

Unusual Circumstances Dependency Override Request

Academic year 2026-2027

What this form is for

Use this form if you are otherwise considered a dependent student on the 2026-2027 FAFSA but you cannot contact a parent, or contacting a parent would pose a risk to you, because of unusual circumstances. Examples may include parental abuse or abandonment, estrangement, human trafficking, refugee or asylee circumstances, or student/parent incarceration. Rider reviews each request individually and may determine that you should be treated as an independent student for federal student aid purposes.

These reasons alone do not qualify

A dependency override cannot be approved only because your parents refuse to help pay for college, refuse to provide FAFSA information, do not claim you on their federal tax return, or because you support yourself financially. If your parents simply refuse to provide FAFSA information but you do not have unusual circumstances, contact One Stop to ask about the separate Direct Unsubsidized Loan-only process.

Your safety and privacy

Do not contact a parent if doing so would be unsafe. You do not need to provide traumatic details that are not necessary to establish your circumstances. If you prefer, you may ask to discuss sensitive information privately with a financial aid administrator. A documented interview may be used as part of Rider's review.

How to submit

Submit this form and supporting documentation through the One Stop Documents Upload, located on the Student Finances tile in myRider. Questions may be directed to the One Stop Services at onestop@rider.edu or 609-896-5360, Bart Luedeke Center, 1st floor. Rider will review requests for a determination of independence as quickly as practicable. Federal law requires review no later than 60 days after a student enrolls; later requests should also be acted on promptly once adequate documentation is received.

Student information

Student Name: _____	Bronc ID: _____
Rider Email: _____	Phone: _____

1. Prior Rider determination

☐ Rider University approved an unusual circumstances dependency override for me in a prior award year, and my circumstances have not changed.

Prior award year: _____ ☐ My circumstances have changed since the prior year.

If Rider previously approved your dependency override, Rider will presume you remain independent in later award years unless you report a change or Rider has conflicting information. Additional documentation should not be required solely because a new award year began.

2. Circumstance

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Parental abuse, neglect, or unsafe family environment | ☐ Parental abandonment or estrangement |
| ☐ Human trafficking or circumstances related to trafficking | ☐ Refugee or asylee circumstances that prevent normal parental contact |
| ☐ Student or parent/legal guardian incarceration | ☐ Parents' whereabouts are unknown or I am unable to contact them |
| ☐ Contact with a parent would pose a risk to me | ☐ Other unusual circumstance that prevents safe or reasonable parental contact |

Are you currently able to contact either parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would contacting a parent pose a risk to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Approximate date you last lived with a parent/legal guardian: _____

Approximate date you last had meaningful contact with a parent/legal guardian: _____

3. Student statement

Explain the circumstances that prevent you from providing parent information or make parental contact unsafe. Describe your current relationship/contact with your parent(s), when the situation began, and your current living/support arrangement. You may omit details that are not necessary to establish the circumstance and request an interview instead.

4. Supporting documentation

Submit documentation that is reasonably available and supports your circumstances. Rider does not require a specific number of letters or a police/Child Protective Services report. If third-party documentation is not reasonably available, contact One Stop. Rider may use other adequate documentation, including a documented interview with you.

Possible documentation	Examples
Court/incarceration records	Court order or official federal/state documentation showing incarceration or another relevant legal circumstance.
Child welfare or independent living professional	Written statement or documented contact with a state, county, or tribal welfare agency, or an independent living case worker.
Victim services or community agency	Statement or documented contact with an agency, facility, or program serving victims of abuse, neglect, assault, violence, or trafficking.
Attorney or court-appointed advocate	Statement or documented contact from an attorney, guardian ad litem, court-appointed special advocate, or similar professional.
TRIO / GEAR UP representative	Statement or documented contact that confirms the circumstances and the representative's relationship to you.

Possible documentation	Examples
Financial aid administrator at another institution	A documented dependency override determination from another institution in the same or a prior award year.
Evidence of separation	Documents such as utility bills, health insurance records, lease records, or other documents showing separation from parents/legal guardians.
Other reliable third-party information	A statement from a counselor, social worker, clergy member, mentor, health professional, or another person with direct knowledge of your circumstances.
Student interview / other documentation	Other documentation Rider determines is adequate, including a documented interview when appropriate.

Optional third-party statement

A third party with direct knowledge of your circumstances may complete this section or submit a separate signed statement. One statement may be sufficient if it adequately supports the circumstances. This section is not required when other adequate documentation is available.

Name: _____ Title/Organization: _____

Phone/Email: _____ Relationship to student: _____

Briefly describe what you know about the student's circumstances and how you know it:

Third-party signature: _____ Date: _____

5. Student certification

I certify that the information I provided is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize Rider University to use the information and documentation submitted to determine my dependency status for financial aid. I understand Rider may request clarification or conduct a documented interview if needed. I also understand that I should tell Rider if my circumstances change.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Rider University financial aid use only

Date request received	_____
Prior Rider override	☐ No ☐ Yes, prior award year _____ ☐ Circumstances unchanged ☐ Conflicting information exists
FAFSA status	☐ Provisional independent ☐ Dependent ☐ Other: _____
Documentation basis	☐ Interview ☐ Court/incarceration ☐ Agency/professional ☐ Other school FAA ☐ Separation records ☐ Other
Decision	☐ Approved dependency override ☐ Denied ☐ Additional information needed
FAFSA action	Dependency Override code entered: ☐ Yes ☐ N/A ISIR transaction #: _____
Student notified	Date: _____ Method: _____
Future-year treatment	☐ Presume independent in subsequent Rider award years unless student reports a change or conflicting information exists
Reviewer	Name/Initials: _____ Date: _____

FAA determination and rationale, including how the documentation substantiates the unusual circumstances:
