



**Student Financial Aid Services (SFS)
2009-2010 Appeal for Independent Status**

Name _____ Mercyhurst ID: _____

Federal regulations on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) indicate the criteria under which a student applies independently of parents for financial aid.

Exceptions (or a dependency override) may be made on a case-by-case basis. However, there are four conditions that, individually or in combination with one another, do not qualify as “unusual circumstances” or that do not merit a dependency override.

1. Parents refusing to contribute to the student’s education;
2. Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification;
3. Parents not claiming the student as a dependent for income tax purposes; and/or,
4. Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.
- 5.

Occasionally, however, extraordinary individual circumstances allow a student to file as an independent without meeting the FAFSA criteria. If your situation is described in one of the following sets of circumstances indicated below, you may request the Financial Aid Appeals Committee to review your status.

Check the item below that applies, attach documentation as required, and return to the SFS Office. You will be contacted regarding a decision.

___ You have been separated from your parents because of an unsafe home environment, or your parent has been institutionalized or is in a correctional facility. Documentation from a court, social service agency, or other objective source acceptable to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee must be provided with this form.

___ You have been separated from your parents, come from a documented background of historical poverty, and are living with a relative or someone who is supporting you. Provide 3 sources of documentation from a social service agency and/or respected members of the student’s community (e.g., guidance counselor, teacher, minister, medical professional) acceptable to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

___ Your economic and personal circumstances are of such a unique or unusual nature that review is warranted. You must submit a written explanation of your situation, accompanied by 3 sources of objective third-party documentation attesting to your circumstances. Only well-documented appeals with serious situations will be considered by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

I declare that the information reported on this form is true, correct, and complete. I authorize the information to be used in conjunction with that reported on the FAFSA for the purpose of calculating eligibility for financial aid. I agree to provide any other official documentation necessary if requested. I also authorize the Financial Aid Appeals to seek information from other Mercyhurst offices when appropriate.

Student's Signature

Date

Note: The FAFSA must be filed annually. As such, the process of granting independent student override must be done on an annual basis. To remain as an independent student by exception basis, the student's circumstances must remain the same and this form must be completed on an annual basis. Please consult with your financial aid advisor at the time your FAFSA is being filed.