

Dependency Override Frequently Asked Questions

Question: My parents have told me that they don't want to provide their information on my FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application; can I be considered an independent student?

Answer: The federal government created the regulations for FAFSA and CA Dream Act Application dependent and independent status. Unfortunately, your parents would need to provide their information on the application unless you can answer "yes" to one of the Dependency Status questions in Section 2 of the financial aid application. Check with the financial aid office to see if you can complete the California College Promise Grant as an independent student.

Question: Can I get a dependency override because my parents won't help me pay for college; they say I must pay for everything myself?

Answer: Unfortunately, students whose parents refuse support are not eligible for a dependency override; however, the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 granted that such students may receive Unsubsidized Direct Loans only. Please contact the financial aid office to see what documentation you will need.

Question: I don't get along with my parents and we refuse to speak with each other; can I do a dependency appeal?

Answer: The federal government does not allow colleges to do a dependency override in this situation. You would need to provide documentation of extraordinary circumstances such as refugees, political asylums, incarcerated parents, physically abusive relationships, etc.

Question: What documentation will I need to submit to petition for a dependency override?

Answer: To petition for a change to your dependency status, request a Dependency Override on <http://cuesta.verifymyfafsa.com> for the academic year in which you would like financial aid. You will need to provide the following:

1. Signed statement: This statement should detail your current relationship with your parents, your last contact with your parents, and whether you have asked your parents to assist you in applying for financial aid. Copies of any court records, police reports, death certificates, etc... that would support your petition for a dependency override.
2. Documentation from a third party who is aware of your situation. This could include written letters from third parties, such as clergy, teachers, counselors, and/or social workers, who know of your family circumstances. Other students and/or friends may or may not be appropriate as independent third parties.

Question: If my dependency override is approved, will it carry over to subsequent academic years at Cuesta?

Answer: No. Because a student's family circumstances, as well as federal and state regulations can change from one year to the next, it is required that you submit a new appeal each academic year.

If you have any additional questions please contact our office.