Independent Student Status Policy

Per federal regulations, a student is considered “independent” if he/she was born before January 1, 1994 or is or can answer yes to one of the following questions.

Per federal regulations, a student is considered "independent" if he/she can answer yes to one of the following questions:

- As of today, are you married? (Answer yes, if you are separated but not divorced.)
- At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, will be working on a master's doctorate program (such as an MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, or graduate certificate, etc.)?
- Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?
- Are you a veteran of your U.S. armed forces?
- Do you have children who receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018?
- 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 through June 30, 2018?
- At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent/ward of the court?
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2016, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2016 did the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2016 did the director of a runaway 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?

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, 2011)

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.

Continue on to third page…….

Cornell College

Financial Assistance Documentation

Independence Status 2017-2018

Student must meet certain federal requirements 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	**2016**
Housing	$
Food	$
Transportation (car payments, insurance, gas, maintenance)	$
Utilities	$
Personal (Clothing, entertainment)	$
Other (health insurance, etc.)	$
Total Financial Support	$

<u>Signatures</u>

_____ _____

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