

2025-2026 REQUEST FOR INDEPENDENCE CONSIDERATION

Dependent students can request independent status for federal aid, but approval isn't guaranteed. To understand the process, eligibility, and required documentation, review the information provided. We acknowledge discussing personal circumstances can be challenging, yet full documentation is necessary for approval. *All information will be kept confidential.*

Federal regulations permit professional judgment to override dependency status for students facing unusual circumstances, such as inability to contact parents or risk associated with parental contact. Dependency status for federal aid differs from tax and state aid criteria, so qualifying for one doesn't ensure qualification for another.

Federal guidelines clearly state unusual circumstances **do not** include:

- × Parents refusing to financially contribute to your education.
- × Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for income verification purposes.
- × Parents not claiming you as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- × A student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.

The following examples are only a guide of situations that could merit a dependency override. Unusual circumstances do include (but are not limited to):

- ✓ Abandonment by parents
- ✓ Human trafficking
- ✓ Parent incarceration
- ✓ Legally granted refugee or asylum status
- ✓ Other documented unusual circumstances

The documentation you submit **must** support an extenuating or unusual circumstance. If you document your circumstances, then it will be reviewed.

Upon review of your application further information may be requested to clarify or support your case. All requests and decisions will be sent to your SUNY Canton email.

Got Questions? Contact the Student Service Center at (315) 386-7616



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This form is for those students who do not meet the federal independence criteria and feel they have unusual circumstances that should be taken into consideration. *The definition of an Independent student is different for state aid, therefore appeals to the state must be done separately through HESC in Albany in a separate request.*

SECTION A: STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name	SUNY Canton ID

All information submitted in support of this application will be kept confidential.

SECTION B: INSTRUCTIONS (All requirements must be met for your application to be reviewed.)

Completed 2025-2026 FAFSA. *You may leave parent section blank until your dependency status has been determined.*

Indicate the month and year that you last lived with either parent. _____ / _____
Month Year

Attached personal statement detailing the relationship with both parents at this time. *Be sure to indicate where and with whom you are currently residing and how you are financially being supported., this letter must be signed.*

Attach at least two (2) letters from reliable third parties that can confirm your relationship with your parents. *Reliable third parties include adults who are familiar with your situation such as a counselor, clergy, teacher, attorney, school counselor, or adult relative other than your parents.*

SECTION C: CERTIFICATION

By signing below, I certify that the information contained on this form is correct. If changes occur, I will notify Financial Aid in writing. **Return this form to the student service center (One Hop Shop) with all required documentation.**

Student Signature (required) _____
Date

Return Forms To <https://www.canton.edu/secure/finaid>