



2015-2016 DOCUMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT STATUS

On your 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you marked yes to one of the situations below that pertain to your dependency status for federal financial aid or you filed your FAFSA without your parents' information. In order for your dependency status to be determined, **you must submit official documentation to the WOU Financial Aid Office.** Refer to the criteria below for the documentation that you must submit.

1. At any time since you turned 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court? Provide documentation of your parents' death (i.e., death certificate, obituary, etc.), copies of the court decision documenting foster care, or ward of the court status. For federal student aid purposes, someone who is incarcerated (ward of the state) is not considered a ward of the court.

2. As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor? Provide copies of the court decision documenting your emancipation immediately before you reached the age of being an adult in your state. The court must be located in your state of legal residence at the time the court's decision was issued.

3. As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you in a legal guardianship? Provide copies of the court decision documenting your legal guardianship immediately before you reached the age of being an adult in your state. The court must be located in your state of legal residence at the time the court's decision was issued. The definition of legal guardian does not include biological parents or adoptive parents. Legal guardianship does not include legal custody.

4. At any time on or after July 1, 2014, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? Have your high school or school district liaison provide a signed statement on high school letterhead. This applies to students who will graduate from high school during the 2014-2015 school year.

If you were not in high school during 2014-2015 but your high school had previously determined that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, you must provide a written statement to the WOU Financial Aid Office explaining your current living situation.

5. At any time on or after July 1, 2014, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? Have the emergency shelter or transitional housing program director provide a signed statement on agency letterhead.

6. At any time on or after July 1, 2014, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless? Have the runaway or homeless center or transitional living program director provide a signed statement on agency letterhead.

7. None of these apply to me and I have unusual circumstances. Unusual circumstances include incarcerated parents, leaving home due to an abusive family environment, or you do not know where your parents are and are unable to contact them. Please contact the Western Oregon University Financial Aid Office if you have unusual circumstances and do not have documentation of the criteria listed above.

8. If you filed your FAFSA without your parents' information in error, you must return to www.fafsa.gov and add parental information.

This document is available in alternative formats. Please give reasonable notice the Financial Aid Office.