

Am I Dependent or Independent?

Your answers to questions on the FAFSA determine whether you are considered a dependent or independent student. The questions change a little from one year's FAFSA to the next year's; for instance, the 2022 - 2023 FAFSA asks whether you were born before January 1, 1999, while the 2021 - 2022 FAFSA asked whether you were born before January 1, 1998. Here are the 2022 - 2023 questions that determine your dependency status:

Were you born before Jan. 1, 1999?	Yes	No
As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced.)	Yes	No
At the beginning of the 2022–23 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an M.A., M.B.A., M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., graduate certificate, etc.)?	Yes	No
Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training? (If you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee, are you on active duty for other than state or training purposes?)	Yes	No
Are you a veteran of the U.S. armed forces? *	Yes	No
Do you now have or will have children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023?	Yes	No
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 and through June 30, 2023?	Yes	No
At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?	Yes	No
As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor?	Yes	No
Does someone other than your parent or stepparent have legal guardianship of you, as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?	Yes	No
At any time on or after July 1, 2021, did your high school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless? **	Yes	No
At any time on or after July 1, 2021, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk for being homeless?	Yes	No
At any time on or after July 1, 2021, 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?	Yes	No

*Answer "No" (you are not a veteran) if you (1) have never engaged in active duty (including basic training) in the U.S. armed forces, (2) are currently a ROTC student or a cadet or midshipman at a service academy, (3) are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee activated only for state or training purposes, or (4) were engaged in active duty in the U.S. armed forces but released under dishonorable conditions. Also answer "No" if you are currently serving in the U.S. armed forces and will continue to serve through June 30, 2023.

*Answer "Yes" (you are a veteran) if you (1) have engaged in active duty (including basic training) in the U.S. armed forces or are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee who was called to active duty for other than state or training purposes, or were a cadet or midshipman at one of the service academies **and** (2) were released under a condition other than dishonorable. Also answer "Yes" if you are not a veteran now, but will be one by June 30, 2023.

**Answer "No" if you are not homeless or at risk of being homeless, or do not have a determination. However, even if you answer "No" to each of the homeless/unaccompanied youth questions, you should contact the financial aid administrator at the college you plan to attend if you are either (1) homeless and an unaccompanied youth, or (2) at risk of being homeless or an unaccompanied youth and providing for your own living expenses--as your college financial aid office can determine that you are "homeless" and are not required to provide parental information.

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***Under very limited circumstances (for example, your parents are incarcerated; you have left home due to an abusive family environment; or you do not know where your parents are and are unable to contact them), you may be able to submit your FAFSA without parental information. You must contact the financial aid office at the college you plan on attending.

What if I answered “Yes” to one or more of the questions above?

If so, then for federal student aid purposes, you are considered to be an **independent** student and will not provide information about your parents on the FAFSA.

What if I answered “No” to every question?

If so, then for federal student aid purposes, you are considered to be a **dependent** student, and you must provide information about your parents on the FAFSA.

Not living with parents or not being claimed by them on tax forms does not make you an independent student for purposes of applying for federal student aid.