2027-28 Independent Status Petition

2641 John F. Kennedy Boulevard | Jersey City, NJ 07306 | financialaid@saintpeters.edu |201.761.6060

STUDENT INFORMATION

Last Name First Name SPIRIT ID Number

Student's Signature:_____ Date::_____

Financial aid regulations assume that the family has primary responsibility for meeting the educational costs of students. If you are considered a dependent student according to the financial aid definition, your aid eligibility is determined by using parent income and asset information in addition to your information. Dependent students are required by law to provide parental information and signatures to be considered for financial aid.

Occasionally, due to unusual circumstances, students should not be considered as dependent. If you can document why you should be considered independent for some unusual reason, you may petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information. The U. S. Department of Education has identified four conditions that, individually or in combination with one another, do not qualify as "unusual circumstances" and do not merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

1. Parents refusing to contribute to the student's education;
2. Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification;
3. Parents not claiming the students as a dependent for income tax purposes;
4. Students demonstrating total self-sufficiency.

Federal regulations allow financial aid administrators to use professional judgment to change dependency status to "independent" on a case by case basis. The student must demonstrate that there is an unusual circumstance other than the fact that the student is self sufficient or that the parents are unwilling to contribute to the student's education.

Guidelines

The following information is used by our financial aid committee in reviewing a student's petition for independent status. Meeting all of the guidelines does not mean that a petition will be granted. The committee will decide on an individual basis whether to change a student's status to "independent".

In your petition you should answer each of the following items:

- 1. Identify the location of both your parents.
- 2. Describe the last time you had contact with each of your parents – when and the nature of the contact.
- 3. Explain what unusual circumstances should make you an independent student.
- 4. Describe how you have been self-supporting: a) when did you start meeting your expenses without parental support; and b) how have you provided for yourself?
- 5. Provide statements from two responsible adults who are aware of your situation. At least one statement must be from someone who is not a relative or friend. Copies of appropriate court documents are acceptable to support your petition.
- 6. Provide a copy of parents' prior year tax return. Provide your current and prior year tax return.
- 7. Certify below: I have attached statements from the following persons (give name, address, phone number, job title and relationship to you):

Name: _____ Relationship to student:_____

Phone Number: _____ Job Title::_____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to student:_____

Phone Number: _____ Job Title::_____

Address: _____

I certify that the information provided in this petition is true and correct:

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

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