

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
**Petition for
Independent Status**

www.harlingen.tstc.edu/financialaid



1902 N. Loop 499 | Harlingen, TX 78550 | 956.364.4330 | 1.800.852.8784 | www.harlingen.tstc.edu
E-mail: financial.aid@harlingen.tstc.edu | FAFSA School Code: 009225

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:

- 48. Were you born before January 1, 1988?Yes No
- 49. As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced.)Yes No
- 50. At the beginning of the 2011-2012 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 No
- 51. Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?Yes No
- 52. Are you a veteran of the Armed Forces?Yes No
- 53. Do you have children who receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012?Yes No
- 54. 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, 2012?Yes No
- 55. 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 No
- 56. Are or were you emancipated minor as determined by the court in your state of legal residence?Yes No
- 57. Are or were you in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?Yes No
- 58. At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?Yes No
- 59. At any time on or after July 1, 2010, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by th U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?Yes No
- 60. At any time on or after July, 1, 2010, 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 No

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 2010. 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.

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 2010 Federal income tax return
- Documentation of any income or resources received in 2010 that are not on your tax return
- Documentation of where you have lived since January 2010 (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 2010? \$ _____
(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 2011? \$ _____
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 2010	Current Year Expenses: JANUARY-DECEMBER 2011
Housing	\$ _____	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____	\$ _____
Transportation	\$ _____	\$ _____
Utilities	\$ _____	\$ _____
Personal	\$ _____	\$ _____
Tuition/Fee	\$ _____	\$ _____
Books/Supplies	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____	\$ _____

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

I hereby certify that the information I have submitted is true and correct.

Students signature _____ Student's Printed Name _____ Student ID# _____

E-mail Address _____ Telephone Number _____ Date Signed _____

For Office Use Only: Approved Rejected

Comments: _____

Financial Aid Officer _____ Date: _____

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
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For Office Use Only: CRI Code: **FAC11DO** Date Entered: _____ Initials: _____ Date Scanned: _____ Initials: _____