



# AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Financial Aid Office, P.O. Box 2609 Pago Pago, AS 96799  
Telephone: (684) 699-9155, Fax: (684) 699-8968 email: faid@amsamoa.edu

## 2015—2016 Dependency Status Appeal Form

Please complete this form in its entirety and return it with all supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Office. We encourage you to monitor the status of your appeal via your email address provided on your FAFSA application. If you do not hear from us via email or phone call after two weeks of submitting your appeal, then please visit our office and speak with your counselor.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. Box # and Village: \_\_\_\_\_ Home/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 1: 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Status (check one)

- I **already filed** my 2015-2016 FAFSA and listed American Samoa Community College (010010) as a school of choice
- I **did not file** my 2015-2016 FAFSA and will list American Samoa Community College (010010) as a school code of choice.

### STEP 2: Unusual Circumstance and Requested Documentation

For each parent (mother and father) check the appropriate unusual circumstance and provide the requested documentation

Mother	Father	Circumstance	Requested Documentation
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Parent is deceased	A copy of the parent's death certificate
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Parent is incarcerated	Documentation that verifies the parent is incarcerated and lists the parent's anticipated release date
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unusual parental circumstance	A written statement from a third-party professional that knows the student's situation

\* If you are unable to provide the requested documentation, please contact the Financial Aid Office to determine if other forms of documentation can be considered

***The Financial Aid Office will not review Dependency Status Appeal Forms that are incomplete or are submitted without proper documentation.***

### STEP 3: Certification Statement

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the information on this dependency appeal form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I agree to submit additional documentation to support my appeal should the Financial Aid Office make such a request. I understand that willful omission or falsification of information or documentation accompanying this request may result in the automatic denial of this request and information may be forwarded to the Dean of Student Services for possible disciplinary action in accordance to the ASCC Student Handbook policies and regulations.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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The federal government sets the criteria for determining the dependency status of financial aid applicants. Students who do not meet at least one of the conditions listed below are considered financially dependent for financial aid purposes, and they must provide parental information and signatures on the 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Renewal FAFSA.

You are **dependent** unless you:

- o Were born before January 1, 1991,
- o Are married as of the date of the FAFSA Application,
- o Are enrolled in a graduate or master's degree program.
- o Are currently serving active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
- o Are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- o Have children who will receive more than half their support from you between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016.
- o Have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who will receive more than half their support from you between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016.
- o At the age of 13 or older, were both your parents (natural or adoptive) deceased, were you in foster care or were a dependent n orphan/ward of the court.
- o Are an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship or was when he reached the age of majority in his state, or
- o Were determined at any time since July 1, 2013, to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless.

If you are classified as a dependent student according to the definition above, but wish to apply for financial aid as an independent student, you must complete this form to appeal for re-classification if you meet the criteria. The federal government recognizes that there are exceptions to these rules. Financial aid administrators are permitted to waive these rules in extreme circumstances and classify students as independent according to the administrator's professional judgment.

Your status as a dependent student will be reviewed if a severe situation exists in your family which makes it impossible for you to obtain your parents' financial information. Severe situations include physical or emotional abuse; estrangement; abandonment; parental drug abuse, incarceration, or mental incapacity; parents are divorced, custodial parent has died and there is no contact with non-custodial parent; or another situation beyond your control. Professional judgment decisions must be made consistently, must be justified, and must be documented.

Students are classified as dependent or independent because federal student aid programs are based on the idea that students and the parents have the primary responsibility for paying for their post-secondary education. This "ability to assist" with college costs is measured in an equitable and consistent manner by the government when student and parent data is supplied on the FAFSA.

When this appeal form is filed, a student who meets the standard definition of a dependent student is stating that his/her circumstances are so severe or unusual that the parental obligation to assist with college costs should be waived. This appeal is not intended to be used by a dependent student whose parents feel they do not have the financial strength to assist with college costs - the FAFSA will measure your parents' ability to assist. In addition, this form is **not** intended to be used by a dependent student whose parents disagree with the government's philosophy stated above and refuse to provide their information.

Also, you must complete the Independent Verification Worksheet. Follow all the instructions to ensure your verification documentation is complete. A decision letter will be sent to you as soon as evaluation of your appeal is completed. The response time on your appeal will be contingent upon your cooperation with requests for documentation. Allow at least **2 - 4 weeks** for a response.

**Required documentation:** (If you are renewing your appeal, skip this step and complete the appeal form.)

Students are required to submit supporting documentation with their appeal. The supporting documentation will vary depending on the student's unusual circumstances. Students must provide documentation for each parent. For the conditions which qualify for dependency override, the following items are requested:

Circumstance	Requested Documentation
Parent is deceased	A copy of the parent's death certificate
Parent is incarcerated	Documentation that verifies the parent is incarcerated and lists the parent's anticipated release date
Unusual parental circumstances	A written statement from a third-party professional that knows the student's unusual parental circumstances

**Personal Statement:** You must submit a typed personal statement that explains what has occurred, with specific dates and information, and must reference the documentation you provide.

**Professional Statements:** Provide supporting statements from **at least two professional adults who are NOT family members, friends, or employers** which verify the family circumstances you have described in your personal statement. Professionals include clergy members, guidance counselors, teachers or professors, doctors, family counselors, mental health professionals, social workers, and law enforcement officers. The supporting statements you submit must be signed and dated originals and must include the contact information of the person providing the statement. Financial Aid Office reserves the right to contact third-party professionals who provide supporting documentation. The supporting statements must be originals. **Photocopies will not be accepted.**

**Income Documentation for 2014:** You must attach a signed statement from friends or relatives who have provided financial or other support (such as housing, food, etc) in 2013 or 2014.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- **Unaccompanied**—when a student is not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian
- **Parent**—a student's biological or adoptive parent. A student's stepparent, foster parent or legal guardian is not considered a parent unless they have adopted the student.
- **Youth**—a student who is 21 years old or younger or still enrolled in high school as of the date he/she signs the FAFSA.
- **Homeless**—lacking fixed, regular, and adequate housing. For example, temporarily living with other people because he/she has nowhere else to go; living in substandard housing; living in emergency or transitional shelters (FEMA trailers after disasters); living in motels, camping grounds, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or any public place not designed for humans to live.
  - *Self-supporting*—when a student pays for his/her own living expenses, including, fixed, regular, and adequate housing.
  - *At risk of being homeless*—when a student's housing may cease to be fixed, regular, and adequate, for example, a student who is being evicted and has been unable to find fixed, regular, and adequate housing.
  - *Fixed housing*—stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.
  - *Regular housing*—used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis.
  - *Adequate housing*—sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in the home.