2017-2018 Dependency Override Appeal

Federal financial aid regulations assume that a student’s family has primary responsibility for meeting educational costs. If you are considered a dependent student according to the federal financial aid definition, your aid eligibility is determined using parent income and asset information in addition to your information.

What makes a student Dependent or Independent?

Your student dependency status is determined by the U.S. Department of Education, based on your responses to specific questions on the FAFSA. For financial aid purposes, federal regulations have defined an independent student as one who meets **AT LEAST ONE** of the following conditions:

- Born before January 1, 1994
- Married as of the date FAFSA signed
- Have children who receive **more than half their support** from the student, OR have legal dependents, other than a spouse or children, who live with student and receive **more than half their support** from the student
- Attending graduate level program of study during the 2017-2018 academic year
- Veteran of U.S. Armed Forces (or will be a veteran as of June 30, 2017), or have attended a service academy and were released under a condition other than dishonorable
- Currently serving on active duty in U.S. Armed Forces (other than for training)
- Emancipated Minor or in Legal Guardianship as determined by the court in her/his state of legal residence
- Orphan, ward of the court, foster care (after age 13)
- A self-supporting unaccompanied youth who is homeless or at risk of homelessness (as certified by governmental or school agency)

A student who does not meet **ANY** of the above classifications is classified as a Dependent student.

What is a Dependency Override?

A dependency override occurs when a financial aid administrator exercises professional judgment and overrides the Department of Education’s criteria for dependent students. An override may only be granted on a case-by-case basis for students with unusual & exceptional circumstances. These circumstances must show compelling reason for a student to be considered independent rather than dependent.

What conditions **COULD** warrant a Dependency Override?

The following are some examples of conditions that could warrant a Dependency Override:

- Documented abandonment
- Parental drug use
- Parental mental incapacity
- Physical or emotional abuse
- Severe estrangement from parents
- Parental incarceration

What conditions **DO NOT** warrant a Dependency Override?

By federal law, the following conditions **DO NOT** warrant a Dependency Override:

- Parents refuse to provide information on the FAFSA application or for verification
- Parents do not claim student as dependent for income tax purposes
- Parents unwilling or unable to contribute to student’s education
- Student demonstrates self-sufficiency
- Student reluctant to request the income information from parents
- Student does not wish to communicate with parents
DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

You should complete this form if you are considered a dependent student for federal financial aid and believe you have compelling extenuating circumstances which should allow you to be considered an independent student. Return the completed form with the required documentation to the Office for Student Financial Aid. We understand the sensitive nature of these circumstances; all documentation received by Office of Financial Aid will be kept confidential.

Please note the following:

- Complete the 2017-2018 FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov prior to completing and submitting the Dependency Override Appeal.
- Financial Aid Policy at the East Tennessee State University requires that a student seeking a Dependency Override must complete the Dependency Override Appeal. Decisions made at other institutions are not accepted.
- When submitting your appeal, you will be required to meet with your Financial Aid Counselor. Please schedule an appointment online through FASTPASS.
- The determination of whether or not to approve a dependency override is made by Student Financial Aid—not the U.S. Department of Education. All decisions made by Student Financial Aid on dependency overrides are FINAL—there is no appeal.

The Dependency Override Process

1. **FAFSA**: Complete the FAFSA prior to submitting the Dependency Override Appeal
2. **Dependency Override Appeal Form**: Complete all sections of the appeal form
3. **Notarized Third Party Statements**: Provide at least two letters from third-party adult individuals who personally have knowledge of your situation and who can verify your circumstances. At least one letter (on letterhead) must be from a guidance counselor, physician, social worker, clergy person, or another individual who has been involved in the circumstances in a professional capacity. All letters must include details as to how the person knows you, how long they have known you, and how they have been involved and/or have first-hand knowledge of your situation. The individuals submitting letters cannot be related to one another, nor can they reside at the same address. A telephone number and address where the individual can be reached for follow-up questions must be included.
4. **Supporting Documentation**: In addition to your appeal form and notarized third-party statements, you must provide the following:
   - A copy of your current lease or rental agreement. If you do not have either, attach a signed statement from your current landlord verifying your tenancy.
   - Tax Return Transcript from the IRS for tax years 2015 and 2016. How to obtain Tax Return Transcript from IRS.
   - W2’s for tax years 2015 and 2016.
   - Details of monthly expenses (utility bills, car payments, etc.)
   - Other supporting documentation (court documentation, police reports, arrest reports, etc.)
   - **Independent Verification Worksheet**
   - Copy of birth certificate; if adopted, copy of birth certificate issued after adoption proceedings.
5. **Meet with a Financial Aid Counselor**: Once you have completed the appeal form and gathered your statements and supporting documentation, make an appointment through FASTPASS to meet with your Financial Aid Counselor to submit and review your appeal in person.
2017-2018 Dependency Override Appeal

E#: ___________________________ Student’s Name: __________________________________________
Phone __________________________ Email ________________________________________________

Financial Aid policy at the East Tennessee State University requires a student seeking a dependency override to complete and submit the Dependency Override Appeal Form, with all required documentation. Decisions made at other institutions are not accepted. Refer to the instructions page for complete details.

STEP ONE: Personal Statement

Please attach a signed and dated personal statement, detailing the unusual & extenuating circumstances that you believe warrant a review of your dependency status. An emailed statement will not be accepted. Be sure to include the following:

1. The nature of your relationship with both your mother and father
2. The location of both parents AND when you last had contact with them
3. Why you cannot obtain information and/or support from your parents

STEP TWO: Third Party/Professional Statement

Provide at least two notarized letters from third party, adult individuals who personally have knowledge of you and your situation and who can verify your circumstances. Please note the following:

1. At least one letter (on letterhead) must be from a guidance counselor, physician, social worker, licensed therapist, clergy person, or other individual who has been involved in the circumstances in a professional capacity.
2. All letters must include details as to how the person knows you, how long they have known you, and how they have been involved and/or have first-hand personal knowledge of your situation.
3. The individuals submitting letters cannot be related to one another, nor can they reside at the same address. All letters must be notarized, signed, and include a telephone and address where the individual can be reached for follow-up questions.

STEP THREE: Residence Information: For each item listed below, circle the appropriate response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence Information</th>
<th>Circle the appropriate response below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where did/will you live during 2017-2018?</td>
<td>On Campus/Off Campus/With Parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP FOUR: EXPENSES (Pt. 1): For each item listed below, circle the appropriate response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>Circle the appropriate response below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did your parent(s) claim you as an exemption on their 2015 federal tax return?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will/did your parent(s) claim you as a dependent on their 2016 federal tax return?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your parent(s) provide your health insurance in 2016-2017?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will your parent(s) provide your health insurance for 2017-2018?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your parent(s) provide your auto insurance in 2016-2017?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will your parent(s) provide your auto insurance in 2017-2018?</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E# ___________________________________ Student’s Name: ___________________________________________________________

STEP FIVE: EXPENSES (Pt. 2): Indicate who pays for each expense listed in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Resource (who pays for the expense)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (car payment and insurance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical (health insurance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP SIX: Prior year financial aid support

Did you receive financial aid during the 2016-2017 year (Fall 2016, Spring 2017, or Summer 2017)? Yes  No

If you answered ‘YES’, list the institution(s) you attended during the 2016-2017 academic year:

STEP SEVEN: Student Certification

I certify that the information provided on this form and all attached documents is true, complete, and accurate. I understand that purposefully providing false information could result in a reduction and/or repayment of aid, and/or denial of future appeals in this and future years.

Student Signature_________________________________________ Date _______________________

Submit the completed form in person during meeting with Financial Aid Counselor: Office of Financial Aid, Burgin-Dossett – Room 105, Johnson City, TN 37614