NC COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE

Event Overview

Residency | FAFSA | Applications

College Foundation of North Carolina

CACRAO

EVENT OVERVIEW

What is NC Countdown to College?

NC Countdown to College is a monthlong initiative that encompasses FAFSA, RDS, and Applications. This initiative includes the popular College Application Week event, when many colleges waive their application fees. The NC Countdown to College is geared towards graduating NC high school seniors, although we do encourage all students to participate in NC Countdown to College activities.

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EVENT OVERVIEW

NC Countdown to College Month

NC Countdown to College will be held during the entire month of October.

NC Countdown to College At A Glance:

- Week 1 & 2: Focus on FAFSA & RDS
- Week 3: College Application Week
- Week 4: Wrap-up/Blast-off!

FAFSA Day is October 27, 2018

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EVENT OVERVIEW

NC Countdown to College Month: Creating a College-Going Culture

Purpose: To establish schools as learning communities that are inclusive of all paths of learning

Important aspects of a college-going culture in your school include:

- All adults in the school influence college-going in and out of classes;
- Expectations that college is for all students;
- The entire school becomes a community of learning;
- Create an environment that shapes college-going identities;
- Pay special attention to parents of first-gen students; and
- Events concentrated at all venues including campuses, high schools, community centers, etc.

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Getting Your CFNC Professional Center Account Ready

1. If you already have a CFNC Professional Center account, make sure you can log in at: http://procenter.cfnc.org. If you encounter any issues, follow the instructions at procenter.cfnc.org or email cfnc@northcarolina.edu.

2. If you do not have a CFNC Professional Center account, follow these instructions and allow two weeks for processing.

3. Check out the CFNC Professional Center FAQ, located in the Application Resources section of this page: https://nccountdowntocollege.org/resources/

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EVENT OVERVIEW

NC Countdown to College Focus

NC Countdown to College focuses on providing support to high school seniors to complete the three important college enrollment steps:

- FAFSA
- Residency Determination Service (RDS)
- College Admission Applications

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FAFSA

When to File FAFSA

File your FAFSA on or shortly after October 1.

STEPS:

1. The student and one parent will need a FSA ID in order to sign the FAFSA. https://fsaid.ed.gov
2. To submit the FAFSA, go to fafsa.gov. Make sure to choose the correct year-the year you will enter college.
3. Use the Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) if possible to link income information to your FAFSA.
4. If entering college in 2019, use 2017 tax information.
5. After FAFSA submission, watch for an email with the Student Aid Report (SAR). Follow instructions.

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RESIDENCY

Purpose of Residency Determination Service

In-State Tuition & State Grants

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1. An applicant must go through the Residency Determination Service (RDS) in order to be eligible for:
   a. **in-state tuition** at any of the NC public colleges and universities, and
   b. **state grants** at any schools in NC, including private or independent colleges and universities.

2. RDS uses similar information to FAFSA. So, it makes sense to ask students to do them at the same time or as early in the admission process as possible.

3. When a student completes RDS, they receive a Residency Certification Number (RCN). The RCN is used by all NC schools to access the student's residency status.

4. Some schools (NC Community Colleges) require an RCN to be submitted before they will accept an admissions application.

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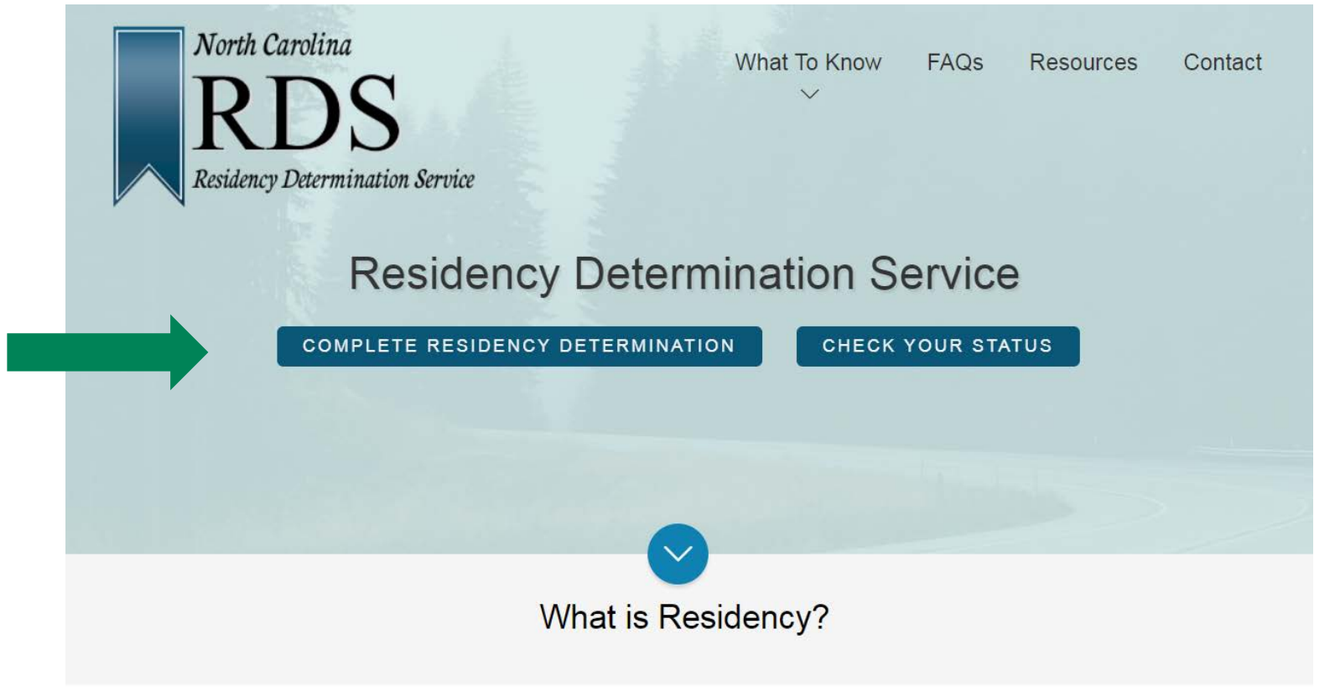
RESIDENCY

Residency Tips

1. Go to www.ncresidency.org



2. RDS and CFNC use the ***same login*** information.
   - Students should not create a new login if they already have a CFNC account.
   - Once a student has started RDS, s/he must complete RDS using the *same* login information.

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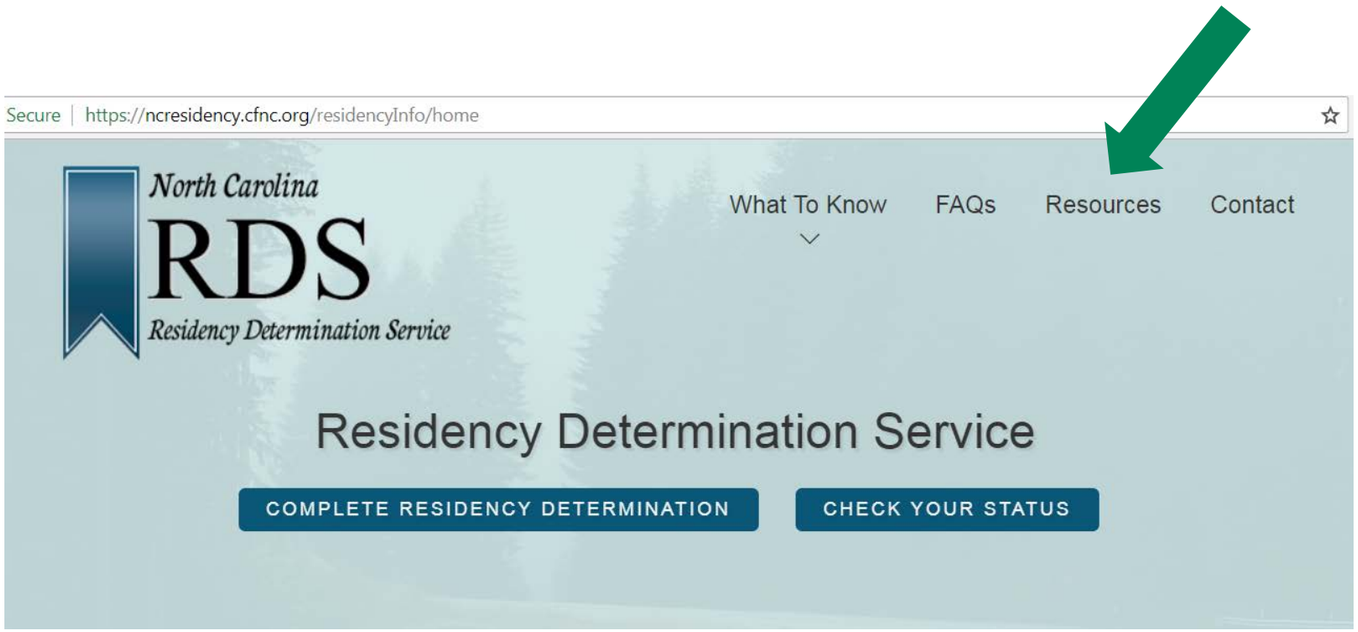
RESIDENCY

Residency Tips

3. Like FAFSA, students will need their parents' information in order to complete RDS.
   - Students should not guess because they cannot go back and change their responses.

4. Many helpful resources can be found on the RDS website:



5. For assistance:

   Email: rdsinfo@ncresidency.org

   Phone: 844-319-3640

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APPLICATIONS

College Application Week

1. NC College Application Week will be held October 15, 2018 - October 19, 2015.

2. A list of all colleges and universities that will be waiving their application fees will be posted on the Resources page of NCCountdowntoCollege.org.
   - Fees are only waived for students using the CFNC App Hub. The fee waiver may not apply to other application systems like Common App.

3. None of the NC community colleges charge application fees.

4. Majority of colleges and universities will accept the SAT, ACT, and NCAC fee waiver.

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APPLICATIONS

Application Fee & Fee Waiver Tips

Many colleges require an application fee when submitting an online application. You may find app fee info in the Admissions link of the School Profile. Unless the school has waived fees for the week, or a student has a need-based fee waiver (see #3 below), you need to be prepared to enter a credit/debit card number or mail a check once you complete your online application.

1. **College App Week Fee Waivers for CFNC Apps:**
   - Several NC colleges and universities will temporarily waive their applications fees for College Application Week.

2. **NC Community Colleges**
   - Community Colleges in North Carolina do not charge applications fees at any time.

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Application Fee & Fee Waiver Tips

3. **Need-Based Fee Waivers (College Board/SAT, NACAC, ACT):**
    - Certain need-based application fee waivers must be authorized by high school counselors or other entities. Students who are eligible for fee waivers for the standard college entrance tests are usually eligible for application fee waivers as well. Encourage students to talk with their school counselor well in advance of college application season to complete the necessary paperwork.
    - Different schools may have different policies about accepting these waivers. The waivers sometimes have a limited use (example: only 4 schools), so encourage students to use them wisely. Do not use a need-based fee waiver for a school that has already waived its fees for Countdown to College.
- For more information:
    - College Board Fee Waiver
    - NACAC Fee Waiver
    - ACT Fee Waiver

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APPLICATIONS

CFNC Application Hub Tips

1. The CFNC Application Hub allows students to view all of their application and transcript activity in one place.

2. Find details about the Application Hub in the CFNC Application Hub FAQ

3. Most NC colleges accept the CFNC online application, but even if they don't, students can still go to CFNC Application Hub and it will link them to the preferred application for that college.

4. Check out the Application Resources documents at: https://nccountdowntocollege.org/resources/

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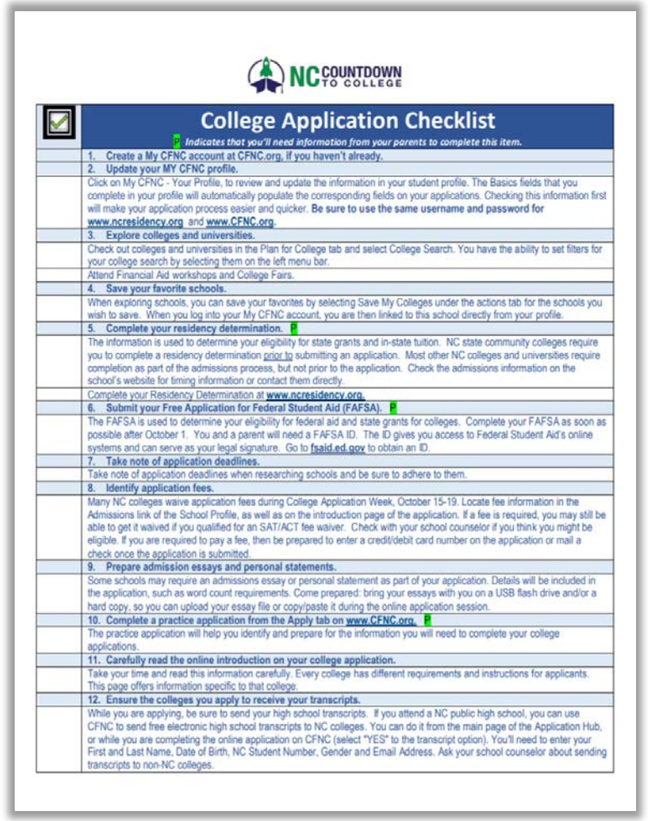
APPLICATIONS

College Application Checklist

- Consider sharing the College Application Checklist with students – great for parents too!
- The checklist encourages students to take important steps before applying, and to make sure they complete all the essential tasks after submitting their applications (e.g. transcripts, recommendations)



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College Application Checklist

Indicates that you'll need information from your parents to complete this item.

1. **Create a My CFNC account at CFNC.org, if you haven't already.**
2. **Update your MY CFNC profile.**

Click on My CFNC - Your Profile, to review and update the information in your student profile. The Basics fields that you complete in your profile will automatically populate the corresponding fields on your applications. Checking this information first will make your application process easier and quicker. **Be sure to use the same username and password for www.ncresidency.org and www.CFNC.org.**

3. **Explore colleges and universities.**

Check out colleges and universities in the Plan for College tab and select College Search. You have the ability to set filters for your college search by selecting them on the left menu bar.

Attend Financial Aid workshops and College Fairs.

4. **Save your favorite schools.**

When exploring schools, you can save your favorites by selecting Save My Colleges under the actions tab for the schools you wish to save. When you log into your My CFNC account, you are then linked to this school directly from your profile.

5. **Complete your residency determination.**

The information is used to determine your eligibility for state grants and in-state tuition. NC state community colleges require you to complete a residency determination prior to submitting an application. Most other NC colleges and universities require completion as part of the admissions process, but not prior to the application. Check the admissions information on the school's website for timing information or contact them directly.

Complete your Residency Determination at **www.ncresidency.org.**

6. **Submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).**

The FAFSA is used to determine your eligibility for federal aid and state grants for colleges. Complete your FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1. You and a parent will need a FAFSA ID. The ID gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and can serve as your legal signature. Go to **fsaid.ed.gov** to obtain an ID.

7. **Take note of application deadlines.**

Take note of application deadlines when researching schools and be sure to adhere to them.

8. **Identify application fees.**

Many NC colleges waive application fees during College Application Week, October 15-19. Locate fee information in the Admissions link of the School Profile, as well as on the introduction page of the application. If a fee is required, you may still be able to get it waived if you qualified for an SAT/ACT fee waiver. Check with your school counselor if you think you might be eligible. If you are required to pay a fee, then be prepared to enter a credit/debit card number on the application or mail a check once the application is submitted.

9. **Prepare admission essays and personal statements.**

Some schools may require an admissions essay or personal statement as part of your application. Details will be included in the application, such as word count requirements. Come prepared: bring your essays with you on a USB flash drive and/or a hard copy, so you can upload your essay file or copy/paste it during the online application session.

10. **Complete a practice application from the Apply tab on www.CFNC.org.**

The practice application will help you identify and prepare for the information you will need to complete your college applications.

11. **Carefully read the online introduction on your college application.**

Take your time and read this information carefully. Every college has different requirements and instructions for applicants. This page offers information specific to that college.

12. **Ensure the colleges you apply to receive your transcripts.**

While you are applying, be sure to send your high school transcripts. If you attend a NC public high school, you can use CFNC to send free electronic high school transcripts to NC colleges. You can do it from the main page of the Application Hub, or while you are completing the online application on CFNC (select "YES" to the transcript option). You'll need to enter your First and Last Name, Date of Birth, NC Student Number, Gender and Email Address. Ask your school counselor about sending transcripts to non-NC colleges.

Find the College Application Checklist in the Application Resources section of: https://nccountdowntocollege.org/resources

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A Few Benefits of the CFNC Transcript System

- Students can request unlimited free transcripts through the CFNC Transcript System. This not only saves money for schools and students, it enables students to send transcripts without having to use a credit card.

- Students can use the CFNC transcript system even if they use a different online application for admission (e.g. Common App or campus website).

- Counselors and other school personnel do not need to be engaged in the process; students can request the transcript themselves.

- The CFNC Transcript System sends a current transcript and automatically creates a request for the final transcript to be sent – one less thing to worry about after graduation.

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APPLICATIONS

Tips for Sending Transcripts

- Transcripts may be requested: (1) in the online application, or (2) directly from the Application Hub, “Request a Transcript” section.
- Students must provide: Student Name, NC Student Number, Date of Birth, Gender, Email Address and Most Recent High School.
- The student last name must be entered exactly the way it appears in the PowerSchool system (student legal name).
- If requesting from the online application, the student will select from the submittal page the checkbox to request an electronic transcript be sent. This checkbox will only appear if the required information was completed on the online application.
- If requesting from the “Request a Transcript” section, the student will be able to update and save any of the required information before making a request.

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APPLICATIONS

Tips for Sending Transcripts

- The student's high school must be a participating school in the electronic transcript system in order for requests to be processed regardless of where the request is made.

- To see a full list of participating schools, go to CFNC.org > Apply > To College and click on the Quicklink, "E-Transcript School List"

- If the application is completed somewhere other than CFNC.org (e.g., the common application or a postsecondary institution's website), the student may request that the transcript be sent through the CFNC Application Hub (Request a Transcript section).

- For more detailed information about the CFNC electronic transcript process, see the Electronic High School Transcript FAQ at https://nccountdowntocollege.org/resources/

- If your public high school is not part of the CFNC Transcript System, your school principal can send a request to cfnc@northcarolina.edu with "Electronic Transcript Request" in the subject. Include first and last name, email address, school name and school College Board Code. Adding school will take 1-2 weeks.

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CONCLUSION

Questions

The answers to most questions can be found on CFNC.org; however, you can call CFNC toll free at 866-866-CFNC, selection option “1” for assistance with your question.

You can also contact the NC Countdown to College Coordinator by email at C2C@northcarolina.edu, or by phone at 919-843-0448.

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