



## **Determination of Dependent or Independent**

### **Dependent**

A dependent student, as defined by s. 1009.21(1)(a), Florida Statutes, whether or not living with his/ her "parent" is eligible to be claimed as a dependent under the federal income tax code by their claimant or "parent" as defined by s. 1009.21(1)(f), Florida Statutes, (i.e., parent or guardian of the student, or any person in a parental relationship with the student as defined by s. 1009.21(2)(b), Florida Statutes, (an adult relative that for 3 years immediately before the child's initial enrollment has exercised day-to-day care, supervision and control of the child)).

- The claimant or parent must have maintained legal residence in Florida for at least the past 12 consecutive months.
- A dependent student will typically be under the age of 24 by the date of initial enrollment.
- A copy of your parent's/claimant's tax return may be requested to establish dependence.

### **Independent**

An independent person is someone who has maintained legal residence in Florida for at least the past 12 consecutive months and provides 51% or more of their own support.

An independent student generally is a person who is one of the following:

- The student is 24 years of age or older by the first day of classes of the term for which residency status is sought.
- The student is married.
- The student has dependents that live with them and receive more than half of their support from the student (other than a spouse), pursuant to the U.S. Dept. of Education for the purposes of federal financial aid eligibility.



- The student is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces or is currently serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces for purposes other than training.
- Both of the student's parents are deceased, or the student is or was (until age 18) one of the following: (a) a ward/dependent of the court or (b) in foster care.
- The student is working on a master's or doctoral degree during the term for which residency status is sought at a Florida institution.
- The student earns \$6,500 or more annually, proven by their most recent tax return or W2.

Students that qualify as an independent student and who are under 24 years old will be required to verify independence (which may include a copy of your tax return to establish financial independence).