

**INDEPENDENT STATUS APPEAL****DIRECTIONS**

If you do not meet the definition of an Independent student, but you believe you have extenuating circumstances beyond what the federally mandated formula can consider, you may file an appeal. A committee of financial aid administrators will examine the documentation supporting your appeal and will either approve or deny your request. You will be notified in writing of the committee's decision. **The deadline for filing this appeal is April 15, 2021.**

To ensure privacy online, open in Adobe Reader (free at Adobe.com).  
Add required signature(s) in blue or black ink.

**Academic Year 2020-2021****RETURN FORM:**

**BY MAIL TO:**  
Office of Student Finance  
200 Fraser Hall  
106 Pleasant St. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

**IN PERSON ON CAMPUS AT:**  
**One Stop Student Services**  
333 Bruininks Hall

**Questions?**

Phone: 612-624-1111  
TTY (hearing impaired): 612-626-0701  
Email: onestop@umn.edu

**SECTION A. Student information**

Name (last, first, middle initial)	Last 4 digits of SSN	Student ID number
Current mailing address (street, apartment or PO Box, city, state, ZIP code)		Phone (include area code)

**SECTION B. Independent status definition**

The federally-mandated formula used to determine your financial need is based on the premise that your family has the primary responsibility to pay for your higher education. The federal government has specific standards to determine who has **dependent status** (you must include parental information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA]) and who has **independent status** and is not required to give parental information when applying for financial aid.

**To have independent status, you must meet at least one of the following conditions:**

- You were born before January 1, 1996.
- You are married. Also answer yes if you are separated but not divorced.
- You are enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program.
- You currently serve on active duty in the armed services for purposes other than training.
- You are a veteran of the United States Armed Services.
- You have children who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2021.
- You have other dependents who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2021.
- When you were age 13 or older, both your parents were deceased, you were in foster care, or you were a ward of the court.
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, you are/were an emancipated minor.
- Someone other than your parent or stepparent has legal guardianship of you as determined by a court in your state of legal residence.
- You were determined to be an unaccompanied homeless youth by your high school district liaison or the director of an emergency shelter program on or after July 1, 2019.
- You were determined to be an unaccompanied homeless youth at risk of being homeless by the director of a runaway or homeless center/shelter on or after July 1, 2019.

**If you were considered an independent student for financial aid purposes at a previous school, you do not automatically qualify for independent status at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Please follow appeal procedures outlined in the following section.**

**SECTION C. Appeal procedures for extenuating circumstances**

Exceptions to the federal dependency definition may be made on a case-by-case basis. If you do not meet any of the conditions for independent status set forth above, you may appeal your status if you believe you have extenuating circumstances. Be aware that parental disagreements and refusal of the parent or stepparent to provide support or information are not considered unusual circumstances for the purpose of achieving independent status for financial aid. Being self-supporting, in and of itself, is not sufficient reason for independent status. If you feel you have extenuating circumstances that would allow you to receive financial aid as an independent student, please follow these steps:

1. **Complete your FAFSA at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)**—Complete the student section only and use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) to transfer your tax data. If you use the DRT, you do not need to submit a tax transcript in item 4.
2. **Submit a personal letter describing your extenuating circumstances**—Include any support you received from your parents during the last 2 years.
3. **Submit third party documentation supporting the extenuating circumstances you described**—Examples of adequate documentation: court documents or a letter on letterhead from a high school counselor, case worker, social worker, clergy, or other professional who confirms that your situation warrants independent status.
4. **Submit copies of your 2018 federal tax return transcript or verification of non filing form from the IRS if you did not use the DRT in item 1**—Obtain your tax transcript or verification online, by mail, by phone, or using the IRS 4506-T form.  
Learn more at <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>.

