

The Department of Education determines a student's status as dependent or independent by the answers the student provides on certain items of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students are classified as dependent or independent because federal student aid programs are based on the principle that students (and their parents) are considered the primary source of support for postsecondary education.

Self-sufficiency of the student or parent's unwillingness to financially contribute to a student's education are **not** sufficient reasons for determining a student's status as independent. However there are situations when a student may have unusual circumstances in which s/he should be considered independent. There must be a justifiable reason to excuse the parents from their financial responsibility.

The following information explains the procedure used to determine a student's eligibility for an Independent Appeal. A Financial Aid Administrator will review the student's appeal by examining the supporting documentation provided by the student and will either approve or deny the student's request. The student will be notified in writing of the decision.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Financial Aid Administrator's decision is final and cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education.

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### **Section I: Circumstances Given Consideration**

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Parental Support was terminated due to:

1. A student's voluntary or involuntary removal from their parent's home due to an extreme situation that threatened the student's health and/or safety.
2. Incapacity of parent(s) due to incarceration, mental or physical illness, or the inability of the applicant to locate the parent(s).
3. Other extenuating circumstances that can be sufficiently documented.

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### **Section II: Review Procedures**

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1. All submitted documentation will be reviewed by the financial aid administrator.
2. An official notification of the administrator's decision will be sent to the student along with an explanation of any further action necessary to complete his/her application for aid.
3. If the student has filed a FAFSA for the year under review, the financial aid administrator will make any necessary corrections to the FAFSA.
4. If the student has not yet filed a FAFSA for the year under review, instructions explaining how to apply will be sent to the student.

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### **Section III: Renewal of an Independent Appeal for Future Years**

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Students who are granted an Independent Appeal will be required to renew their appeal each subsequent year. The Financial Aid Administrator will request documentation from the student regarding their current status for review.

**NOTE: To be considered for an Independent Appeal, you must complete the second page of this form and provide the documentation required to the Office of Student Financial Aid.**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ University ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did anyone claim you on their 2014 federal income tax return?

- No
Yes-Person's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Did anyone claim you on their 2015 federal income tax return?

- No
Yes-Person's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you previously been approved for an Independent Appeal at Iowa State University?

- No-You must provide the documents required under letters A, B, C.
Yes-You must provide the documents required under letters A, C.

4. Please attach the following documentation:

A. A personal letter explaining your request for an Independent Appeal.

Provide as much detail as possible describing your separation from your parents. The following information is required:

- Include the last contact you had with each parent and the frequency of contact with each parent over the past five years.
Explain why you cannot provide parental financial information on the 2016-2017 FAFSA.
Describe your living arrangements over the past five years, including with whom you resided and who has provided financial support to you.
Make sure your name, university ID, and signature are included in the letter.

B. Letters from two individuals who can attest to your situation.

The letters should provide as much detail as possible describing your separation from your parents.

- Each letter must include the individual's name, title or position, address and signature.
One letter must be from a professional individual not related to you (counselor, social worker, clergy, police, etc.).
The second letter can be from someone who can verify your situation.
The two individuals cannot be related to each other AND must reside at separate addresses.

C. Complete and sign the enclosed 2016-2017 Student Institutional Verification Form (SIVF) and include any federal tax documents as requested on the SIVF.

I certify that the information listed on this form and all supporting documents concerning my request for an Independent Appeal are correct and complete. I also understand the Financial Aid Administrator's decision is final and cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education.

Student Signature

Date

