



DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE REQUEST

2023- 2024

REQUEST TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID WITHOUT PARENTS' INFORMATION

NAME: _____ PLU ID# _____

ADDRESS: _____ SS# _____

_____ PHONE# _____

The philosophy upon which financial aid is based states that the primary responsibility for meeting educational costs is that of the student and his or her family. Eligibility for financial aid is determined on the basis of financial need. If you are considered a dependent student, your financial need is determined through income and asset information provided by both you and your parents. When considered a dependent student, you are required by law to provide your parents' financial information in order to be considered for financial aid. If, under certain conditions, a student is unable to provide parent information, a student can apply for a Dependency Override. **To qualify for the dependency override, one or more of the following criteria must exist and be documented, per federal regulation:**

1. abandonment by parent(s)
2. an abusive family environment that threatens the student's health or safety
3. the student being unable to locate his parents

As stated by the Department of Education, the following are situations that do not qualify a student for a dependency override:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education.
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification.
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency

In your letter of appeal you should include the following information:

1. Circumstances that identify abandonment, or abuse, as listed in 1-3 above.
2. Explain the circumstances of the last time you had contact with either parent.
3. Why you feel you should be considered a self-supporting student.

Explain in detail. (The more supporting documentation you can provide, the better. *This information is confidential.*)

Include with your appeal the following documentation:

1. A statement of your expenses and resources.
2. Supporting statements from a minimum of two third parties who are aware of your situation. Third parties include teachers, counselors, medical authorities, members of the clergy, prison administrators, government agencies or courts. If documentation from a third party is unavailable, a letter from a family member detailing the unusual circumstances is an acceptable last resort.

Student's Signature _____

Date: _____

FROM FEDERAL STUDENT AID HANDBOOK

DEPENDENCY OVERRIDES:

A Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) may do dependency overrides on a case-by-case basis for students with unusual circumstances. If the FAA determines that an override is appropriate, she must write out the determination and retain it and the supporting documentation. However, none of the conditions listed below, singly or in combination, qualify as unusual circumstances meriting a dependency override:

1. Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education.
2. Parents are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification.
3. Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
4. Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.

Unusual circumstances do include (and may cause any of the aforementioned conditions) abandonment by parents, an abusive family environment that threatens the student's health or safety, or the student being unable to locate his parents. In such cases an override might be warranted.

These conditions would not disqualify a student from being a homeless unaccompanied youth or self-supporting and at risk of homelessness.

An aid administrator may override only from dependent to independent (though as suggested earlier, if an independent student receives substantial support from others, a school may use PJ to adjust the COA or FAFSA data items such as untaxed income).

Documentation is critical to the dependency override process. The documentation must support, and include the reason for, the decision and should in almost all cases originate from a third party with knowledge of the unusual circumstances of the student.

An FAA may, without gathering documentation, use an override that another school granted in the same award year.

A third party that knows the student's situation—e.g., a teacher, counselor, medical authority, member of the clergy, prison administrator, government agency, or court—should establish the unusual circumstances. Evidence can be a signed letter or an official document, such as a court order. If third party documentation is not available, the school may (it is not required to) accept a signed and dated statement from the student or a family member detailing the unusual circumstances. Such a statement should be a last resort.