

## Questions and Answers from Enrollment Audit Training School Year 2013-2014

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### PROOF OF INCOME-PAY STUBS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Q1: May electronic pay stubs be submitted?**

A1: Yes, as long as home address of the person seeking to enroll the student is on the electronic pay stub and it shows evidence of withholding of District of Columbia taxes.

**Q2: Dc.gov checks no longer have the DC address but shows withholdings, what should a school do?**

A2: There is a way to show addresses on DC.gov pay stubs. Please instruct the parent/guardian to go online to the PeopleSoft system and check the box for “non PDF” version of the pay stub to print, which shows the address.

**Q3: What if the withholding amount on the pay stub is \$0?**

A2: As long as the home address of the person seeking to enroll the student is on the pay stub and the pay stub lists District of Columbia as the state for local taxes, the withholding *amount* is inconsequential.

**Q4: Can we use a pay stub that shows “local tax” and does not specify the District of Columbia as the parent/guardian’s local taxes for residency verification?**

A4: No, if the pay stub only says “local” and does not specify the District of Columbia, it may not be used for residency verification.

**Q5: Can an unemployment pay stub be used for residency verification?**

A5: Yes, as long as it lists the name and address of the person seeking to enroll the student, it can be used as documentation of financial assistance from the District of Columbia government for residency purposes.

**Q6: TANF no longer issues re-certification letters. Can the TANF “Case Profile Page” print-out be used as documentation of financial assistance?**

A6: Yes, as long as it shows the name and address of the person seeking to enroll the student, and that they are currently receiving assistance, it can be used as documentation of financial assistance.

**Q7: What is the 45-day rule for proof of residency— 45 days from when?**

A7: A pay stub, with an issue date within the past forty-five (45) days of date of payment, that contains the name, address, and DC income tax withholding for the current tax year of the person seeking to enroll the student.

**Q8: If a person seeking to enroll a student brings in a copy of their District of Columbia income tax form certified by the Office of Tax and Revenue, without the tax information authorization waiver, can that be used to prove residency?**

A8: Yes.

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### UTILITY BILLS

**Q1: If the person seeking to enroll the student brings in a Pepco bill that has been stamped “paid” by Pepco, is that sufficient for the utility bill requirement?**

A1: Yes. So long as it is clear that the “paid” stamp was produced by Pepco.

**Q2: What if the person seeking to enroll the student is receiving energy assistance so they don't owe any money to the utility company?**

A2: The person should bring in documentation that they are receiving financial assistance from the District of Columbia. If they are not paying a bill, they will not have a receipt to submit.

**Q3: If the person seeking to enroll the student brings in two months of utility bills, with the second month showing that the previous month was paid, is that sufficient?**

A3: Yes, that would meet the criteria for a paid receipt.

**Q4: If the person seeking to enroll the student brings in a bank statement showing that the utility bill was paid, is that sufficient?**

A4: Yes, if the bank statement explicitly says that the payment was made to the utility company (not simply that a payment was made in the amount owed), then that would qualify as a receipt or canceled check.

**Q5: What if the person seeking to enroll the student pays a utility bill by money order – how do they submit a receipt?**

A5: Money orders come with multiple copies, one of which should be retained by the purchaser as the receipt. If they did not keep the copy to serve as the receipt then they will need to use another form of documentation to prove residency.

**Q6: Can we accept P.O. Box addresses as proof of residency?**

A6: No, additional information with the physical address on it is needed. Often a utility bill will show the address where the service occurs, which is acceptable.

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## **LEASES**

**Q1: What if the lease is expired, but the person seeking to register the student is now month-to-month in the apartment?**

A1: If the person seeking to register the student is living in a month-to-month arrangement, they can bring in the original lease and a canceled check with their and their landlord's name from the previous month as proof of residency.

**Q2: What if the lease payment is \$0 because the person seeking to register the student receives housing assistance?**

A2: The law requires both a lease and proof of payment in order to use a lease as residency verification. If no payment is made, the person seeking to enroll the student will be unable to provide evidence of payment. In circumstances where the lease is paid through public assistance, the person seeking to enroll the student should provide a copy of their Housing Authority letter to meet the residency verification standards.

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## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTATION**

**Q1: What about parents who sign a form declining residency verification record maintenance?**

A1: Any parent that does not want the school to keep copies of their documentation on file must sign the Parent Residency Verification Retention Form. In such a case, the school or LEA is required to retain this form along with the residency verification form. During the audit, the auditors may request parents' back-up documentation to prove residency. Therefore all parents using this form should be advised by the school or LEA that they may upon request be required to immediately provide the backup documentation during the audit period.

**Q2: Are schools/LEAs required to keep/maintain back-up documentation used to verify DC residency?**

A2: Yes, all schools and/or LEAs are required to keep back-up documentation, except in the case where a parent submits the Parent Residency Verification Retention Form or where a homeless referral form is provided for a student (the homeless referral form is itself sufficient proof of residency).

**Q3: Are schools/LEAs required to present residency verification back-up documentation to auditors upon request?**

A3: Yes, schools and/or LEAs are required to present the back-up documentation at the auditor's request.

**Q4: Should a homeless referral form be attached to the DC residency form for enrollment audit?**

A4: Yes, any documentation for homeless students under the McKinney Vento Act should be attached to the DC Residency Verification Form for audit purposes.

**Q5: When can schools/LEAs start accepting paperwork for residency?**

A5: Residency documentation should not be accepted any earlier than April.

**Q6: Can we collect forms even from students on the waitlist?**

A6: Schools/LEAs are not required to collect residency verification from students on the waitlist. However, DC residents have priority over non-residents when filling spots at DC schools. Therefore, schools/LEAs must, at a minimum, reference a student's address listed on their application before taking them off the waitlist.

**Q7: If a student's address changes before the enrollment audit, are they required to provide new residency verification documentation?**

A7: New residency documentation does not have to be provided unless (1) the student is moving out of the District of Columbia, (2) the school or LEA has reason to believe that the student has moved out the District of Columbia and requests proof of residency as part of a residency investigation, or (3) the school or LEA has established a policy requiring students to provide new residency verification documentation whenever they change addresses.

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## **TUITION**

**Q1: Who submits payments for tuition for non-resident students?**

A1: Money used to make non-resident tuition payments must come from non-government funding, including the student's caregiver or the school if using money obtained through private funding. The party making tuition payments on behalf of a non-resident student must submit such payments to the LEA or school. The LEA must then submit the payments to OSSE within 5 days of receipt.

**Q2: How does the LEA know what to charge a student for non-resident tuition?**

A2: Calculations should be made using the UPSFF formula, including any applicable supplemental allocations. Tuition may be pro-rated to reflect the portion of the school year during which the non-resident student will be enrolled.

**Q3: When is the deadline for receiving all tuition payments?**

A3: Tuition may be paid in one lump sum payment prior to or at the beginning of the school year, or incrementally based on a payment agreement entered into between the LEA and the party enrolling the student. All payment agreements must indicate that the tuition amount must be paid in full before the start of the last quarter of the school year. All non-resident students must have a zero tuition

balance with the District by the start of the last quarter, therefore all tuition payments must be transmitted to OSSE by that date.

**Q4: Where should LEA's send tuition payments and who should payments be made out to?**

A4: Non-resident students may enroll in DCPS or a PCS, only if no District resident is found on the school's waiting list. The parent/guardian of a non-resident student or the audit nonresident must enter into a tuition plan or must pay the full non tuition upon enrollment. LEA's are required to collect tuition payments. All tuition checks should be made to the "DC Treasurer" and sent to

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