

DEPENDENCY STATUS APPEAL FORM



Student Administrative
Services | Financial Aid

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

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. A decision to declare a student independent applies only to the student’s Title IV Federal Aid at Life University and only to one award year.

If you can document the unusual or unique circumstances governing why you feel you should be declared independent for Title IV Federal Aid purposes, you may petition for a dependency override by providing documentation.

NOTE: The following conditions are NOT considered unusual circumstances and do not qualify for a dependency override: student demonstrates total self-sufficiency, student does not wish to communicate with parents, parents refuse to contribute to the student’s education, parents unwillingness to provide information on the FAFSA or for FAFSA verification, or parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.

Certain circumstances which may qualify as reasons to declare a student independent include, but are not limited to, parents are deceased, parents are incarcerated, or unusual parental situations (e.g. parents’ whereabouts are unknown, abusive family environment, parental abandonment of the student).

REQUIRED ITEMS

1. Signed statement describing in detail your unusual or unique family situation including the last time and the circumstances under which you had contact with your parents, and how you previously met and plan to continue to meet your living expenses
2. Documentation from at least one of the following sources:
 - Official court documentation which specifically details your unusual or unique family situation; **OR**
 - Statements from at least two third party individuals that can verify your statement. These can come from either of the following:
 - public or non-profit agency, court or professional (minister, counselor, teacher, etc.) which possess first-hand knowledge of your unusual or unique circumstances
 - detailed, notarized statements from at least two adults who identify their relationship to you and who have first-hand knowledge of your circumstances.
3. Copy of your most recent Federal Tax Transcript, W-2 wage form, or a statement explaining how you financially supported yourself for the last calendar year.

**** If all required items are not submitted together with this form, this application will not be processed.**

By signing below, I certify the documentation provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I agree to submit additional documentation to support this appeal should the Financial Aid Department make such a request. If independent status is approved, I am aware I must document this status on an annual basis.

Student Signature _____ Date _____