

Dependency Status Appeal

PHONE: 301-891-4005

Name _____ Student ID _____ Tel # _____

Address _____

The Department of Education has established “absolutes” that automatically classify a student as independent. If you can answer “Yes” to at least one of the twelve questions below, you will be considered an independent student. **Be aware that your status as either a dependent or as an independent student cannot be based solely on your income (or resources), or because you do not live with your parents, or they do not claim you on their tax return and that you may be asked for additional documentation.** Please check either “Yes” or “No” to each of the questions below.

☐ Yes ☐ No	1. Were you born Before January 1, 2003?
☐ Yes ☐ No	2. As of today, are you married? (“As of today” refers to the day that you sign your FAFSA) Also answer “Yes” if you are separated but not divorced.)
☐ Yes ☐ No	3. Will you be working on a graduate or professional degree program (beyond a bachelor’s degree) in 2026-2027?
☐ Yes ☐ No	4. Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?
☐ Yes ☐ No	5. Do you now or will you have children who will receive more than half of their support from you now and between July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027?
☐ Yes ☐ No	6. Do you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you now and between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027?
☐ Yes ☐ No	7. At any time since you turned 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
☐ Yes ☐ No	8. As determined by the court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?
☐ Yes ☐ No	9. Does anyone other than your parent or stepparent have legal guardianship of you, as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?
☐ Yes ☐ No	10. At any time on or after July 1, 2025, did your high school district or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and a risk of being homeless?
☐ Yes ☐ No	11. At any time on or after July 1, 2025, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?
☐ Yes ☐ No	12. At any time on or after July 1, 2025, did the director of a runaway shelter or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

If you answered “No” to all of the questions above, you will be considered a dependent student by federal definition. However, because the office of financial aid has the authority to use professional judgment, Washington Adventist University has established the following situations that “**may**” make you independent. Please check “Yes” or “No” to each of the questions below. If your answer to a question(s) is “Yes”, please also submit the requested documentation with this form.

☐ Yes ☐ No	1. Are both of your parents incarcerated/institutionalized? Documentation: a copy of your birth certificate and a letter from warden, sheriff or other public official certifying your parents’ incarceration/ institutionalization.
☐ Yes ☐ No	2. Are you (have you been) involved in a case of abuse or abandonment by your parent(s)? Documentation: certification from a licensed human services provider, pastor, or guidance counselor that the student is in imminent danger if a relationship is maintained with the parent(s).
☐ Yes ☐ No	2. Do you have unusual parental circumstances? Documentation: • written statement from third party professional that describes the situation • Written and signed statement from student

If you answered “No” to all questions on this page, you are considered dependent both by federal definition and by Washington Adventist University definition.

If you answered “Yes” to one of the questions on this page, the financial aid office will review your appeal and supporting documentation. You are required to submit the following documents below along with your appeal. The Financial Aid Office may reach out to you if additional documentation is needed.

- 2026-27 Verification Worksheet (<https://www.wau.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid/important-information/important-documents/>)
- Student’s 2024 Signed Tax Return Transcript
- Student’s 2024 W’2
- If you did not work or file taxes in 2024, you must submit the 2026-27 Non-Filer Statement (<https://www.wau.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid/important-information/important-documents/>)

Third Party Professional Letters should document the following:

- A signed statement from a third-party professional should be on letterhead of the business or organization that they represent. If letterhead is not obtainable, the person’s name, title, phone number, business/organization, and address should be included.
- The student’s name as it appears in our records.
- The relationship between the professional and the student should be stated. The Office of Financial Aid may contact third-party professionals who provide supporting documentation.

If you feel you have special circumstances that are not covered above, please attach a separate statement explaining your situation.

Certification Statement

I certify that the information I provided on this form, and all accompanying documentation, is true to the best of my knowledge • I understand that the Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to contact third-party professionals who provided supporting documentation • I agree to submit additional documentation should the Office of Financial Aid make such a request • I understand my appeal could be denied • If my appeal is approved, I will be subject to the FAFSA verification process.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Please email or fax this form and supporting documentation to the Student Financial Aid office.