

2017-2018 DEPENDENCY APPEAL FORM

Please allow 3 – 4 weeks for the review process. All decisions are final.

****Your 2017 – 2018 FAFSA must be filed before submitting this form. ****

Name: _____

EMPL ID#: _____

Many students assume that if they are not living with their parent(s) and are responsible for their own expenses they should be considered as an independent student for determining eligibility for Federal Student Financial aid. However, Congress' definition of independence for Federal aid purposes is based on statutory criteria as indicated in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended. If you are considered a dependent student because you answered "No" to all the questions in Step Three of your FAFSA, but you believe that you have special and extenuating circumstances that prevent you from being able to obtain and provide parental information on the FAFSA then to apply for consideration for independency you will need to:

A) Carefully read all the instructions and complete this form **AND**

B) Schedule an appointment with a financial aid advisor to submit this form along with all required documentation. You will be interviewed by the financial aid advisor who will review your situation, collect your documents and make an initial status determination. Final determination is made after further review by a committee of several financial aid advisors. **Note: Filing this form does not mean your appeal will be granted.**

A. Reason for Appeal : Check one reason below and provide the requested documentation. When writing your personal statement, be complete and specific. Be assured that all information you provide will be held in strictest confidence and used by the Financial Aid Office solely to determine your dependency status)

☐ **1) A severe situation exists in your family that prevents you from obtaining your parents' financial information, such as physical or emotional abuse, severe estrangement, abandonment, parental drug or alcohol abuse, mental incapacity, or another such situation beyond your control.**

Required Documentation

- **Personal Statement:** Provide a typed and signed detailed statement, in your own words, describing the events in your life which led to your separation from both of your parents, and explain why you should be considered an independent student. Include a description of your past and current relationship with each of your parents (mother, father or stepparent), and provide a timeline with the approximate dates of the events leading to the breakdown of this relationship. If you are receiving support from friends or relatives, describe the nature of that support and how you came to receive it. If you are self-supporting, explain how you came to support yourself, and over what period of time you have done this. Your personal statement must be typed, signed and dated. The personal statement is mandatory.
- **Third Party Statements:** Provide statements from at least two adult professionals, who are not family members, who can verify the family circumstances you described in your petition letter. Professional Statements must be on letter head or have the person's business card attached. Adult professionals include: teachers/professors, guidance counselors, educational professionals, clergy members, lawyers, doctors, health professionals, therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social services professionals, and law enforcement officers. If you were raised by a family member or another person who is not your parent, one of the required statements may be from that person. The persons providing statements must explain how they know you and how they came to know about your family circumstances. All statements must be originals, not photocopies, and signed.
- **Supporting Documentation:** **2017-2018 Independent Standard Verification Worksheet**, Income Documentation: if you are self-supporting, be prepared to submit a copy of your signed 2015 Tax Return or 2015 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W2 forms, and/or proof of your non-taxable income for 2015, i.e. public assistance, social security benefits, cash support from family and friends. Other Documentation for the support of your appeal may include: parent(s)' death certificates, custody papers, police reports, court reports, social service agency/guidance/therapist letters, high school records, utility bills, apartment leases etc. All of the information you provide will be used solely to determine your dependency status and will be kept by the Office of Financial Aid in the strictest confidence.

☐ **2) You are a non-U.S. citizen (who is otherwise eligible to receive federal financial aid), your parents currently reside in a foreign country and you are unable to obtain parental information because of long-standing political policy or civil unrest in that country that prevents mail or funds from passing between you and your parents.**

- **Personal Statement:** On separate paper, tell us in your own words why you should be considered an independent student. Please describe the situation where your parents live that prevents mail or funds from entering or leaving the country. If you are receiving support from friends or relatives, you must describe the nature of that support and how you came to receive it. If you are self-supporting, explain how you came to support yourself, and the period of time you have done this.
- **Supporting Documentation:** Provide a statement from an official from the embassy (or other diplomatic office) of the country where your parents live or from an appropriate refugee agency that describes the long-standing political policy or civil unrest that exists there. The statement must confirm that it is impossible to get mail or funds in or out of the country. The statement must be an original, not a photocopy. **2017-2018 Independent Standard Verification Worksheet**, Income Documentation: if you are self-supporting, be prepared to submit a copy of your signed 2015 tax return or 2015 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W2 forms, and/or proof of your non-taxable income for 2015, i.e. public assistance, social security benefits, cash support from family and friends.

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B. Supplemental Information:

1. Where do you currently live? Full address: _____
2. What are your parents' full names? Father: _____ Mother: _____
3. Father's current (or last known address): _____
4. Mother's current (or last known address): _____
5. When did you stop living with your parent(s)?: _____ (MM/YY)
6. What was the last date of contact or communication with your Father _____ (MM/YY) and Mother _____ (MM/YY)
7. With whom did you live with in 2015? Name: _____ Relationship: _____
8. With whom did you live with in 2016? Name: _____ Relationship: _____
9. With whom will you live with in 2017-2018? Name: _____ Relationship: _____

C. Monthly and Income Expense Worksheet You must complete this section and be prepared to document the amounts listed. Documentation of current income might include recent pay stubs, benefit letters, bank statements, etc. Expenses documentation could include a lease, utility bills, paid receipts, etc.

2015 Income:

1. Were you employed in 2015? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain how you supported yourself in 2015: _____
2. Were you claimed by a parent or anyone else on a 2015 income tax return? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide name and relationship of individual who claimed you: _____
3. Cash support you received in 2015 from other individuals (including your parents): \$ _____
Provide name and relationship of individual who provided the cash support: _____

2016 Income:

1. Were you employed in 2016? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, explain how you supported yourself in 2016: _____
2. Were you claimed by a parent or anyone else on a 2016 income tax return? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide name and relationship of individual who claimed you: _____
3. Cash support you received in 2016 from other individuals (including your parents): \$ _____
Provide name and relationship of individual who provided the cash support: _____

Current Income : List your average monthly income and the source of that income.

Income	Source	Total Amount per Month
Wages		
Savings/Investments		
Untaxed Benefits		
Cash Support from other people		
Other		

Current Expenses -List your average monthly expenses and who pays for the expense. If you pay for the expense list "self".

Expense	Cost per Month	Who Pays or Provides It
Housing		
Utilities		
Food		
Clothing		
Transportation		
Medical		
Personal		

Student's Certification

I hereby certify that all information contained in this appeal for consideration for independent status, including my personal statement and other documentation, is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I have not knowingly or intentionally given false statements or fraudulent documentation. I understand if I am found to have knowingly or intentionally given false statements or fraudulent documentation, my appeal will be denied and my eligibility for Federal Student Aid jeopardized.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Name: _____

EMPL ID#: _____

Dependency Override Petition Letter Sample:

Full Name:
CUNY EMPLID ID:
Date:

Attention: Financial Aid Office

Dear Committee Members,

The first sentences should clearly outline what you are requesting, including all pertinent information regarding the separation and breakdown of the relationship between you and **both** your parents, this must include dates showing a clear timeline of the events.

The body of the letter should include the reasoning behind the separation and how living expenses are met in your household. If you are living with someone who is providing you with financial assistance please include this here.

For Example: I am currently supporting myself through the support of...

Sincerely,
(Must Include Wet Signature)

Please limit you appeal letter to 1-3 pages