

2021-2022 Dependency Status Review Form

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
Date of Birth	Student ID Number	
Home Phone Number _____		Work/Cell Phone Number _____

Read the information below before completing this form.

Federal financial aid regulations assume that the family has the primary responsibility of meeting the educational costs of students. If you are considered a Dependent Student based on the FAFSA definition for dependent students, your financial aid eligibility is determined using your parent income/asset information and signatures, in addition to your own, to be considered for federal financial aid.

When applying for financial aid, the federal government has specific standards to determine who has independent status and is not required to provide parental information. To have independent status, you must meet at least one of the following conditions:

- You were born before January 1, 1998.
- You are enrolled in a graduate or a professional program.
- You are married.
- You have a child or children who receive more than ½ of their support from you.
- You have a legal dependent other than a spouse.
- You were a ward of the court until age 18 or both parents are deceased.
- You are currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
- You are a veteran of the United States Armed Forces.
- At any time since you turned 13, both your parents were deceased, you were in foster care or you were a dependent/ward of the court.
- You are an emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of legal residence.
- You are in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence.
- You were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, determined by your high school or school district, on or after July 1, 2020.
- You were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, determined by the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, on or after July 1, 2020.
- You were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, determined by the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program, on or after July 1, 2020.

A student who does not meet ANY of the above conditions is classified as a Dependent student. Exceptions to this dependency definition are made only in extraordinary situations on a case by case basis. Students with unusual and exceptional circumstances must show compelling reason to be considered independent rather than dependent.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations, there are limits to which circumstances can be considered for a dependency override. The following **are not** considered unusual circumstances for the purpose of achieving independent status for financial aid:

- You do not live in your parents' home.
- You are self-supporting.
- You are not claimed as a federal income tax exemption on your parents' income tax.
- Your parents cannot afford or refuse to help with college or living expenses.
- Your parents are unwilling to provide their financial information to complete the FAFSA or for verification.
- You and your parents do not communicate due to disagreements.

APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

If you do not meet any of the conditions for independent status outlined above, you may appeal if you believe you have an extenuating situation. These are generally severe circumstances within your family that prevent you from obtaining your parents' financial information. If you want Student Financial Aid to **consider** a dependency override, which eliminates the requirement for parental information on the FAFSA, you must be able to **explain** and **document** the circumstances.

Instructions:

Complete and submit this form along with the required documentation to the Student Financial Aid Office. Documentation requirements are listed below. It may be necessary to request additional information to clarify or supplement information already submitted. If so, you will be notified if additional documentation is needed. After your request and documentation are reviewed, we will notify you of the results through your UNA Portal. Please allow up to fourteen (14) business days for review of your dependency status appeal.

To request a dependency override review, you must submit the following information to the Student Financial Aid Office:

1. **Signed Dependency Status Appeal Form.**
2. **Personal Statement.** Attach a letter explaining/describing your situation:
 - describe your extenuating circumstance that warrants your appeal
 - explain the current location/relationship (even if it is non-existent) with both of your parents
 - describe the last time you had contact with each parent
3. **Supporting Documentation.** Provide evidence verifying or substantiating the reasons for your independent status request described in your personal statement. This may include:
 - a statement from two responsible adults who are aware of your situation, such as a high school counselor, caseworker, therapist, clergy person or other professional
 - documentation confirming that a parent is deceased, institutionalized, or incarcerated
 - legal documentation verifying that there is a protection/restraining order that prohibits you from having contact with your parents
 - other documentation that would explain why parental information should or could not be obtained to determine financial eligibility such as court orders, police records, or medical records

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

- I hereby certify that all information contained in this request for dependency override is true and complete.
- I understand that providing false statements or fraudulent documentation will prevent me from receiving financial aid and may lead to fines and/or imprisonment.
- I understand that if my appeal is APPROVED, then I will be awarded federal aid based on independent status.
- I understand that if my appeal is NOT APPROVED, then I will have to submit my FAFSA, providing my parent(s) financial information and signatures in order to receive federal aid.

Student Signature

Date

L#

Hand-written signatures must be provided.

Student Financial Aid Office
UNA Box 5014
318 Commons Building
Florence, AL 35632-0001
Telephone: 256.765.4278
Fax: 256.765.4920
Email: sfins@una.edu

Allow 10-14 business days to process this request.

A final decision will be posted on your UNAPortal and email account.