

# Unusual Circumstances - Dependency Override

Most undergraduate students at Averett University are considered dependent students for financial aid purposes. The [FAFSA will determine your dependency status](#) based on a number of questions. If you answer 'no' to all of the dependency questions on the FAFSA, you are considered a dependent student for financial aid purposes and must provide your parent information on the FAFSA. If there are unusual circumstances where you cannot provide your parent information on the FAFSA, such as: abuse, neglect, or abandonment, the AU Financial Aid Office may be able to perform a **dependency override** to make you an independent student for financial aid purposes. This would make you eligible for financial aid without parent information or signature.

We cannot override dependency in cases where:

- parents refuse to contribute financially to your education
- unwillingness of parents to provide information
- students being financially independent
- parents not claiming a student as a dependent on their income taxes

## Requesting a Dependency Override Due to Unusual Circumstances

If you would like the AU Financial Aid Office to review your unusual circumstances to see if a dependency override would be appropriate, please submit the following:

- If you have not done so already, complete your [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) for the appropriate year
- Provide the following statements to the AU Financial Aid Office:
  - A typed personal statement that explains your unusual circumstances and why you are unable to provide your parent information on the FAFSA (at a minimum, include what the unusual circumstances are, the timeline of the relationship with your parents, and what type of contact you have with your parents now)
  - Additional letters of support (preferably three) from professionals who are familiar with your situation (i.e. therapists, school counselors, members of the clergy, etc)
  - Any additional documents that are relevant to your situation

Once all documents have been completed and submitted, the AU Financial Aid Office will review the documents and determine your dependency status. A review typically takes between 3-4 weeks from the date when all necessary documentation has been received. Once processed, the student will be notified of the final determination of their dependency status as well as an initial or revised financial aid offer, if all other requirements to receive a financial aid offer have been satisfied. During peak processing times, the request may take longer than the typical 3-4

weeks to be reviewed, but no longer than 60 days from the date when all of the above documentation has been received (or from the date the student enrolls, whichever is later).

### **Subsequent Years**

Beginning with the **2023-24** award year, any student who was approved for a dependency override and made independent for financial aid due to unusual circumstances will continue to be independent for each subsequent award year at the AU Financial Aid Office unless the student informs us that their circumstances have changed, or we have conflicting information about the student's independence. Students must still submit their FAFSA each year, but should not need to take additional action to be considered an independent student each year.