

## Financial Aid: Appeal to Dependency Status

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The U.S. Department of Education determines each student's [dependency status](#) based on the information provided on the FAFSA. Students may submit an appeal to NOVA requesting that their dependency status be overridden, but such an appeal can only be approved in certain limited and exceptional circumstances. Unwillingness and/or inability of your parents to financially support you, or living on your own are not by themselves considered to be exceptional circumstances. Appeals must be submitted each award year.

### Appeal to Dependency Status

An appeal to your dependency status may be warranted if an unusual, mitigating circumstance exists between you and your parent(s). This cannot be based on whether your parent(s) refuse to complete the FAFSA (in such cases see the instructions at the bottom of this page). It must be based on an unusual circumstance. Possible reasons that might warrant an appeal to your dependency status are listed below:

1. Your parent(s) is/are incarcerated.
2. Your parent(s) live(s) in a war-torn country, and you are unable to communicate/correspond with them.
3. Your parent(s) is/are mentally incapacitated.
4. You are estranged from your parent(s) because of an abusive relationship.
5. Other mitigating circumstances as documented by the applicant.

### Instructions for Requesting a Dependency Override

1. On a separate sheet of paper, clearly explain the circumstances regarding your request for independent status. **Please include the names of each parent, the date, location, and reason for your last contact with your parent(s) and the method of contact (person, phone, email, social media, etc.).** If both biological parents are living, and you have not been adopted by someone else, you must include this information for each biological parent.
2. Provide a statement from an objective third-party professional who can confirm your circumstances. This should be from a clergy member, counselor, social worker, lawyer, court, police officer, physician, etc. typed on their official letterhead and physically signed. If they are unable to provide the statement on letterhead, please include their business card with their signed statement. If you are unable to get documentation from someone in a professional capacity, you may provide **notarized** statements from two (2) individuals who have no material interest in the case who can confirm your circumstances. Additional documentation or statements may be required if there is any reason to question the documentation provided.
3. Complete the information on the back of this form. You may be requested to provide your most recent tax returns and/or W-2s.
4. **Complete the current FAFSA at <https://studentaid.gov/> without parental information, electronically sign and submit the FAFSA.** If your appeal is approved, the dependency override will be performed electronically by the school updating the FAFSA to reflect the dependency status change.

**Note:** You will normally be notified of the Appeals Committee decision within two weeks. The College Financial Aid Office may request additional information from you before making a decision.

### Instructions if Parents Refuse to Complete and Sign the FAFSA

A parent's refusal to provide information on the FAFSA allows a student to receive unsubsidized loans only. The unsubsidized loans are the least beneficial type of financial aid that can be offered. It is recommended that your parent(s) reconsider providing the information on the FAFSA.

In order for NOVA to award unsubsidized loans to a student when parents are refusing to provide information on the FAFSA, we are required to verify if a parent is supporting the student in any way. Please submit the following:

1. Submit a statement signed by your parent(s) indicating that the parents refuse to complete the FAFSA and that no financial support whatsoever is being provided by your parents (no room, board, monetary assistance, insurance, etc.). Include the date support ended.
2. Complete the information on the back of this form. You may be requested to provide your most recent tax returns and/or W-2s.

**APPEAL TO DEPENDENCY STATUS – PAGE 2**

I am requesting a review of my dependency status for the award year: 20\_\_ - 20\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NOVA Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street
City
State
Zip Code

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent 2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

When did you last live with your parents? Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

When did you last receive financial support from your parent(s)? Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Who do you live with at the present time? \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT EXPENSES: Estimate your current monthly expenses below and how they are covered.

Expenses	Monthly Cost	Who Pays or Provides
Housing	\$ _____	_____
Utilities	\$ _____	_____
Food	\$ _____	_____
Clothing	\$ _____	_____
Transportation	\$ _____	_____
Medical	\$ _____	_____
Personal	\$ _____	_____

CURRENT INCOME: Types of income are listed in the first column.

Type of Income	Monthly Income	Source(s)
Wages	\$ _____	_____
Interest	\$ _____	_____
Dividends	\$ _____	_____
Untaxed Income	\$ _____	_____
Cash Support	\$ _____	_____
Other	\$ _____	_____

Student Certification - Read carefully, sign and date.

I hereby certify that all information contained in this appeal, including my personal statement and other documentation, is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I affirm that I have not knowingly or intentionally provided any false statements or fraudulent documentation. I understand that if I knowingly or intentionally give false or fraudulent statements and/or documentation, my request could be denied, my eligibility for financial aid could be jeopardized, and I could be fined up to \$20,000 and/or sent to prison.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_