

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. Under the definition, an undergraduate student is considered independent for 2021 - 2022 if he or she:

- is born before January 1, 1998.
- 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 or separated.
- is providing significant financial support to dependents other than a spouse.
- 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, 2020, 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.

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 2018 and 2019.**

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 _____

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