

# DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## POLICY

### School Admission Residency

**JF**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee adopts the following policy and guidelines (Requirements for Admission to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District) regarding the residency and admissions of students to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. The staff is directed to ensure that all forms and regulations are fully executed and conform to this policy.

Only students who actually reside in the town of either Dudley or Charlton may attend the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District schools. "Residence" is a place where a person actually lives. Unless expressly permitted under the approved guidelines, temporary residence in the town of either Dudley or Charlton solely for the purpose of attending district schools is not considered "residence" for admission to the district schools.

For those situations where properties straddle the town lines, a fact specific review and analysis will be completed on a case by case basis. At a minimum, factors in the analysis and review will include: plot plan of the dwelling, detailing the location of major rooms, and inclusion in the town census as an occupant of the dwelling.

In determining residency, the committee retains the right to require the production of a variety of records and documentation and to investigate where a student actually resides. Students found to be in violation of the residency policy may be dismissed immediately from the district and the parent(s), guardian(s) or responsible adult may be jointly and severally liable to the district for the student's tuition for the full academic year(s). The district may also impose other penalties on the family such as legal fees incurred by legal action and the withholding of certain scholarships and prizes. A parent, legal guardian, or student who has reached the age of majority (18), who is aggrieved by a determination of residency, may appeal the determination to the superintendent of schools, whose decision shall be final.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee adopts the following policy regarding the residency and admission of students. The staff is directed to ensure that all forms and regulations are fully executed and conform to this policy.

#### I. RESIDENCY

In order to attend school in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, a student must actually reside in the towns of Dudley/Charlton, unless one of the exceptions (set forth in Part V below) applies. The residence of a minor child is ordinarily presumed to be the legal residence of the child's parent or legal guardian having physical custody of the child. A student's actual residence is considered to be the place where he or she lives permanently. In determining residency, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District retains the right to require the production of a variety of records and documentation and to investigate where a student actually resides.

A determination that a student does not actually reside in the towns Dudley/Charlton renders the student ineligible to enroll in the district schools, or if the student is already enrolled in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, shall result in the termination of such enrollment. A parent, legal guardian, or student who has reached the age of majority (18), who is aggrieved by a determination of residency may appeal the determination to the superintendent of schools, whose decision shall be final.

## II. VERIFICATION OF RESIDENCY

A. Before any student is enrolled in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, his or her parent or legal guardian must provide:

1. A signed Affidavit of Residency; and
2. Proof of residency in the town of either Dudley or Charlton (3 documents)

All applicants for enrollment must submit at least one document each from Column A, B, and C and any other documents that may be requested, including but not limited to those from Column A, B, or C (noted below). A parent, guardian, or student who is unable to produce the required documents should contact the superintendent of schools.

### **Column A** **Evidence of Residency** **for Homeowners**

Record of recent mortgage payment (last 30 days) and/or property tax bill

OR

Copy of home closing document with passing date followed by mortgage payment within 60 days from enrollment

### **For Renters/Leasees**

Copy of lease and/or copy of recent rental payment(s)

OR

Copy of notarized statement from landlord attesting to residency and copy of recent rent payment

OR

Section 8 Agreement

### **Column B** **Evidence of Occupancy**

A copy of one of the following bills listed dated within the past 30 days that includes your name and Dudley or Charlton address:

- Gas
- Electric
- Oil,
- Landline Telephone (not cell phone)
- Cable

### **Column C** **Evidence of Identification** **(Photo ID)**

Valid Driver's license  
Valid Massachusetts photo ID card  
Valid passport

## **B. VERIFICATION OF RESIDENCY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO DO NOT OWN A HOME OR LEASE**

For the parent or legal guardian who does not own a home or lease but who is living with a resident of either Dudley or Charlton, a "Shared Housing Affidavit" must be completed and notarized. This form can be found on the district's website under the "Parent Tab - Student Registration." In addition, the homeowner/lessor must appear in person with the parent or guardian at the time of registration and provide the appropriate documents as identified in Columns A., B., and C. Also, the parent or guardian must provide at the time of registration one of the following documents with the address as shown on the Shared Housing Affidavit: auto insurance and registration, credit card statement, bank statement, voter registration card, or US Postal address change document.

The principal, or his/her designee, shall verify the home address and home telephone number of each student at least once during the school year. Any irregularities shall be reported promptly to the superintendent of schools.

Parents are required to notify the school of any changes of their address or the address of the student within five days of the change.

### III. ENFORCEMENT

Should a question arise concerning any student's residency in the towns of either Dudley or Charlton while attending the district schools, the student's residency will be subject to further inquiry and/or investigation. Such questions concerning residency may arise on the basis of incomplete, suspicious, or contradictory proofs of address; anonymous tips; or correspondence that is returned to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District because of an invalid or unknown address, or other grounds.

The superintendent/principal may request additional documentation, may use the assistance of the district's attendance officer, and/or may obtain the services of police or investigative agency personnel to conduct investigations into student residence. The attendance officer and/or residency investigator(s) will report his or her findings to both, who shall make final determination of residency.

Upon an initial determination by the superintendent of schools/principal that a student is actually residing in a city or town other than Dudley or Charlton, the student's enrollment in the district schools shall be terminated immediately.

### IV. PENALTIES

In addition to termination of enrollment and the imposition of other penalties permitted by law, Dudley-Charlton Regional School District reserves the right to recover restitution based upon the costs of educational services provided during the period of non-residency.

### V. EXCEPTIONS

1. The residency requirements shall not apply to the following:

- a. Students enrolled in the Dudley – Charlton Regional School District under special programs approved by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, such as educational exchange programs or School Choice. In order to be considered for enrollment, the foreign exchange student should be at the level of eleventh grade of high school and be fluent in the English language. Students attending for one year under such a program will not be eligible for a Shepherd Hill diploma but may be awarded a certificate of attendance. Requests for the attendance of a foreign exchange student will be acted upon by the committee upon recommendation of the superintendent, in order of the receipt of applications which contain supporting documents, and no more than two students to be admitted in any one year. Approval of the school committee must occur prior to July 30 of the incoming year.
- b. Tuition paying students, as permitted by law;
- c. Students who are entitled to attend school in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

2. Extraordinary Circumstances:

- a. Tuition Waivers

At the discretion of the Superintendent and the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, tuition may be waived in the following cases:

1. Students who have completed their junior year at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, and who move from either Dudley or Charlton just prior to or during their senior year.
2. Students who move because of the severe or chronic illness of the student or immediate family member; the death of an immediate family member; disaster to the residence; or other circumstances having a significant impact upon the student.
3. Dwellings that are intersected by town lines in Dudley/Charlton:
  - a. Dwellings that are intersected by the town line prior to the adoption of this policy:

In the case of a single family dwelling, as distinguished from a plot of land, that is intersected by whatever degree by the towns' boundary lines prior to the adoption of this policy, and upon which some property tax is assessed by the towns of either Dudley or Charlton, persons residing therein may attend school in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.
  - b. Dwellings that are built or altered after the adoption of this policy:

In the case of a single family dwelling that is intersected by whatever degree by the town boundary lines because of construction or alterations occurring after the adoption of this policy, if more than fifty percent of such dwelling is located within the towns' boundary, persons residing therein may attend school in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

#### VI. POTENTIAL WAIVER WHEN RESIDENCY IS IN TRANSITION

For students whose residency is in transition, the following exceptions to the general policy may apply, with prior written approval from the superintendent of schools:

1. Pending purchase of dwelling

The children of families who have signed a home rental or purchase contract to reside in the school district may, subject to verification of residency, be enrolled for the quarter in which they expect to become residents, subject to the superintendent's approval.
2. Construction of new dwelling

The children of families who have signed a home rental or purchase contract to reside in the school district may, subject to verification of residency, be enrolled for the quarter in which they expect to become residents, subject to the superintendent's approval.
3. Residence in rental properties

The children of families who plan to rent a primary residence in either Dudley or Charlton may enroll in the district schools 30 days prior to taking possession of the rental property, as evidenced by a signed lease and evidence of financial commitment.
4. Brief residence outside the town

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District students whose families must briefly live outside the towns of Dudley or Charlton because they are (a) moving from one in-town residence to another, or (b) renovating a current Dudley or Charlton residence, may continue to attend the district schools. Evidence of the intention and ability to resume residency in either Dudley or Charlton within 90 days may be required.

#### VII. NOTIFICATION

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District residency requirements, verification procedures, and consequences of falsifying or misrepresenting residency will be published in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee Policy Manual, and published in each school handbook.

**Legal Ref.: MGL c. 76, sec. 5**

McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Adopted September 7, 1972

Amended September 15, 1977

Amended May 13, 1987

Amended October 10, 2007

Amended December 12, 2012

Amended March 13, 2019