

FHU Office of Financial Aid
Petition for Financial Aid Independent Status

Name: _____ **SS#:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

Federal financial aid regulations assume that the family has primary responsibility for meeting the educational costs of the student. If you are considered a dependent student under the federal dependency definition, your eligibility is determined by using student and parental income and asset information. Dependent students are required by federal law to provide parental information and signatures to be considered for financial aid.

Occasionally, due to *unusual circumstances*, students should not be considered a dependent. If you can document independent status for some unusual reason, you may petition for a waiver of federal regulations requiring parental information. Unusual circumstances may include a documented history of abuse, abandonment, and/or a harmful situation that can be supported by court documents and/or statements by a third party. Unusual circumstances do not include parents refusing to contribute to the student's education; parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification; or parents not claiming the student as a dependent for income tax purposes. Petitions based on self-sufficiency alone are not valid.

In your petition, you should include each of the following issues:

- Identify the location of both natural parents. Describe the last time you had contact with each natural parent – when, where, and the nature of the contact.
- Explain what unusual circumstances should make you an independent student.
- Describe how you have been self-supporting: a) when did you start meeting your own expenses without parental support; and b) how have you provided for yourself? Provide documentation of your self-support.
- Provide statements from two responsible adults who are aware of your situation. You will need to state their relationship to you and list their name, address, and phone number. At least one statement must be from someone who is not a relative or friend. Copies of appropriate court documents are acceptable to support your petition.

Certification: My signature below certifies that all information contained in and submitted with this petition is true and correct. I agree to provide additional proof of the information if requested. I understand that the penalty for providing false or misleading information is a \$10,000 federal fine, a prison sentence, or both. I also understand that the school's decision is final and cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

_____ **Approved**

_____ **Denied**

Administrator's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____