TULANE UNIVERSITY

Financial Aid **2026-27 Petition for Independent Status**

Important Information- Petition for Independent Status

Financial aid regulations assume that the family has primary responsibility for meeting the educational costs of students. If you are considered a dependent student according to the financial aid definition, your aid eligibility is determined by using parent income and asset information in addition to your information. Dependent students are required by law to provide parental information and signatures to be considered for financial aid.

For federal student aid programs, Tulane follows the definition of an independent student as set by the United States Congress. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid contains more details on the criteria. Documentation may be required.

For the 2026–27 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form, an independent student is one of the following:

- At the beginning of the 2026-27 school year, will be enrolled in a master's or doctorate program (such as an M.A., MBA, M.D., J.D., PhD., Ed.D., graduate certificate, etc.)?
- is born before January 1, 2003.
- since turning age 13, was in foster care, a ward or dependent of the court and/or an orphan (both parents deceased).
- is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces or currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
- is married and not separated.
- is providing significant financial support to dependents other than a spouse July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.
- is determined by a court in the state of legal residence as being an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship.
- on or after July 1, 2025, was deemed to be a homeless unaccompanied youth or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless.

Federal regulations allow financial aid administrators to use professional judgment to change dependency status to "independent" on a case-by-case basis. The student must demonstrate that there is an unusual circumstance other than the fact that the student is self-sufficient or that the parents are unwilling to contribute to the student's education. If you do not meet any of the above criteria but you believe that you should be considered independent because of truly exceptional circumstances making it inappropriate to expect a parental contribution, you may complete this form to petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information. Examples of unusual circumstances are situations such as when a student's parents cannot be located, or where an otherwise dependent student has been a victim of domestic violence or abuse and is no longer able to reside with his or her parents.

The U.S. Department of Education has identified four conditions that, individually or in combination with one another, **do not** qualify as "unusual circumstances" and **do not** merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

- Parents refusing to contribute to the student's education;
- Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification
- Parents not claiming the students as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.

In order to petition for independent status, please upload the *Petition for Independent Status* form with supporting documents to: https://finaidforms.tulane.edu/Home/Account/Login. **Phone our office at 504.865.5723 or email finaid@tulane.edu with any questions.**

TULANE UNIVERSITY

Financial Aid **2026-27 Petition for Independent Status**

Student's Name _____ **Last 4 digits of student's SSN #**_____

Student ID (if known) _____

Address _____ Telephone _____ E-Mail_____

The following information is used by our financial aid committee in reviewing a student's petition for independent status. Meeting all of the guidelines does not mean that a petition will be granted. The committee will decide on an individual basis whether to change a student's status to "independent."

1. Identify the location of both of your parents:

Mother's Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Are you in contact? ____ Yes ____ No

Father's Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Are you in contact? ____ Yes ____ No

2. Describe the last time you had contact with each of your parents: when, where, and the nature of the contact.

3. The intent of the federal regulations is that parents contribute to undergraduate educational costs for all students younger than 24 years old. Please explain the extenuating circumstances that make it inappropriate to expect a parental contribution toward your educational expenses. You may attach additional sheets to petition if necessary.

4. You must show that you have not been living with your parents and have not been claimed by your parents for the past two years. Please provide documentation/ statements from three sources who are aware of your situation and who know that you have not had any contact with your parents. Only one of the three

statements may be from someone who is a relative or friend. The other two must be from third-party professionals (school counselors, teachers, clergy, attorneys, therapists, etc.). Copies of appropriate court documents are acceptable to support your petition.

I have attached statements from the following persons:

Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____
Job Title: _____ Employer: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____
Job Title: _____ Employer: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____
Job Title: _____ Employer: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

5. You must demonstrate that you have had income of your own of at least $12,500 annually for the past two years. (The $12,500 figure is based on a Bureau of Labor Statistics report indicating the minimal yearly living budget for a person 20-35 years of age in an urban area). You should count only your earned income (wages). Do not count gifts or loans from family members or other sources of unearned income. Do not count financial aid. **Please attach signed copies of your federal income tax returns (including all schedules and W-2 forms) for 2023 and 2024.**

6. Itemize monthly living expenses as follows:

Monthly Living Expenses	**Dollar Amount**
Housing	$
Food	$
Utilities	$
Transportation	$
Clothing/ Personal Items	$
Health Care/ Insurance	$
Other	$
Total	$

I have read and understand the *Important Information- Petition for Independent Status* sheet and certify that the information in this petition is true and correct:

Student's Signature_____ Date_____

Please upload the *Petition for Independent Status* form with supporting documents to: https://finaidforms.tulane.edu/Home/Account/Login **Phone our office at 504.865.5723 or email finaid@tulane.edu with any questions.**

ver. 10/31/2025