

## Colorado Residency for Graduate Student TA and RAs

Residency status has a very strong influence on tuition costs. Tuition for all GTAs (graduate teaching assistants) and many GRAs (graduate research assistants) is currently covered by the University at the non-resident rate for the first year. However, assistantship support will be provided only at the resident rate in subsequent years. This means that if a non-resident student fails to acquire Colorado resident status by their second year, the student will likely be responsible for paying the (considerable) difference between the resident and nonresident tuition rates. Unless they already hold a green card, international students receiving assistantships are exempt from this process.

The State of Colorado has a stringent set of requirements for changing residency status from non-resident to resident. These requirements are listed on the Student Financial Services website, please read the information, and watch the short video on residency:

<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/residency/>

In addition, they offer Residency orientation sessions, please register, and attend either the online or virtual orientation:

<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/residency-orientations/>

### **Prior to the beginning of your first semester:**

Prior to the first day of classes at CSU, you must take all actions necessary to establish “domicile”. Domicile is used to describe the place where an individual has demonstrated intent to make a permanent home and legal residence. Both physical presence and evidence of intent must be in place to begin the domicile year and is required for 12 continuous months on or prior to the first day of classes of each semester.

Because domicile is defined as a permanent home and legal residence, changing your residency for the sole purpose of saving tuition costs does not qualify as domicile for Colorado residency. You must demonstrate intent to remain in Colorado for the foreseeable future.

### **When you arrive in Colorado:**

Start gathering records of your physical presence and intent to make Colorado your home as soon as you arrive in Colorado. Keep these records organized and assessable for when you complete the actual application the following summer (12 months from when you arrived). We suggest you scan all items to keep as pdfs and convert confirmation emails as you receive them. Finding old forms and emails can be difficult or frustrating when you need them.

NOTE: Please keep in mind that the following lists are examples of the minimum changes that must be done prior to your first day of classes in your first semester at CSU to prove your domicile in Colorado. These changes may be subject to modification by the State of Colorado. In addition, you should consider whether in your individual case there may be other evidence of

domicile that needs to be changed. Please review the CSU Student Financial Services website and orientation thoroughly for any potential additions or changes to these guidelines.

**Physical Presence:**

Proof of physical presence in Colorado should include:

- Rental or property lease or agreements, proof of home purchase/ownership for 12 continuous months.
- Change addresses on all documentation, including RamWeb and state/federal taxes

**Intent:**

Showing intent of domicile may include items that show you have severed ties with your former state. These may include:

- Proof of on campus or off campus employment (assistantship is regarded as full-time employment, documentation can be obtained from our college HR department)
- Withholding of Colorado state taxes from wages (W4 form)
- Payment of Colorado state income taxes as a Colorado resident, including form 104PN-Colorado Partial year payment. NOTE: Make sure you are not on your parent's tax filing in a different state during the time you lived in Colorado.
- Driver's license or ID for 12 continuous months
  - Colorado Department of Revenue  
<https://revenue.colorado.gov>
- Colo vehicle registration (or proof that you made an appointment) 12 continuous months prior to application. We recommend you make an appointment as soon as you are accepted to avoid delay in getting your registration changed.
  - Larimer County Clerk and Recorder  
<https://www.larimer.org/clerk/vehiclelicensing/registration>
- Voter registration
  - State of Colorado  
<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/vote/VoterHome.html?>

**Filing the petition:**

Please see the office of Financial Aid petition process and deadlines at <https://financialaid.colostate.edu/petition-process-and-deadlines/> for links to the State of Colorado Application. The petition should be started as early as the first date you can submit. Waiting for the deadline to submit can cause issues in processing and change of classification. This can, in turn, affect your tuition charges to your student account.

If the petition is denied for any reason, you can submit an appeal that addresses the issues for which it was denied. If the appeal denied, you will be responsible for the difference in tuition payment and for re-applying for the next semester.

**Notes and things to avoid:**

- Do not file your residency petition late, the deadline is the absolute minimum you have to submit. The earlier the better.
- Make sure your address in RAMWeb is a Colorado address/
- Examine evidence of legal ties outside of Colorado during the domicile year that demonstrate residency in another state may include the following:
  - Failure to file a Colorado state income tax return
  - Failure to have Colorado state income taxes withheld from your wages
  - Filing a Colorado state income tax return as a non-resident
  - Being on your parents' tax filing
  - Failure to obtain a Colorado driver's license or Colorado ID
  - Maintenance of a home in another state
  - Prolonged absence from Colorado
  - Vehicle you operate is registered in another state
  - Residing in another state between academic terms or when not enrolled as a student
  - Any other factor unique to the individual which tends to imply your permanent home and legal residence is in another state.
- If you were late changing your driver's license, a confirmation appointment at the Dept of Motor Vehicles can be submitted if the actual change could not be done in time.
- In order to petition for residency a student must be considered a qualified individual and eligible to establish domicile separate from their parents. A student's residency is considered to be their parents' state of residence until they are 23 years of age, married, or a graduate student with few exceptions.
- Make sure you indicate that you are planning on staying in Colorado indefinitely. Avoid, comments such as:
  - Only moved to Colorado for school.
  - Don't know how long I will be staying.
  - Only staying for the duration of the program.
  - The Department told you that you must get residency - you don't have to, but the department cannot pay the out of state tuition fees.
  - You can't afford school if you don't get in-state tuition.