

SUNY Buffalo State

Banner ID _____

Student Phone: _____

Name _____

Other/Parent Phone: _____

Current Mailing Address _____

2015-2016 Independence Appeal Form Petition for Dependency Override

Students who do not meet the federal financial aid statutory definition for independent status may request a Dependency Override. To be considered independent, the student must be able to document **unusual or exceptional family circumstances**.

According to the Department of Education, the conditions listed below **do not qualify** as unusual circumstances meriting a Dependency Override:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education;
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification;
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes;
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.
- Parents reside in a different state or country.

Required Documentation to Demonstrate Unusual Family Circumstances:

Note: All information submitted is kept confidential.

- 1. Personal Statement:** Attach a separate sheet that explains why you should be considered independent from your parents for federal financial aid purposes.
 - a. The circumstances that you describe must be unusual or exceptional in regard to your family situation.
 - b. Your signed statement must explain the situation in detail and provide information about **both** parents.
 - c. You must describe the last time you had contact with each of your parents – when, where and the nature of the contact.
- 2. Third Party Documentation:** You must submit **two letters** from disinterested third parties that corroborate your statement.
 - a. Documentation must be from individuals or agencies that will provide **unbiased and have first-hand knowledge** of your unique situation and include information about **both** parents.
 - b. Third Party documentation must be **dated, be on official letterhead and have a wet signature** (typed name only is unacceptable) and must include contact information for the person providing the letter.
 - c. **Acceptable third parties include:** counselors or teachers, clergy, community groups, government agencies, medical personnel, medical records, court verdicts, police reports, or prison administrators.
- 3. Copy of your birth certificate**
- 4. Copy of your health insurance card**
- 5. Copy of death certificate(s)** (if parent deceased)

Final Submission Checklist: Your appeal will be denied if you do not provide all the following items:

✓ <u>Documentation Required</u>	<u>1st Appeal</u>	<u>Renewal</u>
_____ Personal statement (both parents must be addressed) . . .	Yes	---
_____ Updated personal statement	---	Yes
_____ Your federal tax return transcript, W-2's, etc. Get Transcript: http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f4506t.pdf	Yes	Yes
_____ Third party documentation	Yes	---
_____ Copy of birth certificate and health insurance card	Yes	---
_____ Copy of parent death certificate (if applicable)	Yes	---
_____ Parents' federal tax return transcripts (see page 2)	Yes	---

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Instructions: Go to www.fafsa.gov to complete the 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Answer the dependency status questions as they apply to you. Assuming all the answers are "No" then indicate that you are unable to provide parental information, taking time to carefully read the conditions for not reporting parental information.

Your FAFSA will initially be rejected by the federal processing center. Once our office receives your rejected FAFSA you will be required to submit this form and the supporting documentation. If the committee approves your appeal, we will submit the override to the federal processor. If your appeal is denied, you will be instructed to go back to your FAFSA online to complete the questions regarding parental information.

Each academic year, if your unusual or exceptional family circumstances remained the same, you must go through this appeal process until you meet the statutory requirements for independent status. Transfer students who were granted a dependency override at another school must be re-approved at Buffalo State, even if they were previously granted an override for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Student Income Information: Indicate the amount and source(s) of your annual income for 2013 and 2014. Attach copies of federal tax transcripts (Get Transcript: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f4506t.pdf>) for 2013 and 2014, statements from social services, W-2 forms, etc. Include both taxable and non-taxable income.

2013 \$ _____ Source _____
2014 \$ _____ Source _____

Student Residency Information: Provide the name of the person(s) with whom you resided in each year indicated. You must include the person's relationship to yourself and address.

2013:	_____	_____	_____
	Person(s) with Whom You Lived	Relationship to You	Address (Street, City, State, Zip)
2014:	_____	_____	_____
	Person(s) with Whom You Lived	Relationship to You	Address (Street, City, State, Zip)
2015:	_____	_____	_____
	Person(s) with Whom You Lived	Relationship to You	Address (Street, City, State, Zip)

Parental Information: Attach copies of federal tax transcripts (Get Transcript: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f4506t.pdf>) for 2013 and 2014. If you are unable to obtain these copies, please explain in writing.

Did or will your parents claim you as a dependent in 2013?	Yes	No
Did or will your parents claim you as a dependent in 2014?	Yes	No

Request for Dependency Override Renewal: If you were granted a Dependency Override by Buffalo State for the 2014-2015 academic year and your unusual or exceptional family circumstances continue to exist, you must submit an updated personal statement. Your updated statement must address your current relationship with both parents and if you only state that your situation has not changed, your request will be denied. You must include an explanation of how you are supporting yourself and submit a copy of your 2014 federal tax return transcript (if applicable). You do not need to re-submit items 2 through 5 referenced above.

Affirmation: All the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that intentionally misreporting information to fraudulently obtain federal funds will be reported to Buffalo State's legal counsel and/or the Office of Inspector General (OIG). I understand that if I do not provide the proof required, my appeal will be denied. I understand that I may submit only one appeal per academic year, and that the decision of the committee is final.

Student Signature _____

Date _____