

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

Petition for Independent Status

www.tstc.edu/harlingenfinancialaid



The US Congress and Department of Education determine the criteria for whether a student is considered dependent or independent of their parents for financial aid purposes. Generally, how an applicant responds to "Step Three" on the FAFSA determines their dependency status.

The questions in "Step Three" are:

- 45. Were you born before January 1, 1991? ... Yes O No O
46. As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced.) ... Yes O No O
47. At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, or graduate certificate, etc.)? ... Yes O No O
48. Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training? ... Yes O No O
49. Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces? ... Yes O No O
50. Do you have children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015? ... Yes O No O
51. Do you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2015? ... Yes O No O
52. At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in foster care or a dependent or ward of the court? ... Yes O No O
53. As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor? ... Yes O No O
54. As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship? ... Yes O No O
55. At any time on or after July 1, 2013, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? ... Yes O No O
56. At any time on or after July 1, 2013, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? ... Yes O No O
57. At any time on or after July 1, 2013 did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were and unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at the risk of being homeless? ... Yes O No O

If you do not meet one of the above conditions, but still feel there are extenuating circumstances, which might warrant being considered independent of your parents, you may explain those circumstances in a petition to your Financial Aid Officer.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM

The basic premise underlying student financial aid is that it is primarily the responsibility of the student and his or her family to pay education costs. When family resources are insufficient, financial aid may be awarded to supplement the resources of the student's family to help pay educational expenses. By petitioning, you are asking us to relieve your parents of the responsibility for using their resources to pay part of your college costs. Only very extenuating circumstances will make it reasonable to approve such a petition. Living on your own or having sufficient resources to pay your own expenses is NOT considered an extenuating circumstance for determining dependency status.

For your petition to be considered, you must not have been claimed as a tax exemption by any parent or stepparent in 2013. Your parent(s) or stepparent(s) may not have used you as the basis to file income taxes as "head of household," and you may not have lived with your parent(s) or stepparent(s) for the last two years.

Note: Submission of the FAFSA to the US Department of Education is partly for the purpose of determining what level of contribution should be expected from the family. For low-income families, this contribution is often zero or minimal, and a change in dependency status may have little influence on the student's eligibility for financial aid.

Equal opportunity shall be afforded within the Texas State Technical College System to all employees and applicants for admission or employment regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age or disability. TSTC will make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

TSTC Financial Aid Office | 1902 North Loop 499 | Harlingen, Texas 78550 | Office: 956-364-4330 | Toll-free: 1-800-852-8784 | Fax: 956-364-5119
Email: financial.aid@harlingen.tstc.edu | www.tstc.edu/harlingen | FAFSA School Code: 009225

## Petition for Independent Status (continued)

**To begin the petition process, please answer the questions listed on the reverse side of this form.  
Then submit this form, WITH YOUR PETITION STATEMENT ATTACHED, to the Student Financial Aid Office.**

The Student Financial Aid Office may consider your petition for independent status. In order to consider your petition, please complete the Expense Schedule below. Return this form to our office with the following documentation:

- Signed copy of your 2013 Federal income tax transcript
- Documentation of any income or resources received in 2013 that are not on your tax return
- Documentation of where you have lived since January 2013 (e.g., signed lease agreements, housing contract, statement from person providing housing and relationship to you.)

1. What amount of financial support did you receive from your parents in 2013? \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Include any payments made on your behalf, such as credit card bills, auto insurance, utilities, etc...)
2. What amount of financial support will you receive from your parents in 2014? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
3. Please provide a detail statement of your extenuating circumstance and attach any relevant documentation that you think may support your petition.
4. Attach at least one letter from a relative that can attest and describe your extenuating circumstances.
5. Attach another letter from a professional such as doctor, teacher, clergy, or counselor who can document the same.  
(Must use official letterhead or stationery)

Provide the dollar amounts for each of the items for the table below.

EXPENSES	JANUARY-DECEMBER 2013	Current Year Expenses: JANUARY-DECEMBER 2014
Housing	\$	\$
Food	\$	\$
Transportation	\$	\$
Utilities	\$	\$
Personal	\$	\$
Tuition/Fee	\$	\$
Books/Supplies	\$	\$
Other	\$	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

If you entered "0" for any of the items listed above, please explain:

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### Certification and Signatures

By signing this form, I certify that all of the information reported on this form is complete and correct.  
I understand that, if I purposely give false or misleading information on this form, I may be fined, sentenced to jail, or both.

Students signature	Student's Printed Name	Student ID#
_____@mymail.tstc.edu	_____	_____
MyMail Address	Telephone Number	Date Signed

For Office Use Only:  Approved     Rejected     At risk homeless youth     Dependency override

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Aid Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Office Use Only:** CRI Code: **FAC14DO**    Date Entered: \_\_\_\_\_    Initials: \_\_\_\_\_    Date Scanned: \_\_\_\_\_    Initials: \_\_\_\_\_