

Dependency Override Appeal Guide

Most undergraduate students at University of the Pacific are dependent for financial aid eligibility, which means that they must provide their parent(s)' information on the FAFSA. Whether students are dependent or independent is based upon their answers in Step III, questions 45 – 57 of the FAFSA.

Students can appeal their dependency status if they are experiencing extenuating circumstances such as an adverse home situation. Sometimes a student who would be considered dependent has experienced family upheaval such as parental abandonment, or a parent(s) who is absent, ill, abusive, incarcerated, debilitated or otherwise does not function as a parent. In such circumstances the financial aid office may be able to consider the student for assistance without using the parent's information. Considering a student without the parent's information is called a dependency override.

Your request for a dependency override must include a detailed letter of explanation addressing the reason for your appeal, as well as supporting documentation, and two letters of support from non-family members who are aware of your situation.

The US Department of Education has provided guidance regarding situations that do and do not qualify as extenuating circumstances that merit a dependency override. In particular, the following circumstances do not merit a dependency override, either alone or in combination:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education;
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification;
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes;
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.

To submit an appeal for a dependency override, please complete the following steps:

- 1) Access the following url: **financialaid.pacific.edu** using your PacificNet ID and password. If this is the first time you have logged in, you will be required to confirm your first name, last name, SSN and date of birth.
- 2) Once logged onto the main page, select the "Request" button located on the upper right of the main screen.
- 3) PJ Dependency Override Appeal - click on the green plus sign under 2021-22.
- 4) Enter an explanation - your reason for appealing your dependency status.
- 5) Click on "Submit".
- 6) Select and complete the tasks associated with your request.
 - a. Detailed letter of explanation
 - b. Upload supporting documentation
 - c. Upload two letters of support from non-family members who are familiar with your situation.
- 7) Click on the "Submit" AND "Finish" buttons after all tasks have been completed. These final steps will inform the Dependency Override Review committee that your appeal is now ready for review.
 - a. Please note that the committee may follow up with you for additional information.