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## Dependency Status Appeal 2025-2026

*At Holyoke Community College, we want to make sure that everyone has an equal chance to go to college, no matter who they are. We know that getting money to pay for college is important, so we promise to be fair when we give out financial aid. We also want to make sure that trans and gender-expansive students don't face any barriers in accessing financial aid. If you have questions or concerns about this, you can talk to the financial aid office.*

**Are you applying for financial aid but can't provide your parent's financial information? This form is for you!**

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Last Name First Name MI

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Phone Number HCC ID

**What to know:**

When applying for financial aid, Federal law assumes that you are a dependent student and will provide your parent's information on the FAFSA application unless you meet one of the following conditions.

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| <p>1.) Were you born before January 1, 2002?</p> <p>2.) As of today, are you married? (Answer "No" if you are separated but not divorced.)</p> <p>3.) At the beginning of the 2025–26 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an M.A., MBA, M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., graduate certificate, etc.)?</p> <p>4.) Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training? (If you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee, are you on active duty for other than state or training purposes?)</p> <p>5.) Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?</p> <p>6.) Do you have children or other people (excluding your spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you now and between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026?</p> | <p>7.) At any time since you turned age 13, were you an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent)?</p> <p>8.) At any time since you turned age 13, were you a ward of the court?</p> <p>9.) At any time since you turned age 13, were you in <a href="#">foster care</a>?</p> <p>10.) Are you or were you a legally <a href="#">emancipated minor</a>, as determined by a court in your state of residence?</p> <p>11.) Are you or were you in a legal guardianship with someone other than your parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in your state of residence?</p> <p>12.) At any time on or after July 1, 2024, were you unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?*</p> |
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If you do not meet any of the conditions for independent status outlined above, you may appeal if you **believe** you have an extenuating situation. An extenuating situation is any severe or extraordinary situation in your family that prevents you from obtaining your parents' financial information.

The following **are not** considered unusual circumstances for the purpose of achieving independent status for financial aid:

- You do not live in your parents' home.
- You are self-supporting or your parents cannot afford or refuse to help with college or living expenses.
- You are not claimed as a dependent on your parents' income tax.
- Your parents are unwilling to provide their financial information to complete the FAFSA or for verification.

## **APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

### **Step 1.**

Go to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) and fill out your FAFSA. You only need to complete the student section.

### **Step 2.**

**Write a personal statement** that explains your situation. If you have two parents, write an explanation for each one. Please print, sign, and submit the statement(s) to the Financial Aid office (our address or next cloud secure link is provided at the end of this document).

### **Step 3.**

**Get a supporting statement or statements**, and submit to the Financial Aid office.

**What is a supporting statement?** The federal government requires another person or people to support your request by explaining your extenuating situation and the reason you can't provide your parent(s)'s financial information.

**You might need two supporting statements:** If you get a supporting statement on official letterhead from someone who is considered an "expert" (such as a therapist, teacher, or clergy), you only need **one** supporting statement. If you don't have someone like that, that's okay! In that case, you'll need **two** supporting statements from people who can explain your extenuating situation and why you can't provide your parent(s)'s information on the FAFSA.

**If you are a returning HCC student** who has been approved for a dependency override before, no supporting statement is necessary! You only need to submit your personal statement and explain that your situation has not changed.

### **Step 4.**

Once you've completed all three steps our financial aid counselors will look at all the information you provided and send you a letter or email letting you know if:

- Your request has been approved
- We need more information
- Your request is not approved\*

This process usually takes about two weeks. We will do everything we can to help you get the money you need for college.

\* Don't worry! Even if you don't meet the requirements for a dependency override, you may still be eligible for an unsubsidized loan or scholarships. We'll help you find out.

## YOUR INFORMATION

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you ever attended HCC? ( ) YES ( ) NO

2. Has HCC or another college ever approved you for a dependency override? ( ) YES ( ) NO

If yes, please name the college \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUR PARENT(S) INFORMATION

Parent #1 name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent #1 address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Parent #2 name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent #2 address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

When did you last receive financial help from your parent(s)? Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Do/will your parent(s) claim you on their federal tax return? ( ) YES ( ) NO

Do/will your parent(s) provide you with health insurance coverage? ( ) YES ( ) NO

Do you live with your parent(s)? ( ) YES ( ) NO

## CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

- I confirm that what I submitted is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I understand that all committee decisions are final.
- I understand that if my appeal is APPROVED, then I will be awarded federal aid based on independent status. **Please note:** More paperwork may be needed after the change to your dependency status has been processed.
- I understand that if my appeal is DENIED, then I will have to submit my FAFSA providing my parent(s) financial information and signatures in order to receive federal aid.

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Student's Signature

Date

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*For more information on processing and verification deadlines, please visit <http://www.hcc.edu/finaid/deadlines>*

### **MAIL OR CONTACT US AT:**

Financial Aid Office  
Holyoke Community College  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke, MA 01040

financialaid@hcc.edu  
413.552.2150

Next Cloud Secure Link:  
<https://nextcloud.hcc.edu/index.php/s/DYnYkzYmSAK8L5z>