

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

DEPENDENCY STATUS APPEAL FORM

Student's Name _____ SSN _____ - _____ - _____
Address _____ Phone (____) _____
City/State/Zip _____ Academic Year _____ - _____

The U.S. Congress and the Department of Education determine the criteria by which a student is considered dependent or independent of their parents for financial aid purposes. The basic premise underlying financial aid is that parents have the primary responsibility to pay for their son's or daughter's educational expenses. However, if there is an unintentional, involuntary or uncontrollable break in the relationship between parent and student, the Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) may be able to consider the student independent for financial aid purposes.

There are four conditions that the Department of Education has identified and that, individually or in combination with one another, DO NOT qualify as "unusual circumstances" or that DO NOT merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

1. **Parents refusing to contribute to the student's education;**
2. **Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification;**
3. **Parents not claiming the students as a dependent for income tax purposes;**
4. **Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.**

If you are a dependent student because you answered "No" to all the questions in Step Three of your FAFSA, but wish to apply for financial aid as an independent student, you may complete this form to appeal for status reclassification.

I – REASON FOR APPEAL

If one of the following circumstances applies to you, check the category and provide the required documentation:



1. **A severe situation exists in your family that prevents you from obtaining your parents' financial information, such as physical or emotional abuse, severe estrangement, abandonment, parental drug or alcohol abuse, mental incapacity, or another such situation beyond your control.**

a. PERSONAL STATEMENT

On separate paper, tell us in your own words why you should be considered an independent student. Please describe the events in your life that led up to your current separation from your family. If you are receiving support from friends or relatives, you must describe the nature of that support and how you came to receive it. If you are self-supporting, explain how you came to support yourself, and over what period of time you have done this.

b. DOCUMENTATION

Provide statements from at least two adult professionals who are not family members that verify the family circumstances you describe in your personal statement. Adult professionals include clergy members, lawyers, guidance counselors, teachers or professors, doctors, family counselors or therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists or other qualified mental health professionals, and law enforcement officers. If you were raised by a family member or another person who is not your parent, one of the required statements may be from that person. The statements you submit must be originals, not photocopies. If you are self-supporting, be prepared to submit photocopies of your **two** most recent tax return or other financial documents.

Please continue on reverse side



2. You are a non-U.S. citizen (who is otherwise eligible to receive federal financial aid according to your non-citizen status) and your parents currently reside in a foreign country. However, you are unable to obtain parental information because of long-standing political policy or civil unrest in the country where your parents live that prevents mail or funds from passing in or out of the country.

a. **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

On separate paper, tell us in your own words why you should be considered an independent student. Please describe the situation in your country where your parents live that prevents mail of funds from entering or leaving the country. If you are receiving support from friends or relatives, you must describe the nature of that support and how you came to receive it. If you are self-supporting, explain how you came to support yourself, and over what period of time you have done this.

b. **DOCUMENTATION**

Provide a statement from an official from the embassy (or other diplomatic office) of the country where your parents live or from an appropriate refugee agency that describes the long-standing political policy or civil unrest that exists there. The statement must verify that it is impossible to get mail or funds in or out of the country. The statement must be an original, not a photocopy.

II - MONTHLY INCOME & EXPENSE WORKSHEET

You must complete this worksheet regardless of your reason for appealing your dependency status and be prepared to document the amounts listed. Documentation of current income might include recent pay stubs, benefit letters, bank statements, etc. Expenses documentation could include a lease, utility bills, paid receipts, etc.

CURRENT INCOME – List your average monthly income and from what sources you receive it.

TYPE OF INCOME	SOURCE	AMOUNT PER MONTH
Wages		
Savings/Investments		
Untaxed Benefits (Please specify)		
Cash Support from other people		
Other		

CURRENT EXPENSES – List your average monthly expenses and how they are covered. The types of expenses are listed in the first column. In the second column, fill in the amount that is paid each month for each category. In the third column, give the name and relationship of the person who pays the expenses or provides the item for you. If you pay the cost, enter "self" in the third column.

TYPE OF EXPENSE	WHAT IT COSTS PER MONTH	WHO PAYS OR PROVIDES IT
Housing		
Utilities		
Food		
Clothing		
Transportation		
Medical		
Personal		

IMPORTANT: Please note that if ALL documentation is not submitted at the same time, this application will be returned.

III - AFFIRMATION

I (the student) certify that all information in this appeal, including the personal statement and other documentation, is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if I am found to have knowingly or intentionally given false statements or fraudulent documentation, my appeal will be denied.

Student's Signature

Date