

Santa Clara University Financial Aid Office Dependency Override Request Form

An independent student is defined by federal financial aid regulations as someone who fits into one or more of eleven specific categories. Under these categories, a student is independent if s/he can answer "YES" to at least one of the following:

- Were you born before January 1, 1994
- Are you working on a master's or doctorate degree or graduate certificate
- Are you married as of the date you completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Do you have children who receive more than half their support from you
- Do you have dependents other than your spouse or children who live with you and who receive more than half their support from you
- Did you have no living parents (biological or adoptive) when you were age 13, even if you are now adopted
- Are you or were you in foster care or a ward or dependent of the court at any time when you were 13 or older (even if you are not anymore)
- Are you an emancipated minor or are in legal guardianship as determined by the court in your state of legal residence
- Are you a self-supporting unaccompanied youth who is homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, or have you attended a service academy and were released under a condition other than dishonorable
- Are you currently serving as active duty (other than training) in the U.S. Armed Forces

The law allows you an opportunity to petition the financial aid administrator for a dependency override. The financial aid administrators may grant dependency overrides for students with "unusual circumstances" on a case-by-case basis and must document the "unusual circumstances" each award year.

Unacceptable Conditions for Dependency Override

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 that DO NOT merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification
- Parents not claiming the student as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency

Unusual Circumstances and Required Documentation

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes examples of "unusual circumstances" to be, but are not limited to, an abusive family environment or abandonment by parents. Please submit the following documentation with this form:

1. A detailed letter (typed) explaining the circumstances in your own words
2. Three (3) letters of support from non-relatives (e.g., proprietor, employer, teacher or clergy), which can confirm the statements in your letter of explanation. The letters of support should also include how they know you and how long they have known you
3. All other documentation you believe will help demonstrate your independent status

Certification Statement

By signing, I am certifying that this request is subject to the professional judgment of the Santa Clara University Financial Aid Office. This request may be subject to further documentation and all subsequent decisions are final. I understand that I must renew the dependency override application each award year, the outcome may change each year and it applies only to my attendance at Santa Clara University.

Print Full Name (as it appears on your campus student records):

Campus/Student Identification Number:

Signature: _____

Date: _____