



Office of Financial Aid

Phone: 864-388-8340 | Fax: 864-388-8811 | Form Code SEPARA
 320 Stanley Avenue, Greenwood, SC 29649 | lander.edu/finaid | Email: finaid@lander.edu

2026-2027 Documentation of Separation/Divorce

Student's Last Name	First Name	MI	Lander ID (L#)
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According to your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) you (or your parents) indicated the marital status as “married – but separated” or “divorced or separated”. The U.S. Department of Education requires Lander University to verify that a student is (parents are) in fact separated or divorced. Before your eligibility for federal and state financial assistance can be determined, this form must be completed and returned with the required documents.

If you do not provide ALL necessary documents, your file will be placed on hold.

Definitions of Marital Statuses:

“Married or Remarried” doesn’t include parents who are living together who aren’t otherwise legally married unless your parents’ state of legal residence recognizes their relationship as a common law marriage. Additionally, if one of your parents is widowed or divorced and has remarried, choose “Married or Remarried” and answer the questions about that parent **and your stepparent**.

For FAFSA purposes, “Separated” includes a married couple who is considered legally separated by a state, or if the couple is legally married but has chosen to live separate lives, including living in separate households, as though they weren’t married. If your parents are separated but living together, select “Married or Remarried,” not “Divorced or Separated.”

Note: When two married persons live as a married couple **but are separated by physical distance or have separate households, they’re considered married for FAFSA purposes.**

Unmarried persons. You are considered unmarried for the whole year if, on the last day of your tax year, you are either:

- Unmarried, or
- Legally separated from your spouse under a divorce or separate maintenance decree. State law governs whether you are married or legally separated under a divorce or separate maintenance decree.

Divorced persons. If you are divorced under a final decree by the last day of the year, you are considered unmarried for the whole year.

Divorce and remarriage. If you obtain a divorce for the sole purpose of filing tax returns as unmarried individuals, and at the time of divorce you intend to and do, in fact, remarry each other in the next tax year, you and your spouse must file as married individuals in both years.

STEP ONE: Complete the following information about your or your parent’s marriage.

This form is submitted to document the separation or divorce of the following:

Student/Student’s Spouse _____ Father/Mother* _____

Date of Marriage	_____ (MM/DD/YY)
Date of Separation/Divorce	_____ (MM/DD/YY)
Have you remarried?	Yes ____ No ____
Do you intend to proceed with a divorce?	Yes ____ No ____
Have you consulted with an attorney or legal aid about your separation/divorce?	_____ (MM/DD/YY) Provide a copy of a letter from your attorney or legal aid office representing you. The letter must be on official letterhead, and include the full name, complete address and phone number or copy of divorce decree
Do you have a court appearance date for the divorce proceedings or date of divorce?	Yes ____ No ____ If yes, when? _____
What was the last year a joint federal tax return was filed?	

	<p>_____ -OR-We never filed a joint return</p> <p>Provide a copy of your and your spouse's most recent federal tax return and all schedules and W-2(s); if you and or your spouse does not have a copy of your return you can contact the IRS at 1-800-908-9946, to obtain an IRS tax transcript and W-2 transcript.</p>
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STEP TWO: Complete the following information about your household. (If divorced and yours or your parent's divorce decree is attached you do not need to complete step two.)

Date on which you and your spouse changed residences?	_____ (MM/DD/YY)
Name of Student or Parent completing this form:	
Complete Physical Address:	
Home Telephone Number:	
Cellular Phone Number:	
Who pays for the rent/mortgage and utilities for this residence?	
Name of Student's Spouse or Parent's Spouse :	
Complete Physical Address:	
Home Telephone Number:	
Cellular Phone Number:	
Who pays for the rent/mortgage and utilities for this residence?	

STEP THREE: If you do not have a divorce decree OR if you cannot provide a letter from your attorney or legal aid office, you must submit the following information:

1. Complete this form entirely – do not leave any questions blank; write N/A if a question does not apply.
2. Reference letters: If you have not consulted with an attorney or legal aid and do not have a court date for the divorce proceedings or are not pursuing a divorce at this time, you must still provide evidence of your separation. You must attach a statement which confirms your separation claim from two third party persons (not relatives or friends) who can endorse your statement in their professional capacity on their business letterhead (computer generated letterhead is NOT acceptable). For example, your pastor or rabbi, your marriage counselor, or social services case worker can provide such a letter.
3. Provide a signed copy of both your and your spouse's Federal Tax Return, all Schedules and all W-2(s) **OR** Federal Tax Transcript and/or IRS Letters (if applicable).
4. Provide copies of documents which are in your name only and your spouse's name only; such as utility bills and/or lease/rental/mortgage documents.
5. A personalized letter from you describing your situation. If you are unable to provide any of the required supporting documentation you should include the reasons in your letter.
6. Special documentation: As requested by the Financial Aid Office to help us determine if you are physically and financially separated from your spouse.
7. Your documents will be reviewed faster if they arrive as a group rather than one at a time – all documents should have your name and Student ID included. Attach all supporting documents to this form and submit together to: Lander University Office of Financial Aid, 320 Stanley Avenue, Greenwood, SC 29649

By signing this form, you agree to provide information that will verify the accuracy of your information, if requested. If you purposely give false or misleading information, you will be referred to the United States Department of Education's Inspector General. If you purposely give false or misleading information in order to qualify for Title IV funds, you may be fined \$20,000, sent to prison or both.

Student's Signature (Required) **Phone #** **Date**

Parent's Signature (Required for Dependent Students) **Phone #** **Date**

Note to Counselor: If this is a professional judgment, use PCAR/SCAR instead.