

Do I Have to Provide My Parents' Information on the Free Application for *Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*?

All applicants for *federal student aid* are considered either “independent” or “dependent.” Dependent students are required to include information about their parents on the *FAFSA*. By answering a few questions, you can get a good idea of which category you fit into.

- Will you be 24 or older by Dec. 31 of the school year for which you are applying for financial aid?
- Will you be working toward a master's or doctorate degree (such as M.A., M.B.A., M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)?
- Are you married or separated but not divorced?
- Do you have children who receive more than half of their support from you?
- Do you have dependents (other than children or a spouse) who live with you and receive more than half of their support from you?
- At any time since you turned age 13, were both of your parents deceased, were you in *foster care*, or were you a ward or dependent of the court?
- Are you an *emancipated minor* or are you in a *legal guardianship* as determined by a court?
- Are you an unaccompanied youth who is *homeless* or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?
- Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training?
- Are you a veteran of the U.S. armed forces?

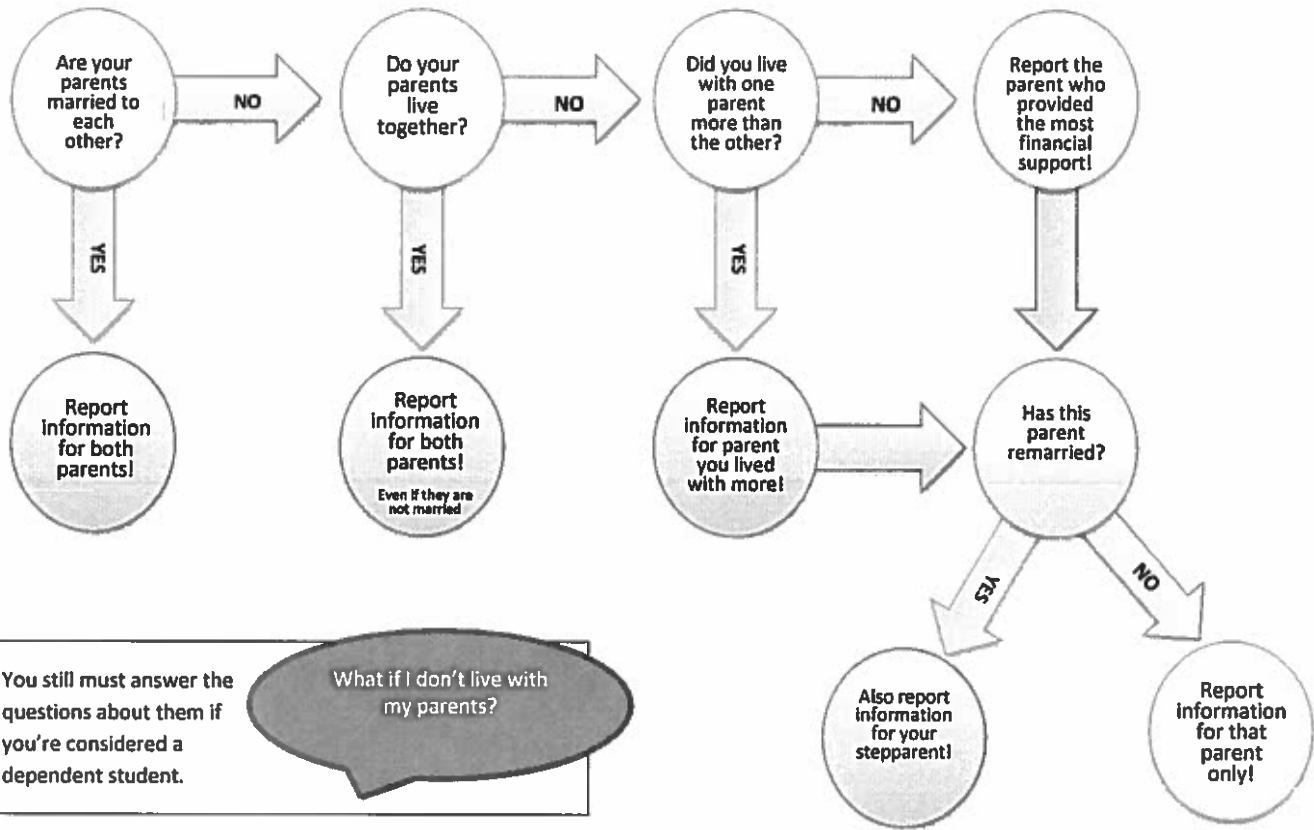
If none of the criteria listed above apply to you, you **may** be considered a *dependent student* and may be required to provide your parents' financial information when completing the *FAFSA*.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you **may** be an *independent student*. You may not be required to provide parental information on your *FAFSA*.

If you have questions about your *dependency status* or need more information, please visit StudentAid.gov/dependency or talk with your college financial aid advisor.

I'm supposed to put information about my parents on the FAFSA application. But what if they are divorced? Remarried? What if I live with my grandparents? Whose information do I report!?!

WHO IS MY FAFSA PARENT?



You still must answer the questions about them if you're considered a dependent student.

What if I don't live with my parents?

- ~~Brother~~
- ~~Sister~~
- ~~Grandma~~
- ~~Grandpa~~
- ~~Aunt~~
- ~~Uncle~~
- ~~Legal Guardian~~
- ~~Boyfriend~~
- ~~Girlfriend~~
- ~~Friend~~
- ~~Fiancé~~
- ~~Your Dog~~
- ~~Foster Parent~~

What if my parents aren't going to help me pay for college and refuse to provide information for my FAFSA?

You can't be considered independent of your parents just because they refuse to help you.

If you don't know where your parents live, or you've left home due to an abusive situation, fill out the FAFSA and then immediately get in touch with the Weatherford College Financial Aid Office.

What if I have no contact with my parents?

Who Is My “Parent” When I Fill Out the FAFSASM?

Which parent’s information should I report on the FAFSASM?

Maybe you know you’re considered a dependent student* by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSASM), and you’re supposed to put information about your parents on the application. But what if your parents are divorced? Remarried? What if you live with your sister? Whose information should you report?

Below are some guidelines that might help. Unless otherwise noted, “parent” means your legal (biological and/or adoptive) parent or your stepparent. In addition, the rules below apply to your legal parents regardless of their gender.

- If your parents are living and legally married to each other, answer the questions about both of them.
- If your parents are living together and are not married, answer the questions about both of them.
 - If your parent is widowed or was never married, answer the questions about that parent.
- If your parents are divorced or separated and don’t live together, answer the questions about the parent with whom you lived more during the past 12 months. If you lived the same amount of time with each parent, give answers about the parent who provided more financial support during the past 12 months or during the most recent year that you actually received support from a parent.
- If your parents are divorced but live together, you’ll indicate their marital status as “Unmarried and both parents living together,” and you’ll answer the questions about both of them.
- If your parents are separated but live together, you’ll indicate their marital status as “Married or remarried,” and you’ll answer the questions about both of them.
- If you have a stepparent who is married to the legal parent whose information you’re reporting, you must provide information about that stepparent as well.
- The following people are not your parents unless they have adopted you: grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, older brothers or sisters, and uncles or aunts.

EXCEPTION: The FAFSA asks about your parents’ education level. For these two questions, your parents are considered to be your birth parents or adoptive parents—your stepparent is not your parent in those questions

What if my parents are worried about providing their private information on the FAFSA?

Their information is safe with us. We recommend you fill out your FAFSA online, where your information is put into special code before it’s sent over the Internet to our processor. Also, we won’t share your FAFSA information with anyone except the schools you tell us you want to attend (so they can use the information to award financial aid to you) and a few federal and state government agencies (so they can check to be sure you’ve reported your information accurately or can assess your information to see what financial aid they could offer you).

What if I don’t live with my parents?

You still must answer the questions about them if you’re considered a dependent student.

What if my parents aren’t going to help me pay for college and refuse to provide information for my FAFSA?

You can’t be considered independent of your parents just because they refuse to help you with this process. If you do not provide their information on the FAFSA, the application will be considered “rejected,” and you might not be able to receive any federal student aid. The most you would be able to get (depending on what the financial aid administrator at your college decides) would be a loan called an unsubsidized loan.

The FAFSA will tell you what to do if you are in this situation. You also will need to speak to the financial aid administrator at the college or career school you plan to attend.

What if I have no contact with my parents?

If you don’t know where your parents live, or you’ve left home due to an abusive situation, fill out the FAFSA and then immediately get in touch with the financial aid office at the college or career school you plan to attend. The financial aid administrator will tell you what to do next.

Don’t put this off or you might miss financial aid deadlines!

*Find out whether you’re a dependent student: see “Am I Dependent or Independent?” at StudentAid.gov/resources.

For more information on federal student aid, visit StudentAid.gov or call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)