

Federal Student Aid Training for Counselors and Mentors

Funding Education
Beyond High School

Academic Year
2019-2020





Student Dependency Status



What Makes a Student Independent?

- Born before 1/1/96 (for 2019-2020 year)
- Married
- Graduate or professional student



What Makes a Student Independent?

- Active duty military for purposes other than training
- Veteran



What Makes a Student Independent?

- Children who receive more than half support from you
- Dependents other than children or spouse



What Makes a Student Independent?

- Orphan, foster care, dependent/ward of the court
- Emancipated minor
- Legal guardianship

Answer “No” if the court papers say “custody” rather than “guardianship.”)



What Makes a Student Independent?


- Homeless or self supporting and at risk of being homeless
 - As determined by agency specified in FAFSA instructions
 - Decision determined by Financial Aid Administrator

Dependency Information—

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>

Prepare for College ▾ Types of Aid ▾ Who Gets Aid ▾ FAFSA: Applying for Aid ▾ How to Repay Your Loans ▾

Home » FAFSA: Applying for Aid » Filling Out the FAFSA » Dependency Status



For purposes of applying for federal student aid, what's the difference between a dependent student and an independent student?

Read the definitions, find out who has to provide parent information on the FAFSA, and learn what to do if you aren't in contact with your parents.*

Your dependency status determines whose information you must report on the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)*](#).

- If you're a dependent student, you will report your and your parents' information.
- If you're an independent student, you will report your own information (and, if you're married, your spouse's).

The federal student aid programs are based on the concept that it is primarily your and your family's responsibility to pay for your education. And because a dependent student is assumed to

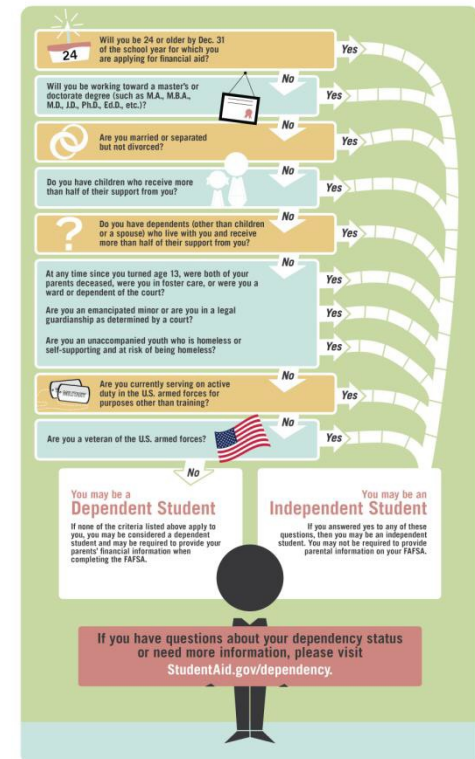
Quick Links

- ▶ [Reporting Parent Information](#)
- ▶ [How Aid is Calculated](#)
- ▶ [Estimate Your Aid](#)
- ▶ [Basic Eligibility Criteria](#)

Resources

Do I Have to Provide My Parents' Information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)?

All applicants for federal student aid are considered either "independent" or "dependent." Dependent students are required to include information about their parents on the FAFSA. By answering a few questions, you can get a good idea of which category you fit into.



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StudentAid.gov

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Dependency Overrides

- Financial Aid Administrators have authority to change the filing status from dependent to independent
- Student must present documentation of situation



Dependency Overrides

- **Special circumstances:**
 - Abuse at home
 - Abandonment by parents
- **NOT considered special circumstances:**
 - Parents don't claim student on taxes
 - Student does not live with parents and supports self
 - Parents don't want to help pay for college
 - Parents refuse to provide information for FAFSA



Dependency Overrides

Documentation from third party:

- Teacher
- Social worker
- Member of clergy
- Court system
- Law enforcement



Completion of FAFSA Without Parental Information



No Access to Parental Information

- FAFSA asks whether student will provide parental data
- If no, student indicates he or she meets special circumstances criteria
- Student can submit FAFSA without parent information
- FAFSA will have reject code
 - Student needs to work with the school to complete application



Parents Refuse to Provide Information

- Student indicates situation on FAFSA, choosing option that he or she is applying only for an unsubsidized loan
- Student submits FAFSA without parental information
- EFC not calculated
- Student does not qualify for federal or state grant aid
- Student must contact the school regarding documentation and a decision



Who Qualifies as a Parent for a Dependent Student?

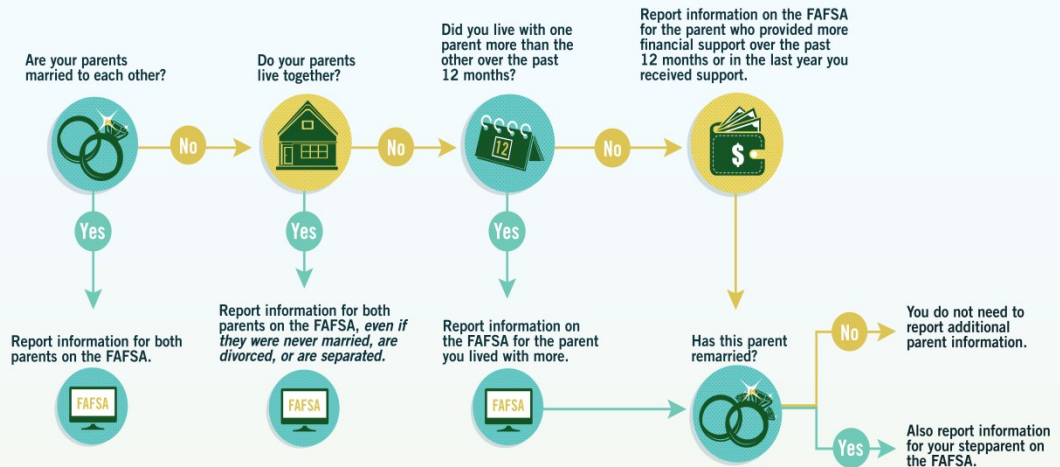


Who Is a Parent - Infographic

WHO'S MY PARENT WHEN I FILL OUT MY FAFSA®?

Dependent students are required to report parent information on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*.¹ For reporting purposes, "PARENT" means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or stepparent, or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent.

Use this guide to figure out which parent's information to include (depending on your family situation).



The following people are not your parents unless they have legally adopted you:



Widowed Stepparent



Grandparents



Foster Parents



Legal Guardians



Older Brothers or Sisters



Aunts or Uncles

If you're not sure whom to report as a parent, you can visit StudentAid.ed.gov/afsa/filling-out/parent-info or call 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243).

¹ If you're not sure whether you are a dependent student, go to StudentAid.gov/afsa/filling-out/dependency

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Who Is a Parent?

- Biological parents
- Adoptive parents
- Stepparents, if they are married to the student's biological or adoptive parent and the student is included in their household size



Parent and Marital Status

- Parents(Biological and adoptive)

If your parents are divorced but live together, you'll indicate their marital status as "Unmarried and both parents living together," and you'll answer the questions about both of them.

If your parents are separated but live together, you'll indicate their marital status as "Married or remarried," and you'll answer the questions about both of them.

If you have a stepparent who is married to the legal parent whose information you're reporting, you must provide information about that stepparent as well.



Who Is Not a Parent?

- Foster parents
- Legal guardians who have not adopted the student
- Any Relatives (including grandparents) who have not adopted the student
- Stepparents who have not adopted the student and who would be the only person providing parental information



Case Study: Vicki

1. Vicki's parents are divorced. She lives with mom and only stays with dad a few weeks during the summer.
2. Vicki's dad makes more money than her mom.
3. Vicki now lives half time with dad, half time with mom.



Case Study: Vicki

4. Vicki's mom remarries. Will her stepdad's information go on her FAFSA?
5. Vicki's stepdad has his own kids. Should Vicki leave his information off her FAFSA?



Case Study: Shawn

1. Shawn's mom passed away, and he doesn't get along with dad. Shawn lives with his older sister and her husband.
2. Shawn's dad is now incarcerated. Should Shawn take a paper FAFSA on a visit for information and a signature?



Case Study: Carlos

1. Carlos lives with his grandmother to take pressure off his mom.
2. Carlos' grandmother has been named his legal guardian.



Case Study: Claire

1. Claire's parents are separated but still live together
2. Claire's parents are divorced. Her parents currently live together to save money until one of her parents can find separate housing..



Case Study: Fred

1. Fred's parents are undocumented but Fred is a U.S. citizen.
2. The FAFSA required parental information but they were not born in the U.S. and he is worried he can't complete the FAFSA.



Questions/Discussion



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