

Career Resources for DACA/Undocumented Students

INTRODUCTION

In alignment with the commitment of university leadership toward undocumented and DACAmented students at Oregon State, the Career Development Center is a place where you can feel safe, heard and supported in your career pursuits. We encourage you to meet with our career advisors (appointments available via **Handshake**), utilize our online and in-person resources, and to know that we are here for you as you navigate the unique opportunities and challenges that come with being a DACA or undocumented learner. Don't hesitate to reach out to us!

This is an introduction into resources that may be helpful to you. If you are aware of a resource we should consider including, please notify us by emailing career@oregonstate.edu.

For university-wide resources and to connect with others, check out the opportunities available on the [Get Involved](#) page on the [Resources for DREAMers and Undocumented Students](#) webpage.

DISCLOSING YOUR STATUS TO EMPLOYERS

It can be confusing and stressful to decide when and with whom to share your status. Throughout the job search and hiring process it is important to provide information that is true and authentic, and to understand the employment process and your rights within it.

You may decide to share your status with an organization early in the hiring process or in an interview if you feel comfortable doing so, and to start a discussion about how to move forward in the process. It is important to consider with whom you want to disclose (sharing with a human resources person vs. a supervisor) and in what manner (disclosing in a personal statement for grad school vs. in an interview). Once you have moved through the hiring and interview process, the next time your status may be discussed is during offer acceptance. Depending on your status, there are many options to consider.

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS WITH DACA:

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) provides temporary relief from deportation and work authorization for individuals who came to the U.S. as children and who meet certain guidelines. To learn more about DACA eligibility, visit the [Department of Homeland Security website](#).

This employer guide on DACA (PDF) has useful information on how to complete the required I-9 Form for Employment Eligibility. All employees must submit an acceptable document that establishes identity and employment authorization. **DACA is item 4 on List A.**

On job applications there is sometimes a question that says: “Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?” **If you have DACA you can answer “yes” to the question and continue through the hiring process without having to disclose more detailed information about your background.**

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS WITHOUT DACA:

On job applications there is sometimes a question that says: “Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?” If you do NOT have DACA or another work authorization status, there are other options you may consider for gaining experience and finding employment. See the section below for a few alternative employment ideas:

1. Conduct employment as an “independent contractor”:

The IRS defines an independent contractor as someone who is self-employed, but the employer agency or payer has control and can direct only the result of the work, not what or how the work will be done. Generally, this will include doing the same type of work multiple times for several clients. When filing for employment, an independent contractor can use a social security number or an **Independent Taxpayer Identification Number** which can be obtained regardless of immigration status.

2. Start your own business:

If you have an entrepreneurial spirit, you can start your own Limited Liability Company (LLC) as a worker cooperative of individuals who are both workers and owners of the business. There are additional fees and taxes associated with an LLC. For more information, see **the Life after College: A Guide for Undocumented Students.**

3. Do volunteer or unpaid internships/get other types of experience:

You may also consider other avenues for gaining professional experience, such as if you receive an internship offer, you may ask the employer not to be paid and pursue other means of financial support. Also think about how to build up your resume with a variety of experiences that do not involve traditional employment, such as:

- Internships
- Fellowships
- Research
- Volunteering
- Community organizing
- Academic projects
- Shadowing professionals
- Project-work
- Leadership roles in student groups
- Study abroad

KNOW YOUR EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

It is against the law for employers to discriminate against its employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, pregnancy and age. There are certain questions employers **may not legally ask you in an interview**. Here are a couple of examples:

INAPPROPRIATE: Questions related to birthplace, ancestry or national origin:

- “Are you a U.S. citizen?”
- “How long has your family been in the U.S.?”
- “How did you learn to speak Chinese?”

APPROPRIATE:

- “Are you eligible to work in the U.S.?”
- “Are you able to provide proof of employment eligibility upon hire?”

For more information on illegal interview questions and employment discrimination, see:

- [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) (Information and how to file a discrimination complaint against an employer)

- [A U.S. department of labor presentation on illegal or inappropriate interview questions](#) (PDF)

What regulations exist with regard to employment eligibility verification?

According to the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#): “Most employers should not ask whether or not a job applicant is a United States citizen before making an offer of employment. The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) requires employers to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all employees hired after November 6, 1986, by completing the Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) Form, and reviewing documents showing the employee's identity and employment authorization. Federal law prohibits employers from rejecting valid documents or insisting on additional documents beyond what is required for the Form I-9, based on an employee's citizenship status or national origin. Employees are allowed to choose which documents to show for employment eligibility verification from the Form I-9 Lists of Acceptable Documents. Employers should accept any unexpired document from the Lists of Acceptable Documents so long as the document appears reasonably genuine on its face and relates to the employee. Federal law also prohibits employers from conducting the Form I-9 and E-Verify processes before the employee has accepted an offer of employment.”

Types of employment discrimination covered by the law: (Source: [U.S. Citizen & Immigration Services](#))

Types	What is prohibited?	Which employers are covered?
Citizenship or immigration status	Employers cannot discriminate against individuals when hiring, firing, or recruiting because the individuals are or are not U.S. citizens, or because of their immigration status or type of employment authorization. U.S. citizens, noncitizen nationals, asylees, refugees, and recent permanent residents are protected from this type of discrimination.	Employers with four or more employees are covered.
National origin	Employers cannot discriminate against individuals when hiring, firing, or recruiting based on the individual's place of birth, country of origin, ancestry, native language, accent, or because they are perceived as looking or sounding "foreign."	Generally, Immigrant and Employee Rights (IER)- covers employers with four to 14 employees.
Unfair documentary practices	<p>Employers cannot, based on an individual's citizenship, immigration status, or national origin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Request more or different documents than are required to verify employment authorization and identity; •Reject documents that reasonably appear to be genuine and relate to the employee; or •Specify certain documents that the worker should present. 	All employers.
Retaliation/ intimidation	<p>Employers cannot intimidate, threaten, coerce, or retaliate against a person because that person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Files a charge with IER or participates in an IER investigation or prosecution of a discrimination complaint; •Contests action that may constitute discrimination under the law that IER enforces; •Asserts their rights under the law that IER enforces; or 	All employers.

ON-CAMPUS RESOURCES

- **Here to Stay OSU**: The OSU student club serves to advocate for DACA students and undocumented immigrants in the United States on both the large level government scale and the smaller university scale, as well as provide resources to help these students be successful at OSU
- **Dreaming Beyond Borders Resource Center**: The DBB Resource Center provides students with academic, legal and health resources, access to **EOP** programs and works closely with Here to Stay in addition to other student advocacy groups.
- **Resources for Undocumented Students and Dreamers**: Resources for students that go beyond DACA, including faculty resources and paying for college.
- **OSU Cultural Centers**: OSU's **Diversity and Cultural Engagement** has multiple cultural centers which provide events and activities including national history and heritage month programs, social justice workshops, cultural holiday celebrations, cooking demonstrations, craftnights, and many other programs for the OSU community.

OFF-CAMPUS RESOURCES

- **College Guide for Undocumented Students**: information regarding the federal Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program, the college application process, how to finance a college education, how to talk about being undocumented, available scholarship opportunities, and tips for how to navigate the college experience.
- **DACA and Your Workplace Rights**: This FAQ, answered by the National Immigration Law Center, is intended to answer questions such as what are the rights of workers (1) when they apply for DACA, (2) after they have received DACA and have a work permit, and (3) when they are applying to renew their DACA. It also provides information that may be helpful when you apply for and after you have been granted DACA.
- **Immigrants Rising**: Immigrants Rising provides resources, knowledge and financial support for immigrant entrepreneurs, regardless of legal status, at any stage of their journey.
- **Life After College**: A Guide for Undocumented Students: sheds light on the possibilities that exist, including personal narratives, student testimonials, and advice from experts.
- **My Undocumented Life**: The mission of the My Undocumented Life blog is to provide up-to-date information and resources to undocumented immigrants. They postscholarship opportunities that are open to undocumented students, strategies for navigating the educational system, information on how to apply for DACA, news on immigration policies, and much more.
- **Resources Guide: Supporting Undocumented Youth**: Informed by research and promising practices, the U.S. Department of Education has compiled this Resource Guide to assist and enhance state and local efforts to support undocumented youth at the secondary and postsecondary school levels.