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Document No. 5051  
**COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**  
CHAPTER 62  
Statutory Authority: 1976 Code Section 59-112-100

62-600 - 62-612. Determination of Rates of Tuition and Fees.

**Synopsis:**

R.62-600 through 62-612 of Chapter 62 is being amended and replaced in its entirety. Revisions to the existing regulation for the SC Residency Regulation are being considered to clarify the policies and procedures for administering the program. In the proposed amendment, the regulation is being updated to reflect recently passed Act 29 of 2021, relating to the allowance of veterans and covered individuals using specific education benefits to be charged at a tuition rate equivalent to the institution's in-state rate. The revisions seek to promote consistency among the State institutions and their residency classification processes.

A Notice of Drafting was published in the *South Carolina State Register* on April 23, 2021.

**Instructions:**

Replace 62-600 – 62-612 in its entirety.

**Text:**

ARTICLE V  
DETERMINATION OF RATES OF TUITION AND FEES

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62-600. Rates of Tuition and Fees.

A. Resident classification is an essential part of tuition and fee determination, admission regulations, scholarship eligibility, and other relevant policies of the state. It is important that institutions have fair and equitable regulations that can be administered consistently and are sensitive to the interests of both students and the state. The Commission on Higher Education hereby establishes regulations for the Statute Governing Residency for Tuition and Fee Purposes to be applied consistently by all South Carolina

institutions of higher education. These regulations do not address residency matters relating to in county categories used within the State's technical colleges.

B. Institutions of higher education are required by the Statute to determine the residence classification of applicants. The initial determination of one's resident status is made at the time of admission. The determination made at that time, and any determination made thereafter, prevails for each subsequent semester until information becomes available that would impact the existing residency status and the determination is successfully challenged. The burden of proof rests with the students to show evidence as deemed necessary to establish and maintain their residency status.

#### 62-601. Code of Laws Governing Residence.

Rules regarding the establishment of legal residence for tuition and fee purposes for institutions of higher education are governed by Title 59, Chapter 112 of the 1976 South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended.

#### 62-602. Definitions.

A. "Academic Session" is defined as a term or semester of enrollment. (62-607.B)

B. "Continue to be Enrolled" is defined as continuous enrollment without an interruption that would require the student to pursue a formal process of readmission to that institution. Formal petitions or applications for change of degree level shall be considered readmissions. (62-607.A)

C. "Dependent Person" is defined as one whose predominant source of income or support is from payments from a parent, spouse, or guardian, who claims the dependent person on his/her/their federal income tax return. In situations where the dependent is submitting the tax return of joint filers, the residency of both filers should be considered. In the case of those individuals who are supported by family members who do not earn enough reportable income for taxation purposes, a dependent person can be defined as one who qualifies as a dependent or exemption on the federal income tax return of the parent, spouse, or guardian. A dependent person is also one for whom payments are made, under court order, for child support and the cost of the dependent person's college education. A dependent person's residency is presumed to be that of the person upon whom they are dependent. (62-602.G) (62-602.N) (62-603.B) (62-605.C) (62-607.A)

D. "Domicile" is defined as the true, fixed, principal residence and place of habitation. It shall indicate the place where a person intends to remain, or to where one expects to return upon leaving without establishing a new domicile in another state. For purposes of this section, one may have only one legal domicile. One is presumed to abandon automatically an old domicile upon establishing a new one. Housing provided on an academic session basis for student at institutions shall be presumed not to be a place of principal residence, as residency in such housing is by its nature temporary. (62-602.E) (62-602.K) (62-602.M) (62-602.N) (62-603.A) (62-603.B) (62-605.B) (62-605.C) (62-607.A) (62-607.B) (62-608.A) (62-608.C) (62-608.D) (62-609.A.3) (62-609.A.4)

E. "Full time employment" is defined as employment that consists of at least thirty seven and one half hours a week on a single job in a full time status, with gross earnings of at least minimum wage. However, a person who works less than thirty seven and one half hours a week but receives or is entitled to receive full time employee benefits shall be considered to be employed full time if such status is verified by the employer. A person who meets the eligibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act must present acceptable evidence that they satisfy their prescribed employment specifications in order to qualify as having full time employment. (62-605.C.1) (62-609.A.2) (62-609.A.3)

F. "Guardian" is defined as one legally responsible for the care and management of the person or property of a minor child based upon the five tests for dependency prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service; provided, however, that where circumstances indicate that such guardianship or custodianship was created primarily for the purpose of conferring South Carolina domicile for tuition and fee purposes on such child or dependent person, it shall not be given such effect. (62-602.C) (62-602.E) (62-602.I) (62-602.M) (62-603.B) (62-605.C)

G. "Immediately Prior" is defined as the period of time between the offer of admission and the first day of class of the term for which the offer was made, not to exceed one calendar year. (62-607.A)

H. "Independent Person" is defined as one in his/her majority (eighteen years of age or older) or an emancipated minor, whose predominant source of income is his/her own earnings or income from employment, investments, or payments from trusts, grants, scholarships, commercial, educational or student loans in the name of the independent person and provided by an insured and federally regulated financial entity, or payments made in accordance with court order and for the purposes of determining residency for tuition and fees. An independent person:

(1) must provide more than half of his or her support, which shall include the institutional cost of attendance as defined by Title IV, during the twelve months immediately prior to the date that classes begin for the semester for which resident status is requested ;

(2) cannot claim the domicile of another individual as their own for the purposes of establishing intent to become a South Carolina resident;

(3) must have established his/her own domicile and provide documentation of establishing his/her own domicile for twelve months to include documentation of renting a domicile if applicable, prior to receiving in-state tuition and fees; and

(4) cannot be claimed as a dependent or exemption on the federal tax return of his or her parent, spouse, or guardian for the year in which resident status is requested. (62-602.N) (62-603.A) (62-605.C) (62-607.B) (62-608.B)

I. "Minor" is defined as a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years. An "emancipated minor" shall mean a minor whose parents have entirely surrendered the right to the care, custody and earnings of such minor and are no longer under any legal obligation to support or maintain such minor. (62-602.G)

J. "Non-resident Alien" is defined as a person who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States. By virtue of their non-resident status "non-resident aliens" generally do not have the capacity to establish domicile in South Carolina. (62-602.M) (62-604.A)

K. "Parent" is defined as the father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, foster parent or parent of a legally adopted child. (62-602.C) (62-602.E) (62-602.I) (62-602.J) (62-602.M) (62-603.B) (62-603.C) (62-605.C)

L. "Reside" is defined as continuous and permanent physical presence within the State, provided that absences for short periods of time shall not affect the establishment of residence. Excluded are absences associated with requirements to complete a degree, absences for military training service, and like absences, provided South Carolina domicile is maintained. (62-603.A) (62-606.B) (62-609.A) (62-609.A.3) (62-609.A.4) (62-609.B)

M. "Resident" for tuition and fee purposes is defined as an independent person who has abandoned all prior domiciles and has been domiciled in South Carolina continuously for at least twelve months immediately preceding the first day of class of the term for which resident classification is sought and for whom there is an absence of domiciliary evidence in other states or countries, notwithstanding other provisions of the Statute. (62-600.A) (62-600.B) (62-602.I) (62-602.K) (62-602.M) (62-603.A) (62-603.B) (62-603.C) (62-604.A) (62-605.A) (62-605.C) (62-605.C.7) (62-606.A) (62-606.A.5) (62-606.B) (62-607.A) (62-608.B) (62-609.A.3) (62-610.A) (62-610.B) (62-611.A) (62-611.B)

N. "Spouse" is defined as the husband or wife of a married person in accordance with Title 20, Chapter 1 of the 1976 South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended. (62-602.C) (62-602.E) (62-602.I) (62-602.M) (62-603.B) (62-605.C)

O. "Temporary Absence" is defined as a break in enrollment during a fall or spring semester (or its equivalent) during which a student is not registered for class. (62-606.A)

P. "Terminal Leave" is defined as a transition period following active employment and immediately preceding retirement (with a pension or annuity), during which the individual may use accumulated leave. (62-609.A.4)

Q. "United States Armed Forces" is defined as the United States Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard. (62-606.B) (62-609.A(1))

R. "Trust" is defined as a legal entity created by a grantor for the benefit of designated beneficiaries under the laws of the state and the valid trust instrument. However, that where circumstances indicate that

such trust was created primarily for the purpose of conferring South Carolina domicile for tuition and fee purposes on such child or independent person, it shall not be given such effect.

62-603. Establishing Residency, Citizens and Permanent Residents.

A. Independent persons who have physically resided and been domiciled in South Carolina for twelve continuous months immediately preceding the date the classes begin for the semester for which resident status is claimed may qualify to pay in state tuition and fees. The twelve month residency period starts when the independent person establishes the intent to become a South Carolina resident per Section 62-605 entitled “Establishing the Requisite Intent to Become a South Carolina Domiciliary.” The twelve month residency period cannot start until the absence of indicia in other states is proven. Absences from the State during the twelve month period may affect the establishment of permanent residence for tuition and fee purposes.

B. The resident status of a dependent person is based on the resident status of the person who provides more than half of the dependent person’s support and claims or, only in the case of those individuals who are supported by family members who do not earn enough reportable income for taxation purposes, qualifies to claim the dependent person as a dependent for federal income tax purposes. Thus, the residence and domicile of a dependent person shall be presumed to be that of their parent, spouse, or guardian.

C. In the case of divorced or separated parents, the resident status of the dependent person may be based on the resident status of the parent who claims the dependent person as a dependent for tax purposes; or based on the resident status of the parent who has legal custody or legal joint custody of the dependent person; or based on the resident status of the person who makes payments under a court order for child support and at least the cost of his/her college tuition and fees.

62-604. Non-Resident Aliens, Non-Citizens, and Non-Permanent Residents.

A. Except as otherwise specified in this section or as provided in Section 62-609 (1) & (2), independent non-citizens and non-permanent residents of the United States will be assessed tuition and fees at the non-resident, out of state rate. Independent non-resident aliens, including refugees, asylees, and parolees may be entitled to resident, in state classification once they have been awarded permanent resident status by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and meet all the statutory residency requirements provided that all other domiciliary requirements are met. Time spent living in South Carolina immediately prior to the awarding of permanent resident status does not count toward the twelve month residency period. Certain non resident aliens present in the United States in specified visa classifications are eligible to receive in state residency status for tuition and fee purposes as prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education. They are not, however, eligible to receive state sponsored tuition assistance/scholarships.

B. Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) serves as the primary resource for defining visa categories.

62-605. Establishing the Requisite Intent to Become a South Carolina Domiciliary.

A. Resident status may not be acquired by an applicant or student while residing in South Carolina for the primary purpose of enrollment in an institution or for access to state supported programs designed to serve South Carolina residents. An applicant or student from another state who comes to South Carolina usually does so for the purpose of attending school. Therefore, an applicant or student who enrolls as a non-resident in an institution is presumed to remain a non-resident throughout his or her attendance and does not qualify under any of the residency provisions.

B. If a person asserts that his/her domicile has been established in this State, the individual has the burden of proof. Such persons must provide to the designated residency official of the institution to which they are applying any and all evidence the person believes satisfies the burden of proof. The residency official will consider any and all evidence provided concerning such claim of domicile, but will not necessarily regard any single item of evidence as conclusive evidence that domicile has been established.

C. For independent persons or the parent, spouse, or guardian of dependent persons, indicia showing intent to become a South Carolina resident may include, although any single indicator may not be conclusive, the following indicia:

- (1) Statement of full time employment;
- (2) Designating South Carolina as state of legal residence on military record;
- (3) Possession of a valid South Carolina driver's license, or if a non-driver, a South Carolina identification card. Failure to obtain this within 90 days of the establishment of the intent to become a South Carolina resident will delay the beginning date of residency eligibility until a valid South Carolina driver's license is obtained;
- (4) Possession of a valid South Carolina vehicle registration card for every vehicle the independent person is in sole or partial ownership. Failure to obtain this within 45 days of the establishment of the intent to become a South Carolina resident will delay the beginning date of residency eligibility until the applicant obtains a valid South Carolina vehicle registrations card(s);
- (5) Maintenance of an established and current domicile in South Carolina;
- (6) Paying South Carolina income taxes as a resident during the past tax year, including income earned outside of South Carolina from the date South Carolina domicile was claimed;
- (7) Ownership of principal residence in South Carolina;
- (8) Licensing for professional practice (if applicable) in South Carolina.

D. The individual seeking residency must ensure that no item from the list above or any other item, reflects residency or intent to be a resident in another state or country. Having any one item from the list above or any other item(s) reflecting residency in another state or country will delay the beginning date of residency. The absence of indicia in other states or countries is required before the student is eligible to pay in state rates.

#### 62-606. Maintaining Residence.

A. A person's temporary absence from the State does not necessarily constitute loss of South Carolina residence unless the person has acted inconsistently with the claim of continued South Carolina residence during the person's absence from the State. The burden is on the person to show retention of South Carolina residence during the person's absence from the State. A person who obtains indicia in another state after leaving the state is demonstrating intent to be a resident of that state. Steps a person should take to retain South Carolina resident status for tuition and fee purposes include:

- (1) Continuing to use a South Carolina permanent address on all records;
- (2) Maintaining South Carolina driver's license;
- (3) Maintaining South Carolina vehicle registration;
- (4) Satisfying South Carolina resident income tax obligation. Individuals claiming permanent residence in South Carolina are liable for payment of income taxes on their total income from the date that they established South Carolina residence. This includes income earned in another state or country.

B. Active duty members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents who are permanently assigned to a state outside of South Carolina on active duty are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees as long as they continuously claim South Carolina as their state of legal residence during their military service. Documentation will be required in all cases to support this claim, including an official Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) demonstrating South Carolina as the member's state of legal residence. South Carolina residents who change their state of legal residence while in the military lose their South Carolina resident status for tuition and fee purposes.

#### 62-607. Effect of Change of Residency.

A. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, any dependent person of a legal resident of this state who has been domiciled with his/her family in South Carolina for a period of not less than three years immediately prior to his/her enrollment may enroll at the in state rate and may continue to be enrolled at such rate even if the parent, spouse or guardian upon whom he is dependent moves his domicile from this State. The student must continue to be enrolled and registered for classes (excluding summers) in order to

maintain eligibility to pay in state rates in subsequent semesters. Transfers within or between South Carolina colleges and universities of a student seeking a certificate, diploma, associate, baccalaureate, or graduate level degree does not constitute a break in enrollment.

B. If domicile of an independent person in South Carolina is lost after enrollment, and information becomes available that would impact the existing residency status, eligibility for in state rates shall end on the last day of the academic session during which domicile is lost. Application of this provision shall be at the discretion of the institution involved. However, a student must continue to be enrolled and registered for classes (excluding summers) in order to maintain eligibility to pay in state rates in subsequent semesters.

#### 62-608. Effect of Marriage.

A. In ascertaining domicile of a married person, irrespective of gender, such a review shall be determined just as for an unmarried person by reference to all relevant evidence of domiciliary intent.

B. If a non-resident marries a South Carolina resident, the non-resident does not automatically acquire South Carolina resident status. The non-resident may acquire South Carolina resident status if the South Carolina resident is an independent person and the non-resident is a dependent of the South Carolina resident.

C. Marriage to a person domiciled outside South Carolina shall not be solely the reason for precluding a person from establishing or maintaining domicile in South Carolina and subsequently becoming eligible or continuing to be eligible for residency.

D. No person shall be deemed solely by reason of marriage to a person domiciled in South Carolina to have established or maintained domicile in South Carolina and consequently to be eligible for or to retain eligibility for South Carolina residency.

#### 62-609. Exceptions.

A. Persons in the following categories qualify to pay in state tuition and fees without having to establish a permanent home in the state for twelve months. Persons who qualify under any of these categories must meet the conditions of the specific category on or before the first day of class of the term for which payment of in state tuition and fees is requested. The following categories apply only to in state tuition and do not apply to State supported scholarships and grants. Individuals who qualify for in state tuition and fees under the following exceptions do not automatically qualify for LIFE, SC HOPE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarships. However, where all scholarship & grant timelines related to residency and academic requirements are met, persons in categories (1), (3) and (4) may qualify for state scholarships or grants:

(1) "Military Personnel and their Dependents": Members of the United States Armed Forces who are permanently assigned in South Carolina on active duty and their dependents are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees. When such personnel are transferred from the State, their dependents may continue to pay in state tuition and fees as long as they are continuously enrolled or transfer to an eligible institution during the term or semester, excluding summer terms, immediately following their enrollment at the previous institution. In the event of a transfer, the receiving institution shall verify the decision made by the student's previous institution in order to certify the student's eligibility for in-state tuition rates. It is the responsibility of the transferring student to ensure that all documents required to verify both the previous and present residency decisions are provided to the institution. Members of the United States Armed Forces who are permanently assigned in South Carolina on active duty (and their dependents) may also be eligible to pay in state tuition and fees as long as they are continuously enrolled after their discharge from the military, provided they have demonstrated an intent to establish a permanent home in South Carolina and they have resided in South Carolina for a period of at least twelve months immediately preceding their discharge. Military personnel who are not stationed in South Carolina and/or former military personnel who intend to establish South Carolina residency must fulfill the twelve month "physical presence" requirement for them or their dependents to qualify to pay in state tuition and fees.

(2) "Faculty and Administrative Employees with Full Time Employment and their Dependents": Full time faculty and administrative employees of South Carolina state supported colleges and universities and their dependents are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees.

(3) “Residents with Full Time Employment and their Dependents:” Persons who reside, are domiciled, and are full time employed with an employer that is physically located in the State and who continue to work full time until they meet the twelve month requirement and their dependents are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees, provided that they have taken steps to establish a permanent home in the State. Steps an independent person must take to establish residency in South Carolina are listed in Section 62-605 entitled (“Establishing the Requisite Intent to Become a South Carolina Domiciliary”).

(4) “Retired Persons and their Dependents:” Retired persons with taxable retirement income received as monthly/quarterly/annual disbursements from a retirement account, or who are receiving a pension or annuity who reside in South Carolina and have been domiciled in South Carolina as prescribed in the Statute for less than a year may be eligible for in state rates if they maintain residence and domicile in this State. All retirement income must show South Carolina income tax withholdings prior to the first day of classes for the term in which residency is being sought. Social Security is not considered as a type of eligible retirement income. Persons on terminal leave who have established residency in South Carolina may be eligible for in state rates even if domiciled in the State for less than one year if they present documentary evidence from their employer showing they are on terminal leave. The evidence should show beginning and ending dates for the terminal leave period and that the person will receive a pension or annuity when he/she retires. Steps an independent person must take to establish residency in South Carolina are listed in Section 62-605 entitled (“Establishing the Requisite Intent to Become a South Carolina Domiciliary”).

(5) “Covered Individuals Receiving Specific Education Benefits:” Covered individuals living in South Carolina, who are enrolled in a public institution of higher education and receiving educational assistance under Chapter 30, Chapter 31 and Chapter 33, Title 38 of the United States Code, are entitled to pay in-state tuition and fees without regard to the length of time the covered individual has resided in this State. For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is defined as:

(a) a veteran who served ninety days or longer on active duty in the Uniformed Service of the United States, their respective Reserve forces, or the National Guard;

(b) a person who is entitled to and receiving assistance under Section 3319, Title 38 of the United States Code by virtue of the person's relationship to the veteran described in subitem (a);

(c) a person using transferred benefits under Section 3319, Title 38 of the United States Code while the transferor is on active duty in the Uniformed Service of the United States, their respective Reserve forces, or the National Guard;

(d) a person who is entitled to and receiving assistance under Section 3311(b)(9), Title 38 of the United States Code; or

(e) a person who is entitled to and is receiving assistance under Section 3102(a), Title 38 of the United States Code.

A covered individual shall remain eligible for in-state rates as long as he remains continuously enrolled in an in-state institution or transfers to another in-state institution during the term or semester, excluding summer terms, immediately following his enrollment at the previous in-state institution. In the event of a transfer, the in-state institution receiving the covered individual shall verify the covered individual's eligibility for in-state rates with the covered individual's prior in-state institution. It is the responsibility of the transferring covered individual to ensure all documents required to verify both the previous and present residency decisions are provided to the in-state institution

B. South Carolina residents who wish to participate in the Regional Contract Program sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) must have continuously resided in the State for other than educational purposes for at least two years immediately preceding their submission of the residency status application and must meet all other residency requirements during this two year period. Individuals who qualify for in-state tuition and fees are not automatically classified as South Carolina residents. A determination of one's resident status made at the time of one's initial application to be certified as a South Carolina resident for purposes of participation in the Regional Contract Program does not prevail for each subsequent academic year. A South Carolina resident student who has been certified as a State resident for the purpose of participating in the Southern Regional Education Board Contract Program must be recertified prior to the beginning of each fall semester for each academic year for which benefits are requested.



C. South Carolina residents who wish to participate in the Academic Common Market program sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board must be a resident for at least one year, or satisfy the conditions of an exception as provided in R.62-609A(1), R.62-609A(3) or R.62-609A(4), immediately preceding application for consideration and must meet all other residency requirements during this one year period.

62-610. Application for Change of Resident Status.

A. Persons applying for a change of resident classification must complete a residency application/petition and provide supporting documentation prior to a reclassification deadline as established by the institution.

B. The burden of proof rests with those persons applying for a change of resident classification who must show required evidence to document the change in resident status.

62-611. Incorrect classification.

A. Persons incorrectly classified as residents are subject to reclassification and to payment of all non-resident tuition and fees not paid. If incorrect classification results from false or concealed facts, such persons may be charged tuition and fees past due and unpaid at the out of state rate. The violator may also be subject to administrative, civil, and financial penalties. Until these charges are paid, such persons will not be allowed to receive transcripts or graduate from a South Carolina institution.

B. Residents whose resident status changes are responsible for notifying the Residency Official of the institution attended of such changes.

62-612. Inquiries and Appeals.

A. Inquiries regarding residency requirements and determinations should be directed to the institutional residency official.

B. Each institution will develop an appeals process to accommodate persons wishing to appeal residency determinations made by the institution's residency official. Each institutions appeal process should be directed by that institutions primary residency officer, in conjunction with those individuals who practice the application of State residency regulations on a daily basis. The professional judgment of the residency officer and administrators will constitute the institutional appeal process. Neither the primary residency official nor appellate official(s) may waive the provisions of the Statute or regulation governing residency for tuition and fee purposes.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:**

There will be no cost incurred by the State or any of its political subdivisions.

**Statement of Rationale:**

These regulations are updated to be consistent with changes in law and to clarify the policies and procedures for administering the program