You are an INDEPENDENT STUDENT for Financial Aid purposes if you meet one of the following conditions at the time you complete and sign the 2018-2019 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):

- You will be 24 years old by December 31, 2018. (Born before January 1, 1995)
- You are/were in foster care, a dependent or ward of the court, or both of your parents were deceased at any time since you turned age 13.
- You are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, or currently serving on active duty (for purposes other than training).
- You are a graduate student working on a post-baccalaureate degree.
- You are married.
- Do you now have or will you have children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019?
- You are/were emancipated as a minor by a court.
- You are/were in legal guardianship as determined by a court.
- You are/were a homeless unaccompanied youth as determined by your high school liaison on or after July 1, 2017.
- You are/were a homeless unaccompanied youth as determined by the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development after July 1, 2017.
- You are/were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless as determined by the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program after July 1, 2017.

*Note:* If you meet one of the above conditions, you do not need to complete this form, however, documentation must be sent to school.

**A. Reason for Appeal**

Many students feel they are independent because they currently live on their own, or because their parents refuse to provide information on the FAFSA, or because their parents cannot afford to help with college expenses. However, these reasons are not sufficient for an appeal.

The Financial Aid Office is required to consider parent information and a parental contribution for students who are not independent according to the above FAFSA definition, unless exceptions are made. **Exceptions are only made when adequate documentation of extenuating family circumstances exist.** Extenuating circumstances are defined by a student’s inability to have contact with his or her parents. Overrides do not apply to New York TAP awards.

Review the following reasons for appeal and check the one that describes your circumstance. If none of these circumstances applies to your situation, do not complete this form.

1. [ ] Severe circumstances within your family prevent you from obtaining your parents’ financial information. Examples:
   (a) an abusive home situation that is detrimental to your physical or mental well-being
   (b) abandonment by both parents
   (c) history of parental alcohol or drug abuse
   (d) incarceration of the custodial parent and inability to obtain other parent’s information
   (e) other extenuating circumstances not described above

2. [ ] Death of a parent after filing the FAFSA and the surviving parent meets one of the severe circumstances listed above.
B. **Personal Statement and Documentation**
Attach a written, signed and dated, personal statement (preferably typed), which completely and explicitly explains the basis of your appeal. Why do you see yourself as an independent student? Please note that your statement will be used only to determine if a dependency exception should be made. This information will be held in strictest confidence.

Attach at least two acceptable sources of documentation, which verify **all** the facts of your appeal. Acceptable sources of documentation are listed below according to the reason for your appeal.

1. If you checked Reason #1, provide **TWO** of the following acceptable sources:

   A signed statement from an adult professional that is not a family member, who verifies the family circumstances described in your personal statement. Adult professionals include clergy members, attorneys, school guidance counselors, medical doctors, mental health professionals, teachers or professors, law enforcement officers, professional staff of Children and Family Services (Public Assistance Department) and officers of the court. **Letters must be signed originals on agency letterhead with the professional’s title (Counselor, Rabbi, etc.).**

2. If you checked Reason #2, provide **one** of the above sources and a photocopy of your parent’s death certificate or newspaper obituary.

C. **Taxes**

Did you file a 2016 Federal Tax Return (1040, 1040A, 1040EZ or 1040 Telefile)? ________________________

Yes or No

Attach copies of your 2016 Taxes or W-2 Forms.

D. **Additional Information** (Answer all five questions)

1. When did you last live with your parent(s)? ________________________
   Month/Year

   Parents address
   Father ________________________
   Mother (if different) ________________________

2. When did you last receive financial support from your parent(s)? ________________________
   Month/Year

3. Are you included as a dependent under your parent’s medical plan? ________________________
   Yes/No

4. When did you graduate from high school? ________________________
   Month/Year

E. **Student Certification** (Read carefully before you sign)

I hereby certify that all information contained in this appeal for independent status, including my personal statement and other documentation, is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I swear or affirm that I have not knowingly or intentionally provided any false statements or fraudulent documentation. I understand that if I am found to have knowingly or intentionally given false or fraudulent statements and/or documentation, my appeal will be denied and my eligibility for Federal and State student aid will be jeopardized.

_____________________________________________  ________________________
Signature                          Date

**Please return this form and all documentation listed below** to the Financial Aid Office at SUNY Oswego, 206 Culkin Hall, Oswego, NY 13126.

1. File FAFSA on-line using “instructions for students unable to provide parental information”
2. Personal letter
3. Two (2) professional letters
4. 1040 Tax returns (2016) or W-2 forms