

DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE REQUEST FORM

UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND ARTS OF OKLAHOMA
Financial Aid Office 1727 W. Alabama, Chickasha OK 73018-5322
Phone: (405) 574-1353 Fax: (405) 574-1220 Email: financialaid@usao.edu

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Federal law assumes the family has the primary responsibility for meeting the educational costs of students. Therefore, a student must meet certain federal criteria to qualify for financial aid as an independent student. If you do not meet one of the criteria listed on the FAFSA, you will be evaluated as a dependent student, meaning your parents must provide income and asset information.

If a student has **unusual circumstances** that may warrant re-evaluation of their dependency status, the University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma (USAO) Financial Aid Office will consider a request for a dependency override.

Unusual Circumstances

Unusual Circumstances must be based on instances in which the student is unable to contact a parent or where contact with a parent poses a risk to the student. Unusual Circumstances may include but are not limited to: 1) Human trafficking. 2) Legally granted refugee or asylum status. 3) Parental abandonment or estrangement. 4) Parental or student incarceration.

The U.S. Department of Education does not consider the following situations, *on their own*, to be Unusual Circumstances: 1) Parents do not want to provide their information on the FAFSA. 2) Parents refuse to contribute to college expenses. 3) Parents do not claim the student as a dependent on their income taxes. 4) The student does not live with parents. 5) Parents residing in another country. 6) Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.

How to Appeal:

Complete this form and attach a signed personal statement explaining the following:

1. Nature of your relationship with your parents.
2. Location of both parents and when you last had contact with them - when, where, and the nature of the contact.
3. Why you cannot obtain information and/or support from your parents.
4. How you have been supporting yourself.
5. Explain any additional unusual circumstances that you feel should make you an independent student.

Required Documentation in addition to the above statement:

1. **Complete The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** online at studentaid.gov.
2. A detailed **statement from two knowledgeable third parties** (e.g.: counselor, therapist, teacher, clergy, older relative, older family friend, social worker, prison administrator, etc.) who are familiar with the situation.
3. Documentation to show **how you have been supporting yourself**: tax return, lease/rent agreement, utility bills, health insurance policy, etc.

If a student is unable to provide any of the requested documentation, they may contact the Financial Aid Office at financialaid@usao.edu to discuss additional options.

After submitting a request and complete documentation, your status will be reviewed, and a decision rendered. You will be notified within 30 days of receipt of all requested documentation. **All decisions are final** and cannot be appealed.

Certification: I certify that the information contained in the Dependency Override forms submitted are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I will provide additional information as requested.

Student's signature: _____

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Instructions: Student must provide two statements from a **knowledgeable third party** to document the student's current situation and support the claim of unusual circumstances. A knowledgeable third party can be but is not limited to: a counselor, therapist, minister, social worker, attorney, an **older** relative or **older** family friend. It is the student's responsibility to submit completed statements along with other required documents.

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Reference Instructions: Please respond to the questions below and explain any unusual circumstances that should be considered in relationship to this student being classified as an independent student for federal financial aid eligibility.

Unusual Circumstances must be based on instances in which the student is unable to contact a parent or where contact with a parent poses a risk to the student. Unusual Circumstances may include, but are not limited to, 1) Human trafficking. 2) Legally granted refugee or asylum status. 3) Parental abandonment or estrangement. 4) Parental or student incarceration.

The U.S. Department of Education does not consider the following situations to be Unusual Circumstances and USAO will **not** consider a dependency override appeal in these cases: parents do not want to provide their information on the FAFSA or refuse to contribute to college expenses, parents do not claim the student as a dependent on their income taxes, the student does not live with parents.

Please answer thoroughly and attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary.

1. What is your relationship to the student? How many years have you known them?
2. Do you know the student's parents? Describe any interaction.
3. What were the applicant's living arrangements and means of support for the past four years? Include their current circumstances.
4. Explain from your personal knowledge the unusual circumstances that make it inappropriate to expect a parental contribution for this student.

Printed Name and Title: _____

Reference signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Daytime phone: _____

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