

Dependency Override/ Unusual Circumstances Appeal Form

Student Name _____ Student ID# _____

Guidelines governing Federal Student Aid (Title IV) categorize students as “dependent” or “independent” based on the premise the student and parents have the primary responsibility for meeting the student’s educational costs. This applies even when the parents are not actually supporting the student. Federal regulations do permit Life University to override a student’s dependency status on a case-by-case basis IF unusual or unique circumstances exist and can be documented.

Some examples of unusual circumstances:

- Abusive family environment (physical, mental, sexual abuse, or other forms of domestic violence)
- Abandonment by Parents (usually in cases of one or more years)
- Incarceration or institutionalization (mental and/or physical illness) of both parents
- Parents whereabouts unknown or parents cannot be located
- An unsuitable household (child removed from household and placed in foster care)
- Other extenuating circumstances that can be sufficiently documented.

Please note that the federal guidelines regarding dependency overrides clearly indicate that the following situations **DO NOT QUALIFY** as extenuating circumstances and therefore would not result in a dependency override:

- Parent(s) refusing to contribute to the student’s education
- Parent(s) are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification
- Parent(s) not claiming students as dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency
- Student does not live with their parent(s)

If you can document unusual circumstances, complete this form to request your dependency status be changed to independent. The outcome of your appeal depends on the information you furnish to the Financial Aid Department. Be complete and concise. All information will be held strictly confidential.

Documentation Needed for Consideration:

Student’s Statement of Independence – A typed personal statement in which you explain the following:

- Reason(s) for requesting a dependency override
- History of parental relationships including timeline of events
- Current living arrangements
- How you support yourself

Third Party Affirmation – You must provide two statements (one from each category below):

- A professional adult who is familiar with and can verify your circumstances. Examples of professional adult include law enforcement officer, clergy member, school counselor, or social worker. These statements must either be on a business letterhead, signed, and dated OR from a third party’s business/organization email address.
- Relative or friend who is familiar with and can verify your circumstances. Must include contact information.

Additional Documentation (if available) – Any documentation that supports your claim for independent status.

- Examples: Copies of reports from the courts, death certificate(s), incarceration notice(s), police report(s).

Documentation Requested by the Financial Aid Department – Upon review of your appeal form, additional documentation may be requested.

Certification and Signature

I certify that the information listed on this form and all supporting documents concerning my request for a dependency override are correct and complete. I also understand that all decisions are final and if the dependency override is denied that parental information will be required to process my FAFSA.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

IMPORTANT: Determination cannot be completed until ALL documentation is received.