

Students are classified as dependent or independent because federal student aid programs are based on the idea that student's parents have the primary responsibility of paying for their children's education.

Certain questions on the student aid application will determine whether you are considered **dependent** on your parents and must report their income and assets as well as your own, or whether you are **independent** and must report only your own income and assets.

For the 2013-2014 academic year, a student is **automatically** determined to be an independent applicant for Federal student aid if he/she meets any one of the following criteria:

1. the student was born before January 1, 1990
2. at the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year, the student is working on a master's or doctorate program;
3. the student is married (*as of the date the FAFSA is completed by the student*);
4. the student has children who receive more than half of their support from the student; or
5. the student has dependents (other than a spouse or children) who live with the student *and* receive more than half of their support from the student, now through June 30, 2014;
6. both of the student's parents are deceased or the student is/was an orphan or ward of the court until the age of 18;
7. the student is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces (called to active duty service other than training).

A student who lives outside of the parent's home is not considered independent for financial aid purposes.

Sometimes students have unusual circumstances, and ask that the financial aid office review their dependency status. The financial aid office provides the following guidelines to students requesting a status review.

1. Independent status will be considered if an irrevocable severance of family ties due to extremely difficult/life threatening situations exists, and the student no longer resides with his/her parents.
2. Acceptance situations may include that the student was abandoned by the parents, or was forced to sever ties because of physical or mental abuse, or was faced with a life threatening situation, and the student no longer resides with his/her parents.

Detailed documentation supporting the change of status request must be provided by the student.

Students who want us to change their status to independent or self-supporting should be aware that the following situations do not warrant such a change of status.

- ❖ parents refuse to contribute to the student's education
- ❖ parents refuse to provide required information
- ❖ parents live out-of-state
- ❖ student chose not to live with the parents
- ❖ student chose to live with other relatives
- ❖ student chose not to have communication with the parents
- ❖ student will not qualify for aid if parent's income is used
- ❖ student demonstrates total self-sufficiency

Warning: According to the U.S. Department of Education, if you purposely give false or misleading information on form, you may be subject to a fine of up to \$20,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both.

*Financial Aid/Veteran's Affairs – Central Piedmont Community College – PO Box 35009 – Charlotte, NC 28235-5009
Telephone: (704) 330-6942 Fax: (704) 330-5053*

You may submit, fax or mail your documents to any of our six locations.