



2019-2020

DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE APPEAL REQUEST

Federal Financial Aid regulations indicate that an individual who does not automatically qualify as an independent student for FAFSA purposes may be reclassified as independent if a financial aid administrator makes a documented determination of independence by reason of unusual circumstances. This determination is commonly referred to as a Dependency Override.

The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) has provided guidance to assist financial aid administrators in making consistent and reasonable Dependency Override decisions.

In accordance with DOE guidance, Missouri Western adheres to the policy that a dependency override cannot be approved for an otherwise dependent FAFSA applicant if one or more following conditions are the ONLY circumstances cited by the applicant:

- the student simply states that he/she is financially self-sufficient or does not live with parent(s);
- a parent isn't willing to contribute financially toward the student's educational and living expenses, or simply elects not to assist the student financially;
- a parent isn't willing to provide the data required on the FAFSA or to assist in completing the verification process; or
- the student is not claimed by a parent as a federal income tax exemption.

A Dependency Override generally may be considered for an otherwise dependent FAFSA applicant if one or more of the following conditions are cited by the applicant in his/her written appeal and supported by additional documentation:

- an abusive (emotionally or physically), unhealthy, or unsafe family environment;
- abandonment of the student by the parent(s);
- incarceration of the custodial parent(s);
- removal or relocation of the student from the parent(s)' residence by court order; and/or
- other unusual or extraordinary circumstances, events, or incidents, particularly those related to any of the conditions for independence.

Dependency Override determinations are always made by the Financial Aid Office on an individual, case-by-case basis and are not approved solely on the basis of a prior determination.

Dependency Override appeal information should be submitted to:

Missouri Western State University
Office of Financial Aid, Eder Hall, Room 103
4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, Mo 64507
Fax: (816) 271-5879

