



2010-2011

**PETITION TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID AS AN INDEPENDENT APPLICANT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
AWARD YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

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.

Occasionally, due to unusual circumstances, students should not be considered as dependent. If you can document why you should be considered independent for some unusual reason, you may petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information.

- I. The student comes from an abusive family situation. The dysfunction may result from cases of physical abuse, emotional abuse, abandonment, or drug/alcohol abuse. In many cases, the student has been counseled by a professional counselor to live separately from the parent(s).
  1. Identify the location of both your parents.
  2. Describe the last time you had contact with each of your parents – when, where, and the nature of the contact.
  3. Explain what unusual circumstances should make you an independent student.
  4. Describe how you have been self-supporting: a) when did you start meeting your expenses without parental support; and b) how have you provided for yourself? Attach a copy of your Federal Tax forms for the last two years.
  5. Provide a letter (on official letterhead) explaining the situation in detail from a minister, social worker, psychologist, high school counselor, teacher, doctor, or other counseling professional.
  6. Other documentation from a social agency.
  7. Court documents.
  
- II. The student's custodial parent has died and the other natural parent is still living. However, the student has had no contact with the living parent (nor has the student received any financial support from this parent) for a significant amount of time.
  1. A copy of the death certificate for the deceased custodial parent; and
  2. Documentation of the custodial relationship (i.e., a court document, copy of the divorce decree, or other viable evidence that the deceased was the custodial parent) and
  3. A letter from an objective third party which supports the student's claim that he/she has not lived with the non-custodial parent (nor received financial support from the parent)

for a significant amount of time. This letter would be from someone other than a relative or friend of the student.

- III. The student has been a Ward of the Court but is now 18 years of age and no longer retains that status. However, the student's parent(s) are still living.
  - 1. A copy of the court documentation verifying Ward of the Court status; and
  - 2. Other documentation relative to the whereabouts of the natural parent(s) and the student's inability to return to that particular situation.
  
- IV. Situations that is unacceptable in granting a student self-support status.
  - 1. The student is living at home (or with relatives) and paying rent.
  - 2. The student is working for his/her parents and is attempting to document his/her self-sufficiency via these earnings.
  - 3. The student has had on going arguments with his or her parents and the parents have chosen not to assist the student.
  - 4. The student has chosen to leave his or her family.
  - 5. The student's stepparent refuses to contribute to his or her education.
  - 6. A student is living with a "significant other" and cannot demonstrate sufficient self-support.
  - 7. A student indicates that a court order has ordered that another family (other than his/her parents) has been given "Care in Custody" status on behalf of the student. This scenario might develop when parents have divorced or when parents move out of state and leave their child in the custody of another family.
  - 8. Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education.
  - 9. Parents are unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification.
  - 10. Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
  - 11. Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.

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

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_