2024-2025

Houston Community College
Financial Aid Office

Unusual Circumstances Dependency Override
Covers Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Summer 2025

Student's Name (PRINT): _____ Phone: (_____) _____

HCC ID:_____ Date of Birth: ____/_____/_____ Home Campus:_____
     (9-digit number required)   (Primary location of attendance)

The Department of Education determines a student's status as dependent or independent by the answers the student provides on the questions listed in Step Three of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students are classified as dependent or independent based on the principle that students (and his/her contributor (parent) are considered the primary source of support for postsecondary education. Since you do not meet the federal definition of an independent student, you must provide documentation that demonstrates unusual circumstances that makes it unreasonable to expect parental data on your application for financial aid. Please complete this dependency override request and return it the financial aid office with supporting documentation.

The following **DO NOT** qualify as reasons for requesting a dependency change:

- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.
- Contributor (parents) are unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification.
- You do not live with your contributors (parents).
- Your contributors (parents) do not claim you on their federal or state tax forms.

The following reasons may consider a student for an unusual circumstance. If approved for an unusual circumstance, a student's dependency status may be updated on the FAFSA to independent and the student's financial aid eligibility calculation can be based on student income information only.

- Abandonment by contributor (parents).
- An abusive family environment that threatens the student's health or safety.
- Student is unable to locate his/her contributors (parents).

Documentation is critical to the Unusual circumstance (dependency override) process. The documentation must support, and include the reason for, the request and should in almost all cases originate from a third party with knowledge of the unusual circumstances of the student.

A financial aid representative will review the request and examine the supporting documentation. Based on his/her professional judgment, the request will either be approved or denied. The student will be notified in writing to their HCC email address of the decision. The review process takes approximately 4 to 6 weeks.

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Unusual Circumstance (Dependency Override)

Please provide a typed and detailed statement explaining the severe situation(s) that exists in your family preventing you from obtaining your contributors (parent's) financial information, such as contributor (parent) physical or emotional abuse, severe estrangement, abandonment, incarceration, drug or alcohol abuse, mental incapacity, or other such situations beyond your control.

Reason for requesting to be independent (attach detailed letter of explanation):_____

_____

Check the type(s) of documentation you are providing to support your request. Three letters from third party persons must be provided to support your request.

       Third party letters from:

_____Minister

_____Social worker

_____Psychologist

_____High school counselor

_____Teacher

_____Doctor

_____Relative

_____Other professional

       If you are providing a report to document your circumstance, check one of the following:

_____Police Report

_____Court Reports

_____Documentation from a social agency

_____Contributor's (Parent's) death certificate

_____Other Report – Type:_____

       _____Other Documentation: _____

Certification

By signing below, I acknowledge and confirm that the above information is complete and correct. Purposely giving false or misleading information may result in federal fines, jail sentence, or both.

Student Signature:_____   Date:_____