



GREENSBORO | HIGH POINT | JAMESTOWN

Guilford Technical Community College

Where Futures Are Created!

Financial Aid Office

P.O. Box 309

Jamestown, NC 27282

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2025-2026 UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES FORM

What is an “Unusual Circumstance”?

A Unusual Circumstance occurs when a Financial Aid administrator overrides the requirement for parent information due to extreme circumstances, such as documented abuse or abandonment by the parent. A Unusual Circumstance at GTCC is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the situation, the supporting documentation provided, and whether the situation is reason enough for a student to be considered independent rather than dependent. Unusual Circumstance applications must be approved each academic year.

Who is a parent for financial aid purposes?

Your biological/adoptive parents are considered your parents. Grandparents, foster parents, and legal guardians are not considered parents unless they have legally adopted you. If a person has adopted you, they are your legal parent. Questions about parents then refer to the adoptive parent(s).

What conditions **DO NOT** merit a Unusual Circumstance?

None of the conditions below, separately or in combination, qualify as unusual circumstances or merit a Unusual Circumstance:

- Parents refuse to provide information on the FAFSA or during the Verification process.
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- Parents refuse to contribute to a student’s education (i.e. pay tuition/fees, room/board, or books and supplies).
- A dependent student who demonstrates self-sufficiency (i.e. has a job, does not live at home, etc.).
- A student who does not wish to communicate with parents.
- A student previously considered independent for financial aid purposes, but who is not meeting the 2025-2026 FAFSA definition.

What happens next?

- Once we receive all the documentation required, your application will be reviewed.
- If additional documentation is required you will be notified via GTCC email. Documents must be sent within 20 business days from the date of notification.
- If your **appeal is approved**, your FAFSA will be processed as an independent student. If your **appeal is denied**, you will be required to correct your FAFSA with parental information and a parent’s signature.

What can you do if your parents refuse to help?

The federal government considers it the family’s responsibility to pay for higher education but may provide financial assistance if the family is unable to pay the full cost of education. But if a parent simply chooses not to pay or participate in the application process, the responsibility cannot fall on the taxpayer. It is an unfortunate reality that parent refusal may prevent students from paying for their education until they meet the independent student definition. Here is some advice on how to help educate your parents better:

- First, try to encourage your biological/adoptive parents to complete the FAFSA. Remind your parents that submitting their information on the FAFSA does not obligate them to pay your bill or provide you support, but their refusal will prevent you from receiving financial aid.
- If your parents are concerned about privacy, remind them that the confidentiality of student records, including financial aid information, is protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The GTCC Financial Aid Office does not share parent information with the student without the parent’s consent.

2025-2026 REQUEST FOR AN UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE

Before continuing with this form, please read all the information on page 1.

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip Code

SECTION A: Dependency Override Reason and Document Requirements

| 1. Check ONE of the following boxes as the reason for your Unusual Circumstance. You must attach the corresponding document to this form. | 2. Attach ALL of the following required documents to this form. |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abandonment at an early age and no ongoing contact with biological or adoptive parents → Submit legal and/or court documents that support claims of abandonment | 1. A copy of your birth certificate. 2. A detailed explanation of your situation and how you supported yourself during the past year (page 3). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive home environment (physical and/or emotional abuse) → Submit legal and/or court documents that support claims of abuse | 3. A statement from an adult relative or family friend who has first-hand knowledge of the history and current status of your situation. They must be able to verify your circumstances. Use the included <i>Reference Worksheet</i> (page 4) or submit a separate notarized statement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents reside outside the United States and can't be contacted by normal communications (i.e. mail, phone, e-mail. Other electronic communications, etc.) → Submit documentation from the governmental source that communication within the area of parental location is unavailable, or... → Submit other documents showing your parents can't provide information | 4. A supporting statement on letterhead, notarized, or on the included <i>Reference Worksheet</i> from a high school counselor, social worker, clergy, psychologist, psychiatrist, or other third party. 5. A copy of your W2(s) from 2023, if you worked (even if you didn't file taxes). |

SECTION B: Please answer the following questions:

| |
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| <p>1. Have you been approved for dependency override in a previous year at GTCC? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Years: _____</p> <p><i>Note: If you answer yes, you must still submit a personal explanation regarding your circumstances and any changes that may now exist. You do not need to resubmit supporting reference letters or documentation unless requested by the Financial Aid Office.</i></p> <p>2. Regarding your biological/adoptive mother and father, when is the last time you...? (Mark N/A for any that don't apply)</p> <p>A. Lived with: Mother ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ Father ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ Month Year Month Year Month Year Month Year</p> <p>B. Had contact with: Mother ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ Father ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ Month Year Month Year Month Year Month Year</p> <p>3. Regarding your biological/adoptive mother and father, to your knowledge, where are they living? (Please provide the address if you know it; otherwise, provide as much information as you have)</p> <p>Mother: _____</p> <p>Father: _____</p> <p>4. Who is currently supporting you?</p> <p>Name: _____ Relationship: _____</p> |
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2025-2026 REQUEST FOR AN UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE

SECTION C: Please answer the following questions:

Explain in detail your unique circumstances that you believe provide a basis for not having your parent's information on the FAFSA. Be sure to address your situation regarding both your biological/adoptive mother and father, Please print clearly or type and attach an additional sheet, if necessary.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

By signing this statement, I certify under penalty of perjury that the information I have reported on this form is complete and accurate. I understand that purposely giving false or misleading information to qualify for federal student aid is a federal offense that can result in fines and/or incarceration.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Sign in Ink or with a Stylus*

2025-2026 REFERENCE WORKSHEET FOR UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE

This form should be completed by a family member, family friend, or a third-party professional (counselor, minister, teacher, etc.) who has first-hand knowledge of the student's situation and who can corroborate and verify the circumstances that necessitate the student's application for an Unusual Circumstance. *(Make additional copies of this form as necessary. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.)*

Student's Name: _____

Name of the person completing this form: _____

If necessary, the following information can be typed on a separate sheet but must address each of the questions below and have an ink signature:

1. How long have you known the student: _____

2. What is your relationship to the student: _____

If you know the student as a third-party professional (counselor, minister teacher, etc.), please indicate where you work:

3. Explain what you know of the student's current relationship/contact with his/her biological/adoptive parents and any relevant background information you have regarding the history that has led to the current circumstances:

4. To your knowledge, when is the last time the student had contact with his/her biological/adoptive mother: ____ / ____ / ____
Month Year

To your knowledge, when is the last time the student had contact with his/her biological/adoptive Father: ____ / ____ / ____
Month Year

Explain the nature of the contact:

5. Explain why you think the student is unable to provide information from a biological/adoptive parent:

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2. What is your relationship to the student: _____

If you know the student as a third-party professional (counselor, minister teacher, etc.), please indicate where you work:

3. Explain what you know of the student's current relationship/contact with his/her biological/adoptive parents and any relevant background information you have regarding the history that has led to the current circumstances:

4. To your knowledge, when is the last time the student had contact with his/her biological/adoptive mother: ____ / ____ / ____
Month Year

To your knowledge, when is the last time the student had contact with his/her biological/adoptive Father: ____ / ____ / ____
Month Year

Explain the nature of the contact:

5. Explain why you think the student is unable to provide information from a biological/adoptive parent:

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Signature: _____ Date: _____

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