



Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Overview

The Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program allows for undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States illegally as minors the opportunity to live and work in the United States. Those who qualify and are approved for DACA are granted "deferred action status," and are allowed to apply for employment authorization. However, to qualify for DACA, there are a number of eligibility requirements undocumented immigrants must meet.

To qualify for DACA individuals:

- Must be under 31 years of age
- Have entered the United States before age 16
- Have lived continuously in the United States for 5 years
- Have not been convicted of a felony, a 'significant misdemeanor', or three other misdemeanors
- Currently in school, graduated from high school, earned a GED, or served in the military

Those undocumented immigrants who are eligible for DACA are referred to as DREAMers because they generally match the eligibility qualifications outlined in the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. Within this group of DREAMers, there are three distinct groups of eligibility:

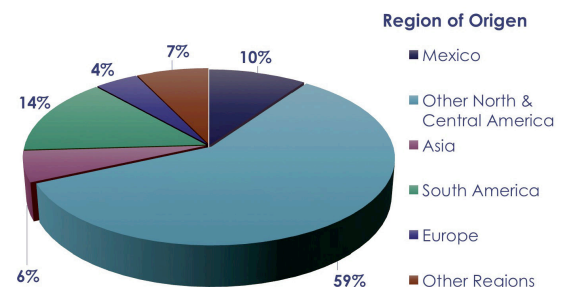
1. **Immediate Eligibility:** Ages 15-30 who are either in high school, have a high school diploma, or have served in the military.
2. **Future Eligibility:** Ages 5-14 who will be eligible at some point in the future if DACA remains in place.
3. **Possible Eligibility:** Ages 15-30 who are not in high school and do not have diploma, but *will* be eligible if they get a GED.

What does this mean for Rhode Island?

In the State of Rhode Island there are potentially 3,364 potential beneficiaries of the DACA program. Half of these potential beneficiaries fall in the first category of **Immediate Eligibility** with the other half divided almost evenly amongst the other categories of **Future Eligibility** and **Possible Eligibility**. The numbers break down as follows:

- ❖ Total Potential Beneficiaries in the State of Rhode Island: **3,364** (1,888 male, 1,476 female)
 - **Immediate Beneficiaries:** 1,689 (50.2%)
 - **Future Beneficiaries:** 757 (22.5%)
 - **Possible Beneficiaries:** 918 (27.3%)*

This would mean that an estimated 1,689 undocumented immigrants currently residing in Rhode Island are eligible to apply for deferred status, allowing them to live, work and study in the United States. Another 1,675 either will or could become eligible for deferred status in the future. If all potential beneficiaries applied for and were granted deferred status, there would be over 3,000 undocumented immigrants coming out of the shadows and participating more fully in the Rhode Island community.



*Data from "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates," published by the Immigration Policy Center, Oct. 16, 2012