

# Unusual Circumstances: Dependency Status 2026/27



If you have an [unusual circumstance](#), federal guidelines say this means there is a documentable reason you cannot provide your parent's information on the FAFSA. Examples of unusual circumstances include having no contact with your parent(s), not knowing where they live, or leaving home due to an abusive situation.

If you do not have an unusual circumstance, you may still be considered Independent if you can answer "yes" to one of the following:

- You were born before 1/1/2003
- You are married (on the FAFSA submission date)
- You are on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training
- You are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
- You have a child and provide more than half of their financial support through 6/30/27
- You have a dependent (not a spouse) who lives with you and you provide more than half of their financial support through 6/30/27
- At any time since you turned 13, both your parents were deceased, you were in foster care, or you were a ward of the court
- You are currently in legal guardianship or are an emancipated minor (if under 18), or were as of last day of your 17<sup>th</sup> year
- On or after 7/1/25, you were documented as unaccompanied and homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless

If you cannot answer "yes" to any of these statements but believe you have an unusual circumstance, continue with the appeal process below once RCC has received your 26/27 FAFSA.

## Items needed to appeal for Unusual Circumstances:

1. Statement: write a statement explaining why you can't provide parental information and why you should be considered independent. Include important details like names, dates, and what happened. **A parent refusing or not wanting to provide information does not qualify as an unusual circumstance.**
2. Provide at least 2 additional documents or statements (from objective, responsible adults) that support the information in your statement. The type of documentation needed depends on your situation.
  - **Examples of documentation include:**
    - A court order showing your parent(s) are incarcerated
    - A death certificate for a deceased parent & your birth certificate (or other legal document) showing they were your parent or adoptive parent
    - Official documents from an agency confirming abuse, neglect or violence
  - If you submit statements from individuals as documentation, statements should be on letterhead when possible and clearly include at least these things:
    - Who the author is and their relationship to you
    - The situation between you and your parent(s), including the timeline
    - Confirmation of the information you shared in your statement
    - The author's signature, date, address, title and phone number
    - Examples of who might write a statement: attorney, court appointed advocate, sponsor, high school teacher or counselor, social worker, court official, agency representative.

Documentation will only be reviewed for students who meet the criteria above. RCC Financial Aid may ask for more information, if needed. Decisions are school-specific, apply to one academic year only, and are final.

Submit your documents by email to your [FinAid Advisor](#) or in person with a FinAid Advisor in [Rogue Central](#). Physical copies can be mailed to: RCC Financial Aid 3345 Redwood Hwy Grants Pass, OR 97527

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