

Independent Status Documentation

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships requires three letters of support regarding your home life situation to help determine your dependency status. The required letters are listed below.

Letter One – from the student

Describe the history of your relationship with both parents. Including step-parents, if applicable. Provide specific examples of the events (in chronological order) that led to the breakdown of your relationship with your parents. Your statement must also include the following:

- o The extent of contact you have with your parents, including the month and year you last communicated with them (e.g., phone call, text, in person), the frequency of your contact (e.g., weekly, monthly, yearly), and the general nature of the interaction (e.g., called to wish me happy birthday, met them for lunch).
- o The month and year you stopped living with your parents and where/with whom you stayed after leaving home.
- o Who provided your financial support from the time you stopped living with your parents through now? Financial support includes medical or car insurance, housing, cell phone, groceries, etc. If you didn't receive financial support from others, explain how you supported yourself (e.g., job, financial aid, stayed with friend or relative, etc.).
- o If your custodial parent has passed away, submit a copy of their death certificate, obituary or memorial program.
- o Your letter must be physically signed and dated by you and must include your student ID number.

Letter Two – from a relative, friend, or someone who knows your situation

- o A letter corroborating your home life situation including specific examples of the events that led to the breakdown of your relationship with your parents.
- o The letter must include their physical signature and date, their relationship to you (e.g., neighbor, aunt, roommate, etc.), and their phone number should we need to contact them for additional information.

Letter Three – from a professional or neutral third party

- o A letter from a professional such as a doctor, psychiatrist, pastor, employer, attorney, teacher or high school guidance counselor that corroborates your home life situation.
- o The letter should be on letterhead, must include their physical signature and date, their association with you, and their phone number should we need to contact them for additional information.

If you feel you meet the requirements to be independent and can provide the three letters above, **contact Mary at 701-231-8398 or mary.gerardy@ndsu.edu** for instructions on your next steps. If you are unable to provide the three letters, contact Mary at the same phone number or email to discuss possible alternatives.