



## **2026-2027 Clark University Unusual Circumstances Appeal Form**

### **Student Information**

Name:

Clark ID:

According to **federal regulations**, a student is considered dependent for financial aid purposes unless they meet at least one of the specific criteria for independent student status (such as being 24 years of age or older, married, a veteran, having legal dependents, etc.) or have qualifying unusual circumstances that warrant an override to independent status. Students who do not meet these criteria are required to provide parental information on the FAFSA.

Please review the criteria below to determine if you are eligible for consideration for a dependency override. Please note: Clark University's Financial Aid Office makes the final decision on all dependency status appeals and unusual circumstances requests, as required by federal regulations. Students will receive a written notification of the decision. Dependency overrides granted at another school do not transfer to Clark.

### **Qualifying Unusual Circumstances (examples):**

- Abusive, unsafe, or threatening family environment
- Parental abandonment or estrangement
- Human trafficking
- Inability to contact/locate parents (or contact poses risk)
- Other situations where parental involvement is unsafe

### **Circumstances That Do NOT Qualify (alone or combined):**

- Parent refusal to provide FAFSA info or contribute financially
- Student living independently or being self-supporting
- Normal family conflict (without safety concerns)

### **Next Steps:**

☐ I believe I have a qualifying unusual circumstances, and will submit the required documentation. -> Proceed to page 2.

☐ I do not have qualifying circumstances, and I will update my 2026-2027 FAFSA to include parental information.

#### **Office of Financial Assistance**

950 Main Street • Worcester, MA 01610 • 508-793-7478 • 508-793-8802 Fax • [finaid@clarku.edu](mailto:finaid@clarku.edu) • [clarku.edu](http://clarku.edu)



---

**Required Documentation** (To expedite a review of your file, submit all information at 1 time):

1. **Personal Statement:** We acknowledge situations are personal, but please detail your situation that led to your appeal for independent status, focusing on your relationship with parents/guardians and why contact/support is not possible. Be specific about safety or other barriers.
2. **Supporting Statements:** Submit a minimum of two statements from third-party professionals (e.g., counselor, teacher, social worker, clergy, attorney) on letterhead, verifying your circumstances. Cannot be from relatives.
3. **Optional/Additional:** Any official records (court orders, DSS reports, police report, etc.) if available.

**Documentation Checklist** (complete this):

- ☐ Personal statement attached
- ☐ Third-party statements attached (list sources): Click or tap here to enter text.
- ☐ Additional documentation attached (describe): Click or tap here to enter text.
- ☐ I confirm this packet is complete.

**Student Certification:** I certify that all information and documentation provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that Clark makes the final decision and that false information may affect my aid eligibility.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Wet signature required; typed not accepted)*

**Office of Financial Assistance**

950 Main Street • Worcester, MA 01610 • 508-793-7478 • 508-793-8802 Fax • [finaid@clarku.edu](mailto:finaid@clarku.edu) • [clarku.edu](http://clarku.edu)