purchase _____
Amount paid _____ Amount of own funds paid _____
Property in joint ownership with parent/relative: No _____ Yes _____
8. Comments:

_____ Date _____ Admissions Officer

Appeals' Board Action: Approved _____ Disapproved _____

Special Comments:



TABLE 4
MILITARY DEPENDENT
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Name _____ SSN _____

Additional information is required to consider your Application for Resident Fees.

It is each applicant's responsibility to provide clear and convincing evidence of residency in the state of Nevada in order to qualify for resident tuition fees. All applications are subject to the regulations governing tuition as approved by the university board of regents.

Further consideration will be given when the following information is received:

1. Parent entered active military service as a legal resident of which state? _____ Date _____
2. Has your parent exercised the privilege of residency in any state other than Nevada since entering the military service?
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, state? _____ Dates _____
3. Does your military parent have legal ties to any state other than Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, state? _____
4. Does your military parent own a home in a state other than Nevada?
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, state? _____
5. Does your military parent own a home in Nevada? No _____ Yes _____
If yes, date of original purchase? _____
Address _____

Number and Street	City	County
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- Has the house been rented to others? No _____ Yes _____
If yes, dates? _____
6. Have your parents filed Federal Income Tax Returns with a permanent Nevada address for the last two years? No _____ Yes _____
7. Has your military parent maintained a bank account in Nevada?
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, from _____ to _____

Month	Year	Month	Year
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(continued)

8. Is your military parent registered to vote in Nevada?
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, from _____ to _____
Month Year Month Year
9. Since entering military service, has your parent voted by absentee ballot in Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, which state? _____ Specify dates _____
10. Since entering military service, has your parent voted in another state besides Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, which state? _____ Specify dates _____
11. Does your military parent have a valid Nevada Driver's License?
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, give date first issued _____
Mo Day Yr
12. Are your parents' vehicles presently registered and insured in Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, give date first registered
Mo Day Yr
13. Last date your military parent physically resided in Nevada?
Mo Day Yr
14. Parents scheduled separation date from military service?
Mo Day Yr
15. In which state do your parents plan to reside after completion of military service? _____
16. Provide photo copies of military documents showing Nevada as your parents' permanent place of residency.
17. Provide any additional information showing legal bona fide ties to the state of Nevada:

APPLICANT'S CERTIFICATION

I certify the information provided on this application to be true, accurate and complete.

_____ Date _____ Applicant's Signature

Print your name _____
Last First Middle

RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AND THE INFORMATION REQUESTED IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.