



Petition for Independent Status 2009-2010

Student's Name _____ Social Security Number _____ - _____ - _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone _____

You are considered an independent student for financial aid purposes if you meet one of the following conditions at the time you complete and sign the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):

- You were born before January 1, 1985
- Both of your parents deceased, or are you or were you a ward/dependent of the court until the age of eighteen
- You are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
- You are a graduate student working on a post-baccalaureate degree
- You are married
- You have legal dependents, other than a spouse, who meet the definition of legal dependent found in the FAFSA instructions

If you meet one of the above conditions, you do not need to complete this form. You are considered an independent student and parental information is not required on your FAFSA.

Basis for an Appeal:

Many students believe they are independent because they currently live on their own or because their parents no longer claim them on their income taxes. Please note, according to the U.S. Department of Education's federal guidelines, the following conditions, singly or in combination, do not qualify to merit a petition for Independent Status:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrates total-self sufficiency

U.S. Department of Education federal regulations require the Financial Aid Office at Tiffin University to consider parent information and expect a parental contribution for students who are not independent according to the above FAFSA definition, unless exceptions are made. Exceptions are made only when adequate documentation of extenuating circumstances exists. Extenuating circumstances generally are defined by a student's inability to have contact with their parents. If you feel that your circumstance warrants a petition for an independent status, we may be able to review your dependent status.

The following is a list of some of the reasons students may appeal:

- Severe Circumstances within your family prevent you from obtaining your parents' financial information. Examples:
 - a) an abusive home situation which is detrimental to your physical and/or mental well-being; b) abandonment by both parents; c) history of parental alcohol or drug abuse; or d) incarceration of the custodial parent
- Death of a parent after filing the FAFSA and the surviving parent meets one of the conditions in the prior statement
- You are divorced after being married for at least two years and maintained a residence apart from your and your spouse's parents during the time you were married. You now maintain a separate residence from your parents and pay all expenses from your own income and assets
- You have extenuating circumstances not already described above which prevent contact with your parents

Please complete the following questions:

Living Arrangements:

Who owns the property where you live? _____

Where do you live during school breaks? _____

Do you rent, own a home, or other? Please explain your living situation: _____

Provide

- Photocopy of your mortgage/lease agreement, or
- Statement from your landlord stating how long you have lived at the residence and if utilities are included in the rent
- Photocopies of rent receipts for the past six months

Vehicle Information:

I do _____ do not _____ own a vehicle

Whose name is the vehicle registered in? _____

Whose name is the vehicle insurance in? _____

Provide

- Photocopies of vehicle registration, insurance contract and car payment

Employer / Income Information:

Did you receive any financial support from your parent during this past year? _____

Your Employer's Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Provide

- Provide a statement from your employer giving the date you started your employment there, usual number of hours worked weekly, and rate of pay.
- If you have worked for more than one employer in the past 12 months, please submit information for all places of employment.
- Copies of your most recent pay stub for each job worked in the past 12 months

If you have income other than wages, explain: _____

If you do not work or do not have any other income, explain how you have supported your self in the past 12 months: _____

Do you receive food stamps, social security benefits, child support, support from others, financial aid or other and the amount monthly you receive to assist in your living expenses for the year:

Tax Information:

Do you claim yourself on your Federal Tax Return? _____

If no, who does claim you? _____

Provide

Provide signed photocopies of your Federal Income Tax form for 2008

If you **do not** file taxes for 2008 please initial here: _____

Personal Statement and Documentation

In order to be considered for independent status, you will need to write a personal statement that completely explains the basis of your appeal. Your statement will be used only to determine if a dependency exception should be made. Information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

You must attach at least two signed statements from two adult professionals who verify the family circumstances described in your personal statement and may be able to provide additional information or support to your cause. Adult professionals include clergy members, attorneys, school guidance counselors, medical doctors, mental health professionals, teachers, professors, law enforcement officers, professional staff of Children Services Bureaus and other officers of the court. If applicable, you can submit a letter from a family member who can verify your situation. However, only one letter from a family member can be used for the appeal. The second letter must be from an adult professional. Only the Financial Aid Director may approve exceptions. (see separate sheet for further information on Third Party Documentation)

Student Certification

I certify that all of the information on this form and all other documentation provided with regards to my appeal are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore, I swear or affirm that I have not knowingly or intentionally provided any false or fraudulent documentation.

Please make sure you have submitted the following documentation:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) This application | 5) Tax Information |
| 2) Living arrangement documentation | 6) Personal Statement |
| 3) Vehicle Information Documentation | 7) Two Third Party Letters/Statements |
| 4) Employer / Income Information | |

Student Signature

Date

RETURN ALL APPLICABLE DOCUMENTATION TO THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE.

155 Miami Street

Tiffin, OH 44883-2161

1-800-968-6446

Fax (419) 443-5006



Petition for Independent Status 2009-2010
Instructions for Third Party Letter of Documentation

Basis for an Appeal:

U.S. Department of Education federal regulations require the Financial Aid Office at Tiffin University to consider parent information and expect a parental contribution for students who are not independent according FAFSA definitions, unless exceptions are made. Exceptions are made only when adequate documentation of extenuating circumstances exists. Extenuating circumstances generally are defined by a student's inability to have contact with their parents. In extraordinary and documented cases, the financial aid office at Tiffin University has the authority to use professional judgment to override a student's dependency status in order to make a student independent for the purpose of applying for financial aid.

Many students believe they are independent because they currently live on their own or because their parents no longer claim them on income taxes. Please note, according to the U.S. Department of Education's federal guidelines, the following conditions, singly or in combination, do not qualify to merit a petition for Independent Status:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education
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- Death of a parent after filing the FAFSA and the surviving parent meets one of the conditions in the prior statement
- Student is divorced after being married for at least two years and maintained a residence apart from parents and spouse's parents during the time they were married. They now maintain a separate residence from parents and pay all expenses from their own income and assets
- Student has other extenuating circumstances not already described above

Instructions for Third Party Reference:

The information the student submits as part of their petition for independent status, must be verified by a letter from a third party who is aware of the student's situation. Third party documentation must be on a separate sheet paper. Please include any information of which you have firsthand knowledge and that you feel best describes the student's situation. The following is a list of information that we request you include in your letter:

- 1) How long you have know the student
- 2) Your relationship to the student
- 3) When the last time the student lived with and / or received financial support from his / her parents.
- 4) Any knowledge of the student's relationship with his / her parents.
- 5) The steps that the student has taken to establish their independence from his / her parents.

Please make sure to include your professional title, name and type of business, and where to contact you should we need additional information.