ILTR12

Student Financial Assistance (SFA)
2012-13 Appeal for Independent Status for Financial Aid Consideration

Federal financial aid regulations dictate the criteria under which a student applies independently of parents for financial aid. Occasionally, however, extraordinary individual circumstances allow a student to file as an independent without meeting the FAFSA criteria. Examples of situations where dependency override appeals may be approved include but are not limited to: documented parental drug abuse, parent mental incapacity, physical or emotional abuse, and parental incarceration. Exceptions (or a dependency override) may be made on a case-by-case basis.

If you wish to appeal for Independent Status for financial aid consideration, you take the following steps:

1. If not already done so, complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by going to www.fafsa.ed.gov.
2. Submit a signed and dated personal letter stating the unusual and/or extenuating circumstances that have caused you to become independent from your parents, when you became independent, and how you have been providing for your basic necessities (food, shelter, clothing, medical care and transportation). Attach appropriate documentation.
3. Submit at least two letters from third parties who personally have knowledge of your situation and who can verify your circumstances. At least one letter on letterhead must be from a guidance counselor, physician, social worker, clergy person, or another individual who has been involved in the circumstances in a professional capacity. All letters need to include a telephone number and address where the individual can be reach for follow up questions.
4. If not already done so, submit a signed copy of your 2011 Federal Income Tax Return (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ).

The circumstances listed below **do not qualify as** "unusual and special circumstances" or that do not merit a dependency override:

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

When you are not able to provide parental information on the FAFSA because the conditions above apply to you, you may file your FAFSA without parental information. However, you will not receive an official Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is required to calculate your eligibility for all federal, state and institutional financial aid programs. In this instance, the only financial aid available to you through federal financial aid programs would be a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan if you document the situation itemized above. You may also consider a private educational loan; however, you most likely will need a credit-worthy co-signer for approval. For consideration of a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan under this situation, you must sign this document below and submit a letter explaining your circumstances indicating all situations that apply to you. Attach any supporting documentation.

I declare that the information that I submit with this appeal is true and correct. 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 Committee to seek information from other Marshall University offices when appropriate.

Student's Name	Student's MU ID
Student's Signature	Date

Send this form and additional documentation to the Office of Student Financial Assistance, Marshall University, One John Marshall Dr., Old Main 116, Huntington, WV 25755 or fax to 304-696-3242. A decision on your appeal will be made within 10 working days after receipt of your request.

Note: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (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 counselor at the time your FAFSA is being filed to determine whether you must resubmit supporting documentation for subsequent years.