



## 2025-2026 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, 2002.
- At the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year, you will be enrolled in a graduate or a doctoral program.
- You are married.
- You have a child or children other than a spouse who receive more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their financial support from you from now and between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.
- You have a legal dependent other than a spouse who receive more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their financial support from you from now and between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.
- You are currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training.

*(If you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee, are you on active duty for other than state or training purposes?)*

- You are a veteran of the United States armed forces. \*

*\*Answer "Yes" (you are a veteran) if you (1) have engaged in active duty (including basic training) in the U.S. armed forces (military, naval, air, or space service) and were released under a condition other than dishonorable; (2) served full-time as a Reservist or member of the National Guard; or (3) were called to federal active duty. Also answer "Yes" if you are not a veteran now but will be one by June 30, 2026.*

- At any time since you turned 13, both your parents were deceased, you were in foster care, or you were a ward of the court.
- You are or were a legally emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of residence.
- You are or were in legal guardianship with someone other than your parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in your state of residence.
- You were unaccompanied and either 1) homeless or 2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless. \*

*\* You'll be considered provisionally independent and will be allowed to fill out the FAFSA form as an independent student if you indicate that you are unaccompanied and homeless or at risk of being homeless on the FAFSA form for the first time and you don't have a determination from an individual at an eligible agency. An individual at an eligible agency includes one of the following:*

- your high school or district homeless liaison or designee
- the director or designee of an emergency or transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness
- the director or designee of a project supported by a federal TRIO program or a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant
- a financial aid administrator

A student who does not meet ANY of the 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

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### **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.

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Student Signature	Date	L#
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**Hand-written signatures must be provided.**

Student Financial Aid Office      Telephone: 256.765.5200  
UNA Box 5014      Fax: 256.765.4920  
Commons Building      Email: [financialaid@una.edu](mailto:financialaid@una.edu)  
Florence, AL 35632-0001

\*Allow 10-14 business days to process this request.

\*A final decision will be posted on your UNA Portal and email account.