

# Dependency Status Appeal Form



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Your Future. Our Focus.

Submit to:

Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Swen Parson Hall 245

DeKalb, IL 60115

## NIU Student Information:

For scanning purposes, use black or blue ink to complete this form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Z-ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Academic year: Fall \_\_\_\_/Spring \_\_\_\_

## Appeal Information:

This form allows you to request special consideration of your student status for financial aid purposes. By completing this form, you are indicating that, while you meet the standard definition of a dependent student, you have unusual or extenuating circumstances that warrant further evaluation of your particular situation.

### Am I an Independent Student?

Students are classified as dependent or independent because federal student aid programs are based on the premise that students and their parent(s) have the primary responsibility of paying for the student's post-secondary education. Federal regulations permit the college to exercise professional judgment in determining if unusual or extenuating circumstances can be documented to consider you independent for federal and state financial aid purposes.

### NIU cannot consider appeals for independent status based on the following circumstances:

- Your parent(s) feel they do not have the financial resources to assist with college costs (the FAFSA measures their ability to contribute).
- Your parent(s) stop claiming you as a tax exemption.
- Your parent(s) refuse to provide their information or give you support for your college education.
- Your parent(s) reside outside of the United States of America.

### NIU will consider appeals for independent status based on, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- An abusive family environment;
- An unsuitable household, such as a student removed from household and placed in foster care;
- Abandonment by parents;
- Parents cannot be located;
- Parent(s) hospitalized for an extended period;
- Incarceration or institutionalization of both parents.

The U.S. Department of Education does not consider appeals to change dependency status. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office can change your status, if your circumstances and documentation justify doing so. The decision of the Student Financial Aid Office is final.

# Dependency Status Appeal Form

ZID \_\_\_\_\_

## Appeal Process Requirements:

**WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information on this worksheet, you may be fined, sentenced to jail, or both.**

### 1. Student's Personal Statement

- Clearly explain your unusual or extenuating special family circumstances. (Minimum two paragraphs, four sentences each.)
- Your statement should be detailed and in chronological order.
- Be sure to address your relationship with both your mother and father (biological or adoptive).

### 2. Supporting Documentation

- Documentation such as copies of police reports should be attached if applicable.

### 3. Third Party Supporting Statements

- You will need **three** individuals to provide a supporting statement. (Statements should be legible and signed. Minimum two paragraphs, four sentences each.)
- All supporting statements should preferably be from a professional or other third party (such as a high school teacher or counselor, therapist, clergy, social worker, or lawyer) which corroborates the unusual or extenuating family circumstances included in your personal statement.
- Letters from family members, roommates, or friends will be considered but **may not** be sufficient documentation.

### 4. Complete the Chart

Indicate below the three individuals who will be submitting supporting statements and their relationship to you.

Name	Relationship to Student

## Appeal Committee Determinations:

**Approval** - Your financial aid will be awarded based on the status of an independent student. Monitor your MyNIU "Campus Finances" page for the posting of your award notification.

**Denial of Appeal** - If you cannot provide the appropriate required documentation to support an independent status, you will be evaluated as a "dependent" student. You will be sent a notification to your MyNIU "To Do List" that you are considered dependent for financial aid purposes along with instructions for updating your FAFSA with parent's income and asset information.

## Certification/Signature: *(Please print this form and then sign.)*

My signature certifies that all the information on this form is true, complete and accurate, and may be used to update the FAFSA.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Electronic signatures will not be accepted**