



2015-2016 Independent Review Instructions

Please complete and return to:
Utica College, Student Financial Services
1600 Burrstone Road, Utica, New York 13502
Fax: 315-792-3368 • Email: sfs@utica.edu

Under Federal law to the extent your family is able; they are primarily responsible for paying for your college expenses. Occasionally, due to unusual or extenuating circumstances, students should not be considered as dependent. Federal law allows for some exceptions, if you can document your special circumstance.

But not all situations are considered a special circumstance. The following are situations that would **not** be considered a special circumstance:

- Your parents do not want to provide their information on your FAFSA; or
- Your parents refuse to contribute to your college expenses; or
- Your parents do not claim you as a dependent on their income taxes; or
- You do not live with your parents.

***If you do not meet Independent guidelines you will need to correct your FAFSA and answer "NO" to the independent questions and include parent(s) information and parent signature on the Student Aid Report.**

Directions: Please attach to this form the supporting documentation for your special circumstance:

1. If your parents are incarcerated; or
 - You have left home due to an abusive family environment; or
 - You do not know where your parents are and are unable to contact them (and you have not been adopted):
 - Please provide a statement and explain your unusual or extenuating circumstance. Provide statements from three responsible adults who are aware of your situation. At least one statement must be from someone who is not a relative or friend, such as school counselor, social worker, physician, and/or clergy on their official letterhead. Copies of appropriate court or law enforcement documents are acceptable to support your petition.
2. If you were in foster care at any time since age 13 or ward of the court – provide court documentation.
3. If you had no living parent (biological or adoptive) at any time since age 13 – provide Death Certificates.
4. If you are or were an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship before the age of being an adult in your state of legal residence – provide a copy of the court's decision.
5. Please supply documentation if you received a determination at any time on or after July 1, 2014 that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless (living in shelters or temporarily living with other people – nowhere else to go, still enrolled in high school as of the day FAFSA application was signed):
 - Determined by high school or school district homeless liaison
 - Determined by director of an emergency shelter funded by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban development.
 - Determined by the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center.

According to federal guidance, if a student does not have, and cannot obtain, verification from a school district liaison or a HUD- or RHYA-funded shelter, a financial aid administrator must make a determination of eligibility. This means that the financial aid administrator is required to determine whether or not you meet the definition of "homeless" and "unaccompanied." Contact the Office of Student Financial Services to ask for this determination. Be prepared to provide some documentation of your status (a letter from an employer, counselor, clergy, people with whom you may be staying, or others). If you do not have any documentation, request an interview with a Student Financial Service Counselor.

I certify that the information provided in this petition is true and correct.

Signature

Date