

## Verification of Independent Student Status 2023-2024

**Student: Last name, first name, MI**

**College ID#**

The laws governing FSA programs is based on the premise that the family is the first source of the student's support, and the law provides several criteria that decide if the student is considered independent of her parents for aid eligibility. Note that a student reaching the age of 18 or 21 or living apart from her parents does not affect her dependency status. If you answered these questions in error on your FAFSA, you will need to correct your FAFSA and include parent income information and have at least on parent sign your FAFSA. And email us at [financialaid@cofc.edu](mailto:financialaid@cofc.edu) once your FAFSA has been corrected.

The office of Financial Assistance and Veterans Affairs is verifying certain students that are independent only for the reasons listed below. Please provide the following documents to establish your independent student status based on your 2023-2024 FAFSA.

Check the box(s) that applies to your Independent Student Status:

- Currently serving on active duty for purposes other than training.** Provide a copy of your orders indicating you are active duty for purposes other than training. NOTE: Members of the **National Guard** or **Reserves** are only considered veterans if they were called up to active federal duty by presidential order for a purpose other than training.
- Veteran-** Provide a copy of your DD-215 indicating you were released under a condition other than "dishonorable." Students who attended a U.S. service academy or preparatory school for at least one day and were released under conditions other than "dishonorable" count as veterans for Title IV purposes.
- Dependents other than spouse-** Provide documentation that you provide more than 50% support (support includes: income earned from work, child support, government programs, ect) for the child or dependent you included in your household on the FAFSA.
- Orphan, foster child, or ward of the court –**
- Orphan-** If you had no living parent (biological or adoptive) at any time since you turned age 13, even if you are adopted, please provide a copy of death certificates of your biological parents.
- Foster Child-** If you were in foster care at any time since you turned age 13, even if you are no longer in foster care as of today, please provide our office with documentation of your status from Department of Social Services/Human Services indicating dates you were in foster care.
- Ward of the court-** If you were a dependent or ward of the court at any time since you turned age 13, even if you are no longer a dependent or ward of the court as of today, please submit a complete copy of the court order making you a dependent or ward of the court.
- Emancipated Minor** is a child who has been granted the status of adulthood by a court order or other formal arrangement. You must provide a copy of the court order that granted you this status. The court must be in your state of legal residence at the time the court's decision was issued. You must submit a copy of the court order that granted you this status before you reached the age of being considered as an adult in the eyes of the law in your state
- Legal guardianship-** provide a copy of a court's decision that you were in legal guardianship immediately before you reached the age of being an adult in your state. The court must be in your state of legal residence at the time the court's decision was issued. The definition of legal guardianship does not include your parents, even if they were appointed by a court to be your guardians. **You are also not considered a legal guardian of yourself or if your parents go to court and ask to have a guardian appointed.** The legal guardianship should have been determined by the court and not just through the court.

**Student signature**

**Date**

Office of Financial Assistance & Veterans Affairs  
 66 George Street Charleston, SC 29424  
[www.cofc.edu/finaid](http://www.cofc.edu/finaid)  
 P:843.953.5540 F:843.953.7192  
[financialaid@cofc.edu](mailto:financialaid@cofc.edu)

**Print Student's Last Name, First, M.I.**

**College ID#**

UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH

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- Unaccompanied homeless youth**- if you received a determination at any time on or after July 1, 2021, that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or, for question 57, at risk of being homeless.

**"Unaccompanied"** means you are not living in the physical custody of your parent or guardian.

**"Youth"** means you are 21 years of age or younger or you are still enrolled in high school as of the day you sign your FAFSA application.

I am providing this letter of verification as a (check one, then complete remaining contact information):

- A McKinney-Vento School District Liaison  
 A Director or Designee of a HUD-funded shelter  
 A Director or Designee of a RHYA-funded shelter

As per the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110-84), I am authorized to verify this student's living situation. No further verification by a Financial Aid Administrator is necessary. Should you have additional questions or need more information about this student, please contact me at the number listed above.

This letter is to confirm that \_\_\_\_\_ was:  
 (Name of Student)

Check one:

an unaccompanied homeless youth on or after July 1, 2022, living in a homeless situation, as defined by Section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Act, and was not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

an unaccompanied, self-supporting youth at risk of homelessness on or after July 1, 2021. This means that, after July 1, 2022, he/she was not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, provides for his/her own living expenses entirely on his/her own, and is at risk of losing his/her housing.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

This form should be completed and returned to our office so we may continue the processing of your award.