

Buffalo State College's 2009-2010
Independence Appeal Form

Name _____ Banner ID (or SS#) _____

Phone: _____ (home) and Cell Phone #: _____

Students who do not meet the statutory definition for independent status for federal financial aid may request a dependency override. To be considered independent the student must be able to document unusual or exceptional family circumstances. Living in your own apartment, paying rent or other bills, and/or claiming yourself on your federal tax return, do not of and by themselves constitute unusual circumstances. This form does not apply to your dependency status for the New York State TAP program.

Instructions: Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to complete the 2009-2010 FAFSA. Answer the dependency status questions as they apply to you. Assuming all the answers are "No" then indicate that you are unable to provide parental information, taking time to carefully read the conditions for not reporting parental information.

Your FAFSA will initially be rejected by the federal processing center. Once our office receives your rejected FAFSA you will be required to submit this form and the supporting documentation detailed below. If the committee approves your appeal, we will submit the override to the federal processor. If your appeal is denied, you will be instructed to go back to your FAFSA online to complete the questions regarding parental information.

Until you meet the statutory requirements for independent status, you must go through this same process each academic year. Transfer students who were previously granted a dependency override at another school must be re-approved at Buffalo State, even if they were previously granted an override for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Note: Students who were granted a dependency override by Buffalo State College last year and want the override renewed need not supply additional copies of third party documentation. However, all other documentation is required annually including an updated statement as to the current status of the extenuating circumstances (requirement #1). If you only state that your situation has not changed, it will be rejected.

Student Information: Indicate the amount and source(s) of your annual income for 2007 and 2008. Attach signed copies of your 2007 & 2008 federal tax returns, statements from social services, W-2 forms, etc. Include both taxable and non-taxable income.

2007 \$ _____ Source _____

2008 \$ _____ Source _____

Where did you live in: (Please circle the appropriate response)

2007:	with parents	with relatives/guardian	on your own
2008:	with parents	with relatives/guardian	on your own
2009:	with parents	with relatives/guardian	on your own

- over -

Parental Information: Attach signed copies of your parents' federal tax returns for 2007 & 2008. If you are unable to get these copies, please explain in writing.

Did or will your parents claim you as a dependent in 2007? _____ Yes _____ No

Did or will your parents claim you as a dependent in 2008? _____ Yes _____ No

Required: 1. Statement as to why you feel you are independent. Please attach a separate sheet that explains why you feel you should not be considered a dependent of your parents for financial aid purposes. The reason/circumstances that you describe must be unusual or exceptional in regard to your family situation. The statement should explain the situation in detail and provide information about both parents. All information submitted is kept confidential.

2. Supporting Documentation. Your supporting documentation should include third party letters from individuals who will not be biased on your behalf, but who have first-hand knowledge of your situation and who can present the facts related to your particular situation. This may include, but is not limited to counselors, members of the clergy or social workers. You do not need to submit rent receipts, utility bills, etc.

Based on the documentation you submit, the Appeals Committee will make a decision regarding your status. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final. You must submit this appeal form and all supporting documentation together as your appeal will only be reviewed one time. The burden of proving your eligibility for independent status rests upon you. In light of this, please use the checklist below to make sure that your appeal is complete before you submit it to our office.

Affirmation: All the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if I do not provide the proof required, my appeal will be denied. I also understand that I may submit only one appeal per academic year, and that the decision of the committee is final.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Student Checklist: (Make sure you attach or provide all the following)

_____ Clear explanation of unusual circumstances (both parents)

_____ Your signed federal tax returns, W-2's, etc.

_____ Third party documentation

_____ Parents' signed federal tax returns for the years indicated