

Office of Financial Aid
2024-2025 Dependency Appeal Form

What is a Dependency Appeal?

The federal government defines specific criteria students must meet in order to be considered "independent" for financial aid purposes. If you do not meet these criteria, you may request the school's financial aid office reevaluate your dependency status. A dependency appeal is the process the school uses to review your situation and determine if you are eligible to be considered independent. This can only be done in **unique** circumstances. **NOTE:** Parental unwillingness or inability to contribute is not considered a unique circumstance, nor is living on your own and paying for your own expenses.

Unique circumstances such as being estranged from your parent(s) due to extreme conditions (e.g. child abuse, abandonment, alcoholism, or drug abuse, etc.) which can be documented by an objective third party (e.g. pastor, high school or college professor, a social service agency official, etc.) may qualify for this special treatment.

How does the Process Work?

Each school establishes its own policies with regard to granting dependency appeals. As a result, a student could receive a dependency override at one school, but not another.

At Notre Dame, the appeals committee reviews your appeal and keeps the information **confidential**. You will be notified of the committee's decision.

How do I submit an appeal?

Complete and submit this form along with the other required documentation to Notre Dame of Maryland University, Office of Financial Aid. **NOTE:** Appeals will not be reviewed until all paperwork/documentation is received.

Other notes:

- Completion of this form and submission of documents does not guarantee approval of a dependency appeal.
- Approval of an appeal does not guarantee receipt of additional aid.
- Your dependency status must be reevaluated each year until or unless you meet the federal government's definition of an independent student.

Office of Financial Aid

2024-2025

Dependency Appeal

Request Form

Student Name: _____

SSN (last four digits): _____ Phone Number: _____

FAFSA

Complete and submit the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on-line at www.fafsa.gov to the best of your ability. If you file taxes, retrieve your 2023 tax information for the FAFSA via the IRS Data Retrieval process. Remember to include Notre Dame's code (002065) so that the information may be released to our office.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Write and attach a clear and concise typed one-page explanation of your exceptional circumstance. Your signed and dated statement must include a complete history of:

- Your relationship with your biological and/or legally adoptive parents (include their first and last names and last known address).
- Specific dates of events that caused your separation from your parents (include how long you have been separated from your parents).
- Do you have siblings (include their ages, where they live, and describe your relationship with them).
- Where you have lived since separating from your parents (include addresses and dates).
- Your sources of income.
- How you have supported yourself while living apart from your parents (include if you have auto and/or health insurance and who pays for them; include a copy of your card insurance card).

THIRD PARTY DOCUMENTATION

Provide statements from **two** third-party references who are not family members who can verify the unique family circumstances you described.

- Third party references include clergy members, counselors, social workers, physicians, or law enforcement officers.
- Letters should be on organization letterhead, detailed, refer to actual events, and physically signed (email will NOT be accepted). They should reflect the writer's direct knowledge of events.
- Police reports may, in some cases, substitute for one letter.

Certification:

By signing this form, I certify that the information provided to support this appeal is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that failure to provide requested documents will result in a denial. I also understand that completing this appeal does not guarantee an override in my dependency status.

Student Signature_____
Date