

**NOTE: Being considered independent does not automatically make you eligible for more financial aid. In some cases, you may actually have more financial aid eligibility as a dependent student.**

A financial aid administrator makes a documented determination of independence by reason of unusual circumstances. **Changes are for ONE YEAR ONLY.**

Financial aid regulations assume that the student and the student's parents have primary responsibility for meeting the educational costs of students. If you are considered a dependent student according to the FAFSA, your aid eligibility is determined by using both parent and student income and asset information. Dependent students are required by law to provide parental information and signatures to be considered for need-based financial aid.

Occasionally, due to unusual circumstances, a student cannot obtain parental information. If you cannot provide this for some reason, you may petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information. All requests will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office, **but not all requests are granted. All decisions are final.**

In your petition you should respond to each of the following items:

1. Identify the location of both of your parents.
2. Describe the last time you had contact with, received support from, lived with each of your parents.
3. Why are your parents unable to provide support or information?
4. Describe how you have been self-supporting in the last three years. Describe the source(s) of your income; income/wages, savings, benefits (SSI, etc.), financial aid, cash support from others, and any other source.

Also, respond to the following items:

- a.) when did you start meeting your expenses without parental support?
  - b.) submit a copy of your most recent federal tax return, or write an explanation why no tax return was submitted.
5. Provide statements from two responsible adults who are aware of your situation and can corroborate the facts you present. Examples of such persons would include clergy, social workers or other social service personnel, court officials (or copies of court documents), teachers or high school counselors and police officers. At least one statement must be from someone who is not a relative or a friend.

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