

## VERIFICATION OF DEPENDENCY STATUS

(2025-2026 FAFSA QUESTION #5)

On the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you answered “Yes” to one or more of the following questions. You will need to provide additional documentation before we can continue to process your financial aid.

Dependency Status	Required Documentation
<p><b>Orphan</b>            You had no living parent (biological or adoptive) at any time since you turned age 13, even if you are now adopted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of your birth certificate</li> <li>• Death certificates for both parents</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foster Care</b>            You were in foster care at any time since you turned age 13, even if you are no longer in foster care today. If you are not sure if you were in foster care, check with your state child welfare agency. You can find that agency’s contact information at <a href="http://childwelfare.gov/nfcad">childwelfare.gov/nfcad</a>.</p>	Legal documentation from your state of residency or a letter from DHS that shows that you are/were in foster care
<p><b>Ward of the Court</b>            You were a dependent/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. For financial aid purposes, incarceration does <b>not</b> qualify a student as a ward of the court.</p>	Court Orders/Records
<p><b>Emancipated Minor</b>            You are an emancipated minor <u>as determined by a court in your state of legal residency</u>. Note: This does not apply to you if you are still a minor and the court decision is no longer in effect, or the court decision was not in effect at the time you became an adult.</p>	Court Orders/Records
<p><b>Legal Guardianship</b>            You are in a legal guardianship <u>as determined by a court in your state of legal residency</u>. Note: This does not apply to you if you are still a minor and the court decision is no longer in effect, or the court decision was not in effect at the time you became an adult.</p> <p><b>You are not in a legal guardianship if you live with your parent(s) and a court did not enter an order regarding your dependency.</b></p>	Court Orders/Records

**What if I have lost my court documents?**

Copies of documents may be obtained from the court or your caseworker if you no longer have them.

**What if I made a mistake and I was not a ward of the court or in foster care?**

You will need to correct your FAFSA and include your parents’ information and signature.

**What if I have unusual family circumstances and have no contact with my biological parents?**

Please complete an **Unusual Circumstances (Dependency) Request**.

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will review the documents and determine if they support your dependency status based on federal regulations.