

What is the definition of an independent student?

The first step in calculating a student's EFC is to determine his or her dependency status.

For the 2011-2012 Award Year, a student is automatically determined to be an independent applicant for federal student aid if he or she meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Student was born before **January 1, 1988**.
- Student is **married or separated** (but not divorced) as of the date of the application.
- At the beginning of the 2011-2012 school years, the student will be **enrolled in a master's or doctoral degree program** (such as MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, or graduate certificate, etc.).
- Student is currently **servicing on active duty** in the U.S. Armed Forces, or is a National Guard or Reserves enlistee called into federal active duty for other than training purposes.
- Student is a **veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces** (see the definition in the box on page 4).
- Student **has one or more children who receive more than half of their support** from him or her between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012.
- Student has **dependent(s) (other than children or spouse) who live** with him or her and who receive more than half of their support from the student, now and through June 30, 2012.
- At any time since the student turned age 13, both of the **student's parents were deceased**, the student was in **foster care, or the student was a dependent/ward of the court**.
- As determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence, the student is now or was upon reaching the age of majority, **an emancipated minor** (released from control by his or her parent or guardian).
- As determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence, the student is now or was upon reaching the age of majority, **in legal guardianship**.
- On or after July 1, 2010, student was determined by a high school or school district homeless liaison to be **an unaccompanied youth who was homeless**.
- On or after July 1, 2010, student was determined by the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to be an **unaccompanied youth who was homeless**.
- On or after July 1, 2010, student was determined by a director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program to be **an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless**.
- Student was determined by the college financial aid administrator to be **an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or is self-supporting and at risk of being homeless**.

The Financial Aid Advisor at Brewster can make a determination of independence with documentation of special circumstances, even if the student initially filed as a dependent student.

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[Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) | [Work Study](#) | [Forms Policy Statements and Links](#)

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