



Application for Unaccompanied and Homeless Youth Form 2020-2021 Academic Year

Student Name: _____ Student ID #: _____

Student's Address: _____ Phone #: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please be aware that due to the Higher Education Amendments of 1992, which changed the financial aid definition of an "independent" student, applicants can no longer be considered independent simply because they are "self-supporting", nor because parents are "unwilling" to assist the applicant in applying for aid. If the applicant cannot answer "yes" to any of the student dependency questions in Section Two of the on-line Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student must document they are independent by reason of specific Unaccompanied Homeless Youth.

UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH

Unaccompanied homeless youth (question 56–58 on the FAFSA). A student is independent if at any time on or after July 1, 2019 (irrespective of whether the student is currently homeless or at risk thereof), the student is determined to be an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or is self-supporting and at risk of being homeless. This determination can be made by: a school district homeless liaison, the director (or designee) of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the director (or designee) of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program. These authorities make this determination if the student is receiving their programs' services or if, in the case of a school district homeless liaison, the student is in high school.

A financial aid administrator can also determine if a student is an unaccompanied youth who is either homeless or is self-supporting and at risk of being homeless. It is important to examine students' living situations and claims on a case-by-case basis. If a student does not have, and cannot get, documentation from any of the authorities listed below:

- Local school district personnel
- State homeless education coordinators
- Third parties such as private or publicly funded homeless shelters and service providers
- Financial Aid Administrators from other colleges
- Staff from college access programs, such as TRIO or GEAR UP
- College or high school counselors; or
- Mental health professionals, social workers, mentors, doctors, and clergy.

A student is considered homeless when a student's housing may cease to be fixed, regular, and adequate housing. This is broader than just living "on the street." It includes temporarily living with other people because they had nowhere else to go; living in substandard housing (if it doesn't meet local building codes or the utilities are turned off, it is generally not adequate); living in emergency or transitional shelters, for example, trailers provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after disasters; or living in motels, camping grounds, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or any public or private place not designed for humans to live in. It also includes living in the school dormitory if the student would otherwise be homeless. A student living in any of these situations and fleeing an abusive parent may be considered homeless even if the parent would provide support and a place to live.

The documentation for a financial aid administrator's evaluation of the living arrangements of a student must demonstrate that the student meets the definition of this category of independent student. The determination may be based on a documented interview with the student if there is no written documentation available.

Homeless youth definitions:

At risk of being homeless—when a student’s housing may cease to be fixed, regular, and adequate, for example, a student who is being evicted and has been unable to find fixed, regular, and adequate housing.

Homeless—lacking fixed, regular, and adequate housing.

Self-supporting—when a student pays for his own living expenses, including fixed, regular, and adequate housing.

Unaccompanied—when a student is not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Youth—a student who is 21 years old or younger or still enrolled in high school as of the date he signs the application.

Housing Fixed—stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.

Regular—used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis.

Adequate—sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in the home.

This petition is a request to be processed for financial aid purposes as an "independent" student for the current year. If you feel you can document Unaccompanied Homeless Youth qualifying you as an "independent" student, respond to all items in Section I and return this form with your documentation to the McKendree University Office of Financial Aid.

SECTION I: (please address ALL items)

- Attach a signed statement explaining your unusual circumstances for consideration for the current year (Be specific.)
- Submit documentation from a school district homeless liaison, the director (or designee) of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the director (or designee) of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program.
- Provide documents showing how you are supporting yourself (include IRS transcripts of your 2018 and 2019 Federal tax returns with W-2's).
- Complete 20-21 Family Expense Form
- Complete 20-21 Verification Form

I certify the information submitted to substantiate my "independent" status is true and complete. If I cannot provide the appropriate, required documentation to support an independent status, I understand that I will be evaluated as a dependent student with my parents providing income and asset information and signature when completing the FAFSA.

Signature: _____ Date: _____