
Request for Review of Unusual Circumstances (Dependency Status) | 2024-2025

The Financial Aid Office at Lake Michigan College may only consider a student under the age of 24 as independent/self-supporting if unusual circumstances exist; for example, when a custodial parent has died, or when situations of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse exist. If and only when there is an unintentional, involuntary, and uncontrollable break in the relationship between parents and student, LMC may be able to consider you an independent student. To make that determination we will need a detailed written explanation and supporting documentation.

Incomplete appeals without the required supporting documentation will be denied.

The following are NOT acceptable reasons to grant a student independent status (singly or in combination), and will not be considered:

- Student living at home (or with relatives) but paying rent.
- Student has ongoing arguments with parents.
- Student has chosen to leave parent's home and put himself/herself through college.
- Student's parent/stepparent has chosen not to provide support for the student's college expenses and/or refuses to provide financial information on the FAFSA or for verification purposes.
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency and/or lives on their own.

Financial Aid Specialists will review your request based on the documentation submitted.
Notification of the results will be sent to you via your LMC WaveLink account.

Submission Instructions: You must return this form in one of the following ways:

Print and mail OR return to:

Financial Aid Office
2755 E. Napier Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

OR FAX to:

(269) 927-8183

OR scan/email to:

FAforms@lakemichigancollege.edu

Student Certification

I certify that all information on this form is true, complete, and accurate. Upon request, I agree to provide proof of the information reported on this form. False statements or misrepresentation can be considered a cause for denial, reduction, withdrawal, and/or repayment of financial aid. I give permission to the Financial Aid Office to make corrections/adjustments to my data the the FAFSA based on forms and/or documents submitted.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please CHECK ONE of the following circumstances and provide all information requested:

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth –

Required Documentation:

- Please complete the Homeless Youth Verification Form (located on the LMC website)

Death of a Parent –

Your custodial parent has died, and the other natural parent is still living. However, you have neither had contact with nor received any financial support from the living parent for a significant period.

Required Documentation:

- Letter from you explaining the situation in detail along with details of your living situation and means of support since your parent's passing.
- A copy of the death certificate for the deceased custodial parent.
- **Two** letters from an objective third party, which supports your claim.

Unsustainable Family Dynamic –

Your family situation is unsustainable. The dysfunction may result from parent abandonment, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or drug/alcohol abuse. In many cases, a professional counselor will have recommended living apart from your parent(s) household.

Required Documentation:

- A letter from you explaining the situation in detail. And,
- At least one letter (on official letterhead) explaining the situation in detail from any of the following: a minister, social worker, high school counselor, teacher, doctor, principal, or counseling professional.
 - If providing two letters from the above, you may not need to provide any further documentation.
- One or more of the following
 - A letter from someone other than a relative or a friend (i.e. the parents of a friend of the student, a neighbor, an employer).
 - Police or court reports
 - Documentation from a social agency.

Marital Status Change to Married –

This circumstance applies ONLY if your original 2022-23 FAFSA required you to provide parent information and you have since married. A special review of your FAFSA, as a married student, will be considered if you married prior to beginning your 2022-23 academic year enrollment at LMC.

- This change in circumstance significantly changes your financial resources and ability to pay.

Required Documentation:

- A copy of the student's marriage certificate.
- A signed copy of your spouse's federal income tax return for 2020.
- A signed copy of your federal income tax return for 2020.
- A completed copy of the V1 Independent Verification Worksheet.

Other circumstances not addressed in above categories –

(i.e. parent institutionalized, foster care after age 13, adoption after age 13)

Required Documentation:

- A detailed written explanation of the situation
- Substantiating documentation of all unusual circumstances.