

Unusual Circumstances Appeal Form- Dependency Override 2024-2025

Student's Name: _____ **ID #:** _____

The U.S. Department of Education determines each student's dependency status based on the information provided on the FAFSA. Students may submit an appeal to Bowie State University (BSU) requesting that their dependency status be overridden. Unwillingness and/or inability of your parents to financially support you or living on your own and paying your own bills are not by themselves considered to be exceptional circumstances.

A student who meets one or more of the situations identified below, is considered an independent student for the purpose of Financial Aid for higher education. You have the opportunity to dispute this belief based on extreme circumstances such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, parent's use of drugs or alcohol, or other similarly extreme situations that result in the separation of a family.

- **Born before 1/1/1991**
- **Married**
- **Veteran of U.S. Armed Forces**
- **Serving on Active Duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training**
- **Have legal dependents other than spouse**
- **Orphan or Ward of the Court or in Foster Care after age 13**
- **Emancipated Minor**
- **Under Legal Guardianship determined by the Court**
- **Homeless Unaccompanied Youth**
- **Working on a Master's or Doctorate program**
- **Have children and provide more than half of their support**

Students who wish to apply for a dependency override must submit the following the instructions below as well provide all necessary documentation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Complete and submit the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>.
2. Complete, sign, and date this form to indicate that you have read it in full.
3. Type, sign, and date a personal statement explaining your exceptional circumstance(s). Your signed statement must include a complete history of:
 - your relationship with your biological and/or adoptive parents;
 - specific dates of events that caused your separation from your parents;
 - where you have lived since separating from your parents; and
 - how you have supported yourself while living separately from your parents.
4. Gather proof of your source(s) of income, including copies of your 2022 W-2 / 1099 forms and a signed copy of your 2022 IRS Form 1040 and all accompanying schedules. If you do not have a copy of your federal 1040, please request a free official 2022 **Tax Return Transcript** from the IRS at <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>.
5. Obtain signed and dated testimonial statements from **two different third-party professionals** (clergy members, counselors, social workers, lawyers, police officers, physicians) typed on their official business letterhead, documenting their firsthand knowledge of your exceptional circumstance(s). The Office of Student Financial Aid may need to contact these references for clarification of your situation, so complete contact information must be included.
 - **The statements should be detailed and refer to specific events the writer has direct personal knowledge of. They should not be reiterations of information you have shared with them.**
 - An official police report may be substituted for one testimonial statement.
 - Statements from friends or family members are not acceptable.

6. Scan your appeal form, personal statement, income documents, and testimonial statements and submit them to the Office of Student Financial Aid via the [Unusual Circumstances Appeal](#) webpage. Be sure that your scans are clear and legible and that all attachments have a Windows-compatible file extension, such as ".jpg" or ".pdf". Scans that are illegible or cannot be opened may cause your submission to be delayed or rejected.

*Submission of an appeal **does not guarantee** approval of an appeal. Additionally, approval of an appeal does not guarantee receipt of additional aid. You are responsible for all outstanding charges with Bowie State University.*

Appeals submitted without all the required documentation listed above cannot be considered. If your dependency appeal is approved for the current academic year, your status may be reevaluated for each subsequent academic year until you naturally meet the federal criteria for being considered an independent student.

STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, attest that I have read this form in full and that the information provided in my appeal is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate. **I acknowledge that submission of this appeal does not guarantee a change in my dependency status nor receipt of additional financial aid and that all decisions of the Unusual Circumstances Committee are final and cannot be changed.**

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____