



Tuition Reciprocity Program

August 2022

The tuition reciprocity program ([Minn. Stat. § 136A.08](#)) authorizes the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to enter into agreements with other states to reduce tuition for Minnesota students at the other states' postsecondary institutions. Similarly, under the agreements, residents of reciprocity states pay reduced tuition rates when they attend a public postsecondary institution in Minnesota.

Who is eligible to participate?

Minnesota has separate tuition reciprocity agreements with North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin covering all public postsecondary institutions in those states. Minnesota also has limited agreements with Iowa (covering one institution in each state) and Manitoba (covering all public Minnesota institutions and ten institutions in Manitoba). Although undergraduates constitute the majority of participating students, the agreements also include most graduate programs and some professional programs.

To participate in the program, a student must first apply to a public college or university in a reciprocity state and then apply for reciprocity to the administering agency in their home state—OHE for Minnesota students. Students have until the last day of the academic term to apply for reciprocity. The reciprocity program has no limit to the number of participating students. A student's reciprocity benefits automatically renew for subsequent academic terms. Any changes to the reciprocity agreements apply to students who first enroll after the effective date of the change.

What do the agreements cover?

The reciprocity agreements and annual memorandum specify the terms of participation, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional tuition rates for applicable institutions and programs. The agreements must be approved by postsecondary governing boards—in Minnesota, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnState) Board of Trustees and the University of Minnesota Board of Regents.

What tuition rates do students pay?

There are three main approaches to tuition rate setting for tuition reciprocity agreements:

- 1) Resident tuition at the institution attended (with or without a surcharge)
 - Applies to Minnesota residents attending North Dakota institutions
 - Applies to participating institutions under the Iowa and Manitoba agreements

- 2) The higher of the two states' resident tuition at a comparable institution
 - Applies to North Dakota residents attending Minnesota institutions
 - Applies to South Dakota and Wisconsin agreements

- 3) Resident tuition at a comparable institution in the student's state of residence

- Not currently used under any agreement

Note that the North Dakota agreement is unique in that the tuition rate-setting approach differs depending on the student's state of residence.

Does the reciprocity program cost the state?

The state pays for the reciprocity program through general fund appropriations to public institutions and through specific appropriations to OHE for payments to other states, as required in the Wisconsin and North Dakota agreements.

For the 2019-2020 academic year, Minnesota's obligation to North Dakota was \$11.02 million. That same year, Wisconsin's obligation to Minnesota was \$7.16 million. Minnesota's total obligation for the 2019-2020 academic year was therefore \$3.86 million. In its 2021 higher education omnibus act, the legislature appropriated \$8.5 million each year to OHE for tuition reciprocity contract obligations in fiscal years 2022 and 2023, with authorization for OHE to transfer amounts between years as needed and transfer unencumbered balances to other OHE programs.

How many students participate in the program?

Minnesota's agreement with Wisconsin accounts for 54 percent of all reciprocity enrollments, and North Dakota accounts for 33 percent. Minnesota's agreement with South Dakota represents an additional 11 percent of participation. In fall 2019, a total of 39,198 students from all participating states (and Manitoba) participated in the tuition reciprocity program. Approximately 92 percent of these students were undergraduates. In keeping with historical trends, Minnesota continues to send more students to each of the other states than it receives from them.

Fall 2019 Reciprocity Enrollment

	From Minnesota Attending in	Attending in Minnesota from	Net Outflow of Students
North Dakota	9,825	3,289	6,536
South Dakota	3,448	1,029	2,419
Wisconsin	13,094	8,118	4,976
Manitoba*	162	27	135
Iowa Lakes Community College	139	67	72
Total	26,668	12,530	14,138

*The number of Minnesota residents enrolling in Manitoba is for the full 2019-2020 academic year.



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