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Dependency Status Appeal 2026-2027

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 you can't provide your parents' financial information? This form is for you!

Last Name	First Name	MI
Phone Number	HCC ID	

What is a Dependency Override?

In cases involving unusual circumstances, Federal regulations permit financial aid administrators to make dependency overrides on a case-by-case basis for any student with documented unusual circumstances

Unusual circumstance reasons which must be documented (including, but not limited to, the following):

- An abusive family environment, such as sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, or other forms of domestic violence.
- Abandonment by parent(s), resulting in lack of care, support, or contact.
- Incarceration or institutionalization of both parents, preventing them from providing stable care.
- Parents lacking the physical or mental capacity to raise the child.

However, Federal Regulations prohibit the following circumstances (for the reason below alone):

- You are financially self-sufficient and/or your parents cannot afford or refuse to help with college or living expenses.
- You do not live with your parents(s).
- You are not claimed as an exemption on your parent(s) federal income tax returns.
- Your parent(s) refuse to complete the FAFSA, participate in verification or pay for college.
- Your parent(s) live in a foreign country.

***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 will do everything we can to help you get the money you need for college.**

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

APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

Step 1. Go to www.fafsa.gov and fill out your FAFSA. You only need to complete the student section.

Step 2: Submit a typed, signed, and dated Personal Statement that explains your situation. The statement must include the following:

1. Detailed description of the reason(s) for requesting a dependency override
2. History of parental relationships, including:
 - Timeline of events
 - Explanation of your relationship (or lack of relationship) with each parent
3. Current living arrangements, including:
 - Names of people you live with
4. How you support yourself, including
 - financial resources, employment, or assistance

Step 3: Provide Supporting Statement(s) from individuals who can verify your circumstances. These statements must explain why you cannot provide parent(s) information on the FAFSA.

Who can provide a supporting statement?

A supporting statement should come from a professional adult who is familiar with your situation. Examples of a “Professional Adult” include:

- Law enforcement officer
- Clergy member
- School counselor
- Social worker
- Case worker or licensed counselor

Requirements:

- Must be on business letterhead, signed, and dated OR
- Must be sent from a professional’s official work email address

If you cannot obtain a professional statement:

You must provide **two statements** from individuals (such as relatives or friends) who can confirm your circumstances. These statements must:

- Describe the situation (for both parents)
- Explain why parental information cannot be provided
- Include the writer’s full contact information
- Be signed and dated

Once you’ve completed all three steps and submitted a complete appeal form and submitted all required documentation our financial aid counselors will look at all the information you provided and send you a letter or email letting you know if:

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

The appeal process usually takes about two weeks from when the appeal is received with all required documentation.

YOUR INFORMATION *do not leave any question blank*****

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 to receive federal aid.

Student's Signature Date

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>