



Dependent v. Independent for Tuition Purposes

Dependent

A dependent student, as defined by s. 1009.21(1)(a), Florida Statutes, whether or not living with his/ her "parent" is eligible to be claimed as a dependent under the federal income tax code by their claimant or "parent" as defined by s. 1009.21(1)(f), Florida Statutes, (i.e., parent or guardian of the student, or any person in a parental relationship with the student as defined by s. 1009.21(2)(b), Florida Statutes, (an adult relative that for 3 years immediately before the child's initial enrollment has exercised day-to-day care, supervision and control of the child).

- The claimant or parent must have maintained legal residence in Florida for at least the past 12 consecutive months.
- A dependent student will typically be under the age of 24 by the date of initial enrollment
- A copy of your parent's/claimant's tax return may be requested to establish dependence

Independent

An independent student is a person who has maintained legal residence in Florida for at least the past 12 consecutive months, provides more than 50% of their own financial support, and is age 24 or older by the start of classes.

If a student is under 24 by the start of classes, they can be classified as independent by meeting one of the following criteria and providing one of the following required documents:

- Married (marriage certificate)
- Graduate or professional student (proof of graduate/professional enrollment)
- Veteran or active-duty military (DD-214 or military orders)



- McKinney-Vento letter, FSH-1 form, Department of Children & Families form, or court documentation proving independence.
- Both parents are deceased (both death certificates)
- Has legal dependents other than a spouse (child's birth certificate, court guardianship documents, or tax return showing dependent(s))
- Financial independence
Documentation showing earnings of at least \$6,500 and may include:
 - Prior-year federal tax return, or
 - Prior-year W-2, or
 - Year-to-date earnings statement