



AN HONORS UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND

## 2017-2018 Dependency Appeal Request Form

### What is a Dependency Appeal?

As outlined on the FAFSA, federal regulations define the criteria you must meet to be considered an independent student. If you do not meet any of the criteria, you can ask your school's financial aid office to re-evaluate your status. A dependency appeal is the process that a school uses to review your situation to determine if you are eligible to be considered as an independent student. This can only be done in certain **limited** and **exceptional** circumstances.

**Please note:** Federal guidelines state that the following situations are not considered "exceptional circumstances": **1) Your parent(s) is unwilling and/or is not able to financially support you 2) you live on your own and pay your own bills.**

### How does the process work?

Each institution is required to establish its own policies in regards to granting dependency appeals. This means you can receive a dependency appeal approval from one school, but may not receive one from the next school that you attend.

The Appeals Committee will do an initial review of the information that you submit within 2 weeks of receipt. They will notify you of your status by email. Failure to provide requested documentation may result in a delay or a denial of your appeal. In addition, the Appeals Committee may need to request additional documentation to support your appeal or may need to contact your references; sometimes the committee may request that you come in for a personal interview. Please keep in mind that the review process can take 6-8 weeks to complete.

Documents and information collected to support your appeal will remain confidential and are used to determine your eligibility for financial aid assistance. However; if the Committee finds that you intentionally made false statements or misrepresentations, your request will be cancelled and may be referred to Judicial Services for further review.

### How do I apply for an appeal?

Complete the attached form and submit all requested documentation. You should monitor your myUMBC email account – the Appeals Committee will send all correspondence to you regarding your request to your UMBC email account.

### What else do I need to know?

Completion of this form and submission of documents **does not guarantee** approval of a dependency appeal. Approval of an appeal **does not guarantee** receipt of additional aid. You are responsible for all outstanding bills with UMBC and should make arrangements to ensure that your bill is paid by the due date. **Please note: If you are approved for a dependency appeal, your dependency status must be reevaluated each year until you are automatically considered independent by federal criteria.**



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### Student Information

Please print clearly—illegible documents cannot be processed

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus ID: \_\_\_\_\_

- Step 1: You MUST:** Complete and submit to the best of your ability the 2017-2018 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on-line at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Retrieve your tax information for the FAFSA via the IRS Data Retrieval process. Remember to include UMBC's Title IV code (002105) so that the information may be released to UMBC.

- Step 2: You MUST:** Attach a typed **one-page** explanation of your exceptional circumstance. Your explanation should be clear and concise, signed, dated and must include a complete history of:
  - Your relationship with your biological and/or legally adoptive parents - include their first and last names, when you last spoke with each parent, and their last known address
  - Specific dates of events that caused your separation from your parents - include how long you have been separated from your parent(s) and your current address/phone number
  - If you have siblings, include their names, ages, and where they live - describe your relationship with them
  - Where you have lived since separating from your parents – include how long you have lived at each address
  - Your sources of income - include a copy of your 2015 federal tax transcript or you must retrieve your tax data for the FAFSA via the IRS Data Retrieval process; include a copy of all 2015 W-2s if not required to file a return
  - How you have supported yourself while living apart from your parents – you should state if you have auto and/or health insurance and who pays for them – include a copy of your card(s)

*Please note, federal guidelines state that the following situations are not considered "exceptional circumstances": 1) your parent(s) is unwilling and/or is not able to financially support you 2) you live on your own and pay your own bills.*

- Step 3: You MUST provide:**
  - A copy of your birth certificate
  - Two signed and dated letters from professionals (on their letterhead) documenting their first-hand knowledge of your exceptional circumstance. **Each letter must include the writer's contact information including their address and phone number**
    - Examples of professionals include: clergy, counselors, social workers, police, physicians, etc.
    - Letters should be detailed and refer to actual events – they should not be reiterations of events you have shared, but should reflect the writer's direct knowledge
    - Police reports may, in some cases, substitute for one letter
  - Two signed and dated letters from non-professionals documenting their first-hand knowledge of your exceptional circumstance.
    - Non-professionals include: family members, neighbors and close friends of the family
    - **Letters should be detailed and must include the writer's contact information including their address and phone number.** If you currently live with a family member or close friend, one of your non-professional letters should be from this person; if you have siblings, one of your non-professional letters should be from one of them

**The Appeals Committee may contact your references for additional clarification of your situation.**

**Appeals submitted without above required documentation will not be considered.**

By signing and dating this form, I acknowledge that I understand completion of this request does not ensure a change in dependency status or receipt of additional financial aid. I also understand that intentionally making false statements or misrepresentations will mean that my request will be cancelled and that my case may be referred to Judicial Services for review. I understand that the decision of the Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

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

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