

Unusual Circumstance: Dependency Review 2026-2027

Student's Name _____

EMPLID _____

If you are under the age of 24, in most cases your financial aid eligibility must be determined using the financial information of your birth/adoptive parent(s). However, we realize that the family situations of some students may need further review because of unusual circumstances. Unusual circumstances include but are not limited to: involuntary dissolution of the family due to death, imprisonment, or abandonment; an abusive family environment that threatens the students' health or safety; the students' inability to locate parents; or other unusual circumstances.

The U.S. Department of Education requires documentation to be submitted to the Virginia Western Office of Financial Aid, Veterans' Affairs and Records in order to determine if your circumstances warrant a review. The decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and are final. An approval in a previous academic year or at a previously attended institution does not guarantee an approval for the current award year.

The following documentation must be attached to this completed and signed form and submitted to the Office of Financial Aid for reconsideration of your dependency status:

- A typed and signed detailed letter from you, the student, explaining your unusual circumstance(s), including your relationship with either your biological or adoptive parents.
- A separate letter from an independent third party, not a family member, that includes what they have witnessed regarding your circumstances, their wet (handwritten) signature, and a telephone number where they may be contacted if there are additional questions. This letter must include as much detail about the situation as possible. A court order may also be submitted, if available.
- If you cannot provide a letter from an independent source, please explain why in your letter. You may submit a signed letter from another source, like a family member in its place.

The following conditions, singly or in combination, do not merit an unusual circumstance review:

- Parental refusal to contribute to your education.
- Parents will not provide information for the FAFSA, VASA or for verification.
- Parents do not claim you as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- You (student) live on your own.
- You (student) demonstrate total self-sufficiency.

Your request for an Unusual Circumstance Review will take approximately 10 business days to process and review. You may be asked to submit additional documentation or to meet with a Virginia Western Financial Aid Advisor. As a result, this information should be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of classes.

Additional Messages will be posted to the Student's Message Center when additional action is required, or the review is complete. Please check your Message Center often.

I certify that all information submitted on and with this application is accurate. I have attached the appropriate supporting documents that may help in determining what my dependency status should be as required by the U.S. Department of Education. I understand that the decision is final.

Student's Signature _____

Date _____

Ways to Submit:

- (1) Upload through VWCC Secure Document Uploader found at www.viriniawestern.edu/students/uploads/
- (2) Drop off in-person at the Virginia Western Community College Financial Aid Office.