

Independent Student Status Policy

Per federal regulations, a student is considered “independent” if he/she was born before January 1, 1986 or is or can answer yes to one of the following questions.

1. At the beginning of the 2009-10 school year, will you be working on a master’s or doctorate program; (such as a MA, MBA, JD, PhD, EdD, or graduate certificate, etc.)?
2. As of today, are you married? (Answer yes if you are separated but not divorced.)
3. Do you have children who receive more than half of their support from you?
4. Do you have dependents other than your children/spouse who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2010?
5. Are (a) both of your parents deceased, or (b) are you (or will you until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court?
6. Are you are currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?
7. You are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?

To take into account individual circumstances, the law allows an aid administrator to use “professional judgment” on a case-by-case basis and must document the reason(s) for the decision. Per federal guidelines, “a student’s claim that his or her parents have refused to contribute to his/her college education is not automatically grounds for a dependency override. Nor can an aid administrator override the student’s dependent status solely because the student’s parent(s) have said that they are unwilling to provide information on the application or information needed for verification.” (Application and Verification Guide, 2009)

If you do not meet these criteria, but still feel you are independent, per Cornell College’s policy, you must meet the following criterion to be evaluated for a dependency override. Applications will not be reviewed until all documentation is received (see attached).

1. A case of either abuse or neglect by parents.

If you meet this criterion, please complete the attached application with all required documentation for consideration by the Financial Aid Office.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Submission of all documentation does not guarantee Independent Status.

Cornell College
 Financial Assistance Documentation
 Independence Status – 2009-10

Beginning with the 1993-94 academic year there are new federal requirements a student must meet to qualify for financial assistance as an independent student. If you do not meet the criteria, you will be evaluated as a dependent student, meaning that your parents must provide income and asset information. There are circumstances that **MAY** warrant re-evaluation of your status. Providing the following information will permit the financial assistance administrator to consider your request.

1. Provide **three** signed and dated statements, which will explain and document your request for independent status:
 - from yourself
 - from your parent(s) or other family member familiar with the situation
 - third party individual familiar with your situation (i.e. a counselor, pastor, teacher, etc.... not a relative)
 - Additional legal document supporting claim of neglect, i.e. police report, or other legal documents.

Please indicate the amount of financial support received below.

Financial Support Received From Guardians For.....	2008
Housing	\$
Food	\$
Transportation (car payments, insurance, gas, maintenance)	\$
Utilities	\$
Personal (Clothing, entertainment)	\$
Other (health insurance, etc.)	\$
Total Financial Support	\$

Signatures

 Student

 Date

 Guardian

 Date

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE OFFICE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BEFORE YOU WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR INDEPENDENT STATUS.