



Residency Policy

California law requires that certain residency requirements are established in order for a student to be enrolled in an independent study charter school for which average daily attendance may be claimed. California law requires that a student be a California resident and requires that the student is a resident of the county in which the apportionment claim is reported or of a county immediately adjacent to the county in which the apportionment claim is reported. [EC §§ 47612(b), 5147.3]

The purpose of the Cottonwood School Governing Board approving this Residency Policy is to accomplish the following:

1. Define Residency
2. Outline Residency for a Student on an Extended Vacation
3. Establish the Location Materials Will Be Mailed To
4. Outline the Procedures When a Student's Residency is in Question
5. Outline the Parent/Guardian/Education Rights Holder's Right Regarding Determination of Nonresidency
6. Outline the Procedures for Children of Military Families
7. Outline the Procedures for Homeless Youth

1. **Definition of Residency:** A student has residency in the state and county of the residence of the parent/guardian with whom that student maintains his or her place of abode. Residence denotes any factual place of abode of some permanency that is more than a mere temporary sojourn. Owning a home in California or in a particular county does not qualify a student to attend The Cottonwood School, unless it can be shown that the student is also living in the home at least three days per week during the school year.
2. **Residency for a Student on an Extended Vacation:** A student on an extended vacation lasting longer than four weeks, but less than six months, will not be deemed to have lost California residency.
3. **The Location Material Will Be Mailed To:** All materials will be mailed to, and any in person services will be held at, the address identified in the student's records in his/her proof of residence documentation, unless an alternative location is agreed upon by the teacher of record.
4. **Student's Residency is in Question:** If there is reason to believe that a student's residency is in question, The Cottonwood School may investigate in order to determine authenticity of the home address. When it is determined that a student lives outside of California and/or an authorized county, The Cottonwood School will provide written notice of the determination of nonresidency within five days of The Cottonwood School's intention to

disenroll the student.

5. Parent/Guardian/Education Rights Holder's Right Regarding Determination of nonresidency: The notice shall contain an explanation of the parent/guardian/education rights holder's right to request a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate to dispute the finding of nonresidency. If the parent/guardian/educational rights holder does not request a hearing within five days of receipt of the notice, the right to a hearing is waived and the student will be immediately disenrolled. If the student's parent, guardian or educational rights holder initiates the hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be disenrolled until The Cottonwood School issues a final decision.

6. Children of Military Families: The Cottonwood School will serve children of military families, as defined by Education Code section 49701, as follows:

- 1) Allow the student to continue his or her education in The Cottonwood School, regardless of change of residence of the military family during that school year, for the duration of the student's status as a child of a military family; or
- 2) For a student whose status changes due to the end of military service of his or her parent during a school year, comply with either of the following, as applicable:
 - a. If the student is enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, allow the student to continue his or her education in The Cottonwood School through the duration of that academic school year;
 - b. If the child is enrolled in high school, allow the student to continue his or her education in The Cottonwood School through graduation.

For purposes of providing special education services, The Cottonwood School will continue to provide special education services for children of military families as required by law.

7. Homeless Youth: The Cottonwood School will be considered to be a pupil's school of origin for a homeless youth when the child attended The Cottonwood School when permanently housed or was last enrolled in The Cottonwood School before becoming homeless. The Cottonwood School will serve homeless youth, as defined below, whose residency has changed as follows:

1. Allow the student to continue his or her education in The Cottonwood School for the duration of homelessness.
2. If the pupil is no longer homeless before the end of the academic year, either of the following apply:

- a. If the homeless youth is in high school, the The Cottonwood School shall allow the formerly homeless child to continue his or her education in the The Cottonwood School through graduation.
- b. If the homeless youth is in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, the The Cottonwood School shall allow the formerly homeless youth to continue his or her education in The Cottonwood School through the duration of the academic year.

The term “homeless youth” or “homeless pupil” shall mean individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of 42 USC section 11302(a)(1)); and includes—

1. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
2. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 42 USC section 11302(a)(2)(C));
3. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. migratory children (as such term is defined in 20 USC section 6399) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).