



University Financial Aid

## 2008-2009 Petition for Independent Status

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.

For 2008-2009 federal student financial aid purposes, students are considered independent of their parents if they meet one of the following conditions:

- born before January 1, 1985
- is an orphan or ward of the court
- is a veteran of the United States armed forces
- is currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or is a National Guard or Reserves enlistee on active duty for other than state or training purposes
- is a graduate or professional student
- is married
- has legal dependent(s) other than a spouse

If you do not meet any of the above criteria but you believe that you should be considered independent because of truly exceptional circumstances that make it inappropriate to expect a parental contribution, you may complete this form to petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information. Examples of unusual circumstances are situations such as when a student's parents cannot be located, or where an otherwise dependent student has been a victim of domestic violence or abuse and is no longer able to reside with his or her parents.

The U.S. Department of Education has identified four conditions that, individually or in combination with one another, **do not** qualify as "unusual circumstances" and **do not** merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

- Parents refusing to contribute to the student's education;
- Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification
- Parents not claiming the students as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.

Federal regulations allow financial aid administrators to use professional judgment to change dependency status to "independent" on a case-by-case basis. The student must demonstrate that there is an unusual circumstance other than the fact that the student is self sufficient or that the parents are unwilling to contribute to the student's education.

**In order to petition for independent status, please submit the *Petition for Independent Status* form along with supporting documents to the Office of Financial Aid. You may fax in the information at 504-862-8750 or send it to Tulane University, 205 Mechanical Engineering Building, New Orleans, LA 70118. You may contact our office at 504-865-5723 should you have any questions.**



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## 2008-2009 Petition for Independent Status

Submit completed petition with attached documents to Tulane University Financial Aid, 205 Mechanical Engineering Building, New Orleans, LA 70118 or fax it to 504-862-8750.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

The following information is used by our financial aid committee in reviewing a student's petition for independent status. Meeting all of the guidelines does not mean that a petition will be granted. The committee will decide on an individual basis whether to change a student's status to "independent."

1. Identify the location of both of your parents:

**Mother's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you in contact?  Yes  No

**Father's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you in contact?  Yes  No

2. Describe the last time you had contact with each of your parents - when, where, and the nature of the contact.

3. The intent of the federal regulations is that parents contribute to undergraduate educational costs for all students less than 24 years old. Please explain the extenuating circumstances that make it inappropriate to expect a parental contribution toward your educational expenses. You may attach additional sheets to petition if necessary.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

4. You must show that you have not been living with your parents and have not been claimed by your parents for the past two years. Please provide documentation/ statements from three sources who are aware of your situation and who know that you have not had any contact with your parents. Only one of the three statements may be from someone who is a relative or friend. The other two must be from third party professionals (school counselors, teachers, clergy, attorneys, therapists, etc). Copies of appropriate court documents are acceptable to support your petition.

**I have attached statements from the following persons:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

5. You must demonstrate that you have had income of your own of at least \$12,500 annually for the past two years. (The \$12,500 figure is based on a Bureau of Labor Statistics report indicating the minimal yearly living budget for a person 20-35 years of age in an urban area). You should count only your earned income (wages). Do not count gifts or loans from family members or other sources of unearned income. Do not count financial aid. **Please attach signed copies of your federal income tax returns (including all schedules and W-2 forms) for 2006 and 2007.**

6. Itemize monthly living expenses as follows:

Monthly Living Expenses	Dollar Amount
Housing	\$
Food	\$
Utilities	\$
Transportation	\$
Clothing/ Personal Items	\$
Health Care/ Insurance	\$
Other	\$
<b>Total</b>	\$

I have read and understand the *Important Information- Petition for Independent Status* sheet and certify that the information in this petition is true and correct:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Submit completed petition with attached documents to Tulane University Financial Aid, 205 Mechanical Engineering Building, New Orleans, LA 70118 or fax it to 504-862-8750.