

Request to Change Dependency Status 2021-2022 (Dependency Override)

Financial Aid Office
Bristol Community College 777 Elsbree Street Fall River, MA 02720

Information and Instructions

The Financial Aid Office may consider exceptional/unusual circumstances to allow an otherwise dependent student to apply for aid without parental financial information.

Only documentable cases in which parents' information cannot be obtained due to an unusual circumstance such as abandonment by parents, an abusive/neglectful family environment that threatens a student's health or safety, or a student being unable to locate their parents, may warrant a change from dependent to independent status.

Note: Several conditions that do not qualify as unusual circumstances, either individually or in combination, include:

- parents who refuse to contribute to a student's education.
- Parent's unwillingness to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification.
- Parents do not claim the student as dependent for income tax purposes.
- A student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.
- Also, the fact that a student's parents live in another country does not qualify as an unusual circumstance.

A student who does not qualify for a dependency override can complete the Parent Refuse Form to receive consideration for an unsubsidized loan.

To request consideration for a dependency override, two statements must be completed. Submit both documents to the Financial Aid Office at the same time.

1. Student's Personal Statement: Explaining why you are unable to obtain parental information for the FAFSA or Verification and why you are requesting a review of your dependency status (page two of this form)
2. Documentation from a third party with knowledge of your unusual circumstances.
 - A social worker, professional counselor, high school guidance counselor, clergy are examples of individuals who typically submit this documentation.
 - Other documentation such as court documents, police reports, or other documentation.

Third-Party statements should describe the professional relationship with the student; explain knowledge of the student's estrangement from family, and state why the student is unable to obtain parental information and assistance. Generally, a statement from a family member, relative, or friend does not meet this requirement, however the Financial Aid Office will decide what documentation is acceptable on a case-by-case-basis.

The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to request additional documentation if needed to adequately document any adjustments it makes or to resolve conflicting or inconsistent information. The Financial Aid Office's decision regarding adjustments is final and cannot be appealed.

