



Financial Aid and Scholarships

Provisional Independent Student Status

FAFSA Requirements and Unusual Circumstances

Unless they meet one of the federal criteria that would establish them as an independent student, students are required to provide parental information on the FAFSA application to gain full consideration for Federal Student Aid, including programs such as the Federal Pell Grant and Federal Student Loans.

In some cases, some students may be unable to provide parent information on their FAFSA due to “unusual circumstances”. Oftentimes in these circumstances, a student is unable to contact their parent or attempting to obtain the required parent information would potentially endanger the student’s mental, emotional, or physical well-being. Examples of these circumstances can include, but are not limited to:

- Parental abandonment, estrangement, or abuse
- Parental incarceration
- Other circumstances

In these types of unique situations, students may be able to request a dependency status override in which they are made “independent” by a financial aid administrator. However, it is important to note that such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and must be made based on adequate documentation.

Many other situations, while unique, unfortunately do not qualify as an unusual circumstance and therefore are ineligible for a dependency override. Examples of these situations include, but are not limited to:

- The student does not live with the parent
- The student is self-supporting
- The parent(s) refuse to contribute to the student’s education.
- The parent(s) will not provide information for the FAFSA or verification.
- The parent(s) do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.

In any of these scenarios, students would still be required to provide parent information on the FAFSA Application to gain full consideration for student aid eligibility.

Dependency Override Process and Timelines

Step 1

Students who believe their unusual circumstances may qualify for a Dependency Override may submit a request in Workday for evaluation and provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances that are preventing them from providing the required parent information on the FAFSA Application. Students should receive a response from the financial aid office within 3-5 business days following the submission.

Step 2

If a student's unusual circumstance qualifies for a dependency override, they will receive a Dependency Override Request in Workday to provide more information. The request will detail the specific information and documentation that needs to be submitted in order for the file to be reviewed.

Step 3

Students will submit all required information and supporting documentation through the Professional Judgement request in Workday. Upon receipt of the information and documentation, the file will be routed for review by a financial aid staff member. Review of submitted information and documentation may take up to 3-5 business days.

- If additional documentation is needed, students will be contacted by their financial aid counselor with detailed information about what must be submitted. Once the additional documentation has been submitted, re-review may take up to an additional 3-5 business days.

Step 4

If a Dependency Override is approved, our office will submit a correction to the FAFSA Application to the US Department of Education. Following this submission, an updated FAFSA record should be received within 3-5 business days.

Step 5

Once the updated FAFSA has been received back from the US Department of Education, students will then be awarded their financial aid eligibility based on their new FAFSA calculation.

Timeline

In total, the above process may take anywhere between 2-3 business weeks, depending on how quickly each step is completed.

Students who initiate the process noted above will receive an official determination of dependency status no later than 60 days from the date of initiation. If additional

documentation and/or information is requested and not submitted within this timeframe, the resulting determination will be a denial. In such an instance, students may re-initiate the process at any time after the initial timeframe expires.

All other formal determinations rendered by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships are final.