



In extraordinary and documented cases, the Financial Aid Office 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. A student must be unable to obtain his/her parents' information because of extenuating circumstances.

Parents' unwillingness to provide the information or inability to help support the student are not acceptable reasons for an override. Students must submit a Request for Independent Status and disinterested third party reference letter to the Financial Aid Office for consideration of a dependency override.

The information stated in the Request for Independent Status must be verified by disinterested third party references that are aware of and can verify the student's home situation (see the form for the number of statements required). Examples of such a person include, but are not limited to: employer, clergy, social worker, attorney, court official, teacher, counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist, medical professional, or law enforcement agent.

Instructions to disinterested third party reference:

Third party documentation must be on a separate sheet of letterhead 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 **MUST** be included in your letter:

1. How long you have known the student
2. Your relationship to the student
3. The last time the student lived with and/or received financial support from his/her parents
4. Any knowledge of his/her relationship with his/her parents
5. Steps the student has taken to establish independence from his/her parents

Please make sure to include your professional title, name and type of business, business address, telephone number, and where to contact you should any additional information be required.