



## Unusual Circumstances Form

**Instructions: The form and required documentation must be uploaded via your SIS To Do List, so it will be linked to your account.** We do not accept forms via email, fax, or in-person.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I am asking for consideration of my unusual circumstances for the following (check all that apply and add year ex. 2025):

Fall 20\_\_\_\_\_

Spring 20\_\_\_\_\_

Summer 20\_\_\_\_\_

### **Do I qualify as an independent student?**

*(Which means you don't have to include your parent's information on the FAFSA)*

You will automatically be considered independent in 2025-2026 if you meet any of the following:

- You were born before January 1, 2002.
- You are working on a graduate degree (master's, PhD, etc.) in the school year 2025-2026.
- As of the date of filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you are married.
- You are an orphan or ward of the court or were a ward of the court until age 18, or were in foster care any time after age 13. (This does not include students who were placed as a ward of the state.)
- You are currently serving on active duty (other than training) in the military or are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces (see FAFSA instructions for definition).
- You have children who receive more than half of their support from you OR you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and receive more than half of their support from you, now through June 30, 2026.
- You meet the criteria for homelessness or at-risk for homelessness as described on the FAFSA.

Unless you meet one of these criteria for independent status for financial aid, then your biological or adoptive parent(s) must complete the FAFSA with you. Your parent(s) must provide income and asset information on the FAFSA.

## Can I appeal my dependency status?

In some unusual cases, you may appeal your dependency status.



Per federal regulations, an appeal cannot be based on any of the following:

- Student Financial self-sufficiency
- Parental unwillingness to contribute to college costs
- Parental unwillingness to complete the FAFSA or provide documents or signatures for verification
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes

Appeals must be based on an unusual situation such as:

- Student or parent incarceration
- Your parent(s) is/are mentally incapacitated
- You had a court-appointed legal guardianship that has ended
- You are estranged from your parent(s) because of an abusive situation
- Parental abandonment or estrangement
- Victim of human trafficking

## How do I submit an Unusual Circumstances Form?

1. Thoroughly describe your circumstance on this form.
2. Provide as much documentation as you can of your stated circumstances. Documentation can be in the form of:
  - a. Court, attorney, or other legal records
  - b. One or more statements from an individual **other than friends or family members**, who can confirm your statement. This should be from an objective, third party, such as a counselor, social worker, doctor, clergy member, etc. These statements should include a telephone number, so we may verify the authenticity of the statement
  - c. Statements from family can and should be included, but may **not** be the **only** documentation provided

Complete and submit this appeal form and all supporting documents using the upload button on your SIS To Do List. **Go to [www.rappahannock.edu](http://www.rappahannock.edu) -> myRCC -> SIS -> My Student Information -> To Do List (right-hand side of page)**. You will be notified in your student email after your appeal has been reviewed. The College Financial Aid Office may request additional information from you before making a decision.

## Tips for a Successful Appeal

- Describe your situation fully. While we understand that it can be very uncomfortable to go into the details of your personal life, please know that no one outside the financial aid office will be able to access the information on this form or any attachments you submit. It is important for us to get as clear an understanding of why you are appealing as possible.
- Provide as much documentation as you can. We would much rather have too much documentation than not enough. Documents, letters, etc., are very helpful in the appeal process.
- DO NOT have anyone other than yourself write a statement in the space below. Their letters need to be on a separate written or typed page and each statement should be signed by the writer with his or her unique signature.
- DO NOT write a statement for someone else in your handwriting, even if the other person signs it. This will raise suspicion regarding the letter's authenticity.
- If you are not sure what you should submit, contact the financial aid office. We will be happy to meet with you and discuss the best approach for your appeal.

Please describe your situation below **[MUST BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT]**

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I certify that my responses to all items on this form are true and correct. Penalties provide for a fine of \$10,000, or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both, if a person embezzles, steals, or obtains funds by false statement or forgery.

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

**FOR FINANCIAL AID OFFICE USE:**

Approved Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By FA Technician: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Fall                      \_\_\_\_\_ Spring                      \_\_\_\_\_ Summer                      Aid Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Denied Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By FA Technician: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation:

Document Received	Date Reviewed	Stored Where

Additional Documents Requested	Date Requested	Date Received	Date Reviewed

Interviews (if applicable):

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