



Financial Aid Office

2025-26 Unusual Circumstance

Student's Legal Name _____

Student ID Number _____ Phone _____

What is an unusual circumstance?

An unusual circumstance 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 and exceptional circumstances. These circumstances must show compelling reasons for a student to be considered independent rather than dependent.

What conditions **DO NOT** warrant an unusual circumstance?

By Federal Law, the following conditions **DO NOT** warrant a usual circumstance

- Parents refuse to provide information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application or for verification
- Parents do not claim student as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Parents unwilling or unable to contribute to student's education
- Student demonstrates self-sufficiency

When completing the 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you answered YES to "Do unusual circumstances prevent the student from contacting their parents or would contacting their parents pose a risk to the student?" **We understand the sensitive nature of these circumstances; all documentation received by our office will be kept confidential.**

Check the unusual circumstance that applies and submit the required documentation:

- ☐ **Abusive family environment (e.g., sexual, physical or mental abuse or other forms of domestic violence)**

Required Documentation

- Personal Statement by Student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature.
- Personal Statement from a public official (*on letterhead*) who has knowledge of your unusual circumstance (e.g., teacher, high school guidance counselor, member of clergy, law enforcement representative, social worker, government agency, medical authority, or clerk of courts).
- Personal notarized statement from an adult who has knowledge of your unusual circumstances.
- Additional Supporting Documentation such as *court documents, legal documents, or police reports.*

- ☐ **Abandonment by parents**

Required Documentation

- Personal Statement by Student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature.
- Personal Statement from a public official (*on letterhead*) who has knowledge of your unusual circumstance (e.g., teacher, high school guidance counselor, member of clergy, law enforcement representative, social worker, government agency, medical authority, or clerk of courts).
- Personal notarized statement from an adult who has knowledge of your unusual circumstances.

Please complete both sides

- Additional Supporting Documentation such as *court documents, legal documents, or police reports*.
- ☐ **Refugee or asylee status and are separated from their parents, or parents are displaced in a foreign country**
Required documentation:
- Personal Statement by student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature.
 - Additional Supporting Documentation: Original documentation showing status as Refugee or Asylum granted (I-94, I-94-A, or I-571 with proper endorsements). Copies of any relevant supporting documentation (*e.g., court documents, legal documents, or police reports*).
- ☐ **Victim of Human trafficking**
Required Documentation
- Personal Statement by student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature
 - Additional Supporting Documentation: An eligibility letter from Health and Human Services (HHS), a T-visa, or a copy of 1-797
- ☐ **Incarceration or institutionalization by both parents**
Required Documentation
- Personal Statement by student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature.
 - Additional Supporting Documentation: Official federal or state documentation that your parents or legal guardians are incarcerated.
- ☐ **Unable to contact or locate parents**
Required Documentation
- Personal Statement by Student explaining your situation. Include your name, student ID number, date and signature.
 - Personal Statement from a public official (*on letterhead*) who has knowledge of your unusual circumstance (*e.g., teacher, high school guidance counselor, member of clergy, law enforcement representative, social worker, government agency, medical authority, or clerk of courts*).
 - Personal notarized statement from an adult who has knowledge of your unusual circumstances.
 - Additional Supporting Documentation such as *court documents, legal documents, or police reports*.

What is next?

Your form will be reviewed to determine if documentation is sufficient. If any additional information is required, you will be contacted via email. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for a determination.

Certifications and Signatures

Federal Warning: Any person who knowingly makes a false statement or misrepresentation on all forms submitted shall be subject to a fine up to \$20,000 or imprisonment or both under provisions of the U.S. Code.

I declare under penalty of perjury that all information reported on this form and all the information reported on the 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid which will be used to qualify for state and federal student aid is true, complete, and accurate.

I certify that I have read and understand all items on this form and all information provided for my financial aid is true and correct.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____