

Career Academy of Beauty

Special and Unusual Circumstances

Students may pursue an adjustment to their financial aid calculation based on special or unusual circumstances.

Students/Parents that complete the FAFSA which uses the prior prior year's income as a estimate of their financial strength. The information of the prior prior year is assumed to be a good estimate of the financial strength for the current year but sometimes the current year is more accurate due to exceptional circumstances.

In those cases, the financial aid office can recalculate financial aid eligibility based on a current year estimate. Examples of exceptional circumstances include death or unemployment of a parent/spouse, divorce/separation, and exceptional medical costs beyond your control.

The financial aid office will review each case individually with appropriate documentation. A Professional Judgment/Special Circumstances Request Form should be completed in these events. Sometimes an exceptional circumstance occurs and the parent/students estimated current year income exceeds their prior year income - sometimes you have received the maximum offer already and an adjustment will not result in additional assistance

Special Circumstances-When students and/or families experience a change in circumstances, the information on the FAFSA may no longer accurately reflect their current financial or dependency situation. In some cases, Financial Aid Administrators may be able to adjust some information based on these special or unusual circumstances. With appropriate documentation, we may be able to make adjustments to a student's FAFSA.

Examples of financial situations that justify an aid administrator adjusting data elements in the COA or the SAI calculation include, but are not limited to the financial status or personal circumstances of eligible applicants as it relates to the special circumstances.

As part of the special circumstances process, the Office of Financial Aid will ask for applicable financial estimates for the student, parent(s), or spouse (if married). When estimating income, please include all sources of potential income for the year, including but not limited to wages, bonuses, severance, unemployment, and disability.

Unusual Circumstance-Student dependency status is determined by information provided on the FAFSA and required by the US Department of Education. A student may submit an appeal to override their dependency status and be considered an independent student, based on unusual circumstances.

Situations that justify an aid administrator modifying a student's dependency status based on a unique situation may include cancellation of parental contribution due to parental abandonment of the student, student or parental incarceration, homeless youth, legal refugee or asylum status, or human trafficking. A notarized letter from a responsible adult (such as a high school principal, a state-certified social worker, or a court document placing the student in the care of an adult other than their parent) explaining the circumstances of the abandonment would be appropriate documentation.

Unusual circumstances are determined on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting this override bear the burden of providing strong documentable justification to support their request. Students must provide evidence that it is reasonable to believe that their parents should be forgiven of their obligation to provide educational support. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a court order or official Federal or State documentation that the student's parents or legal guardian are incarcerated;
- a documented phone call or written statement from an attorney, guardian ad litem, or court-appointed special advocate (or similar), or a representative of a Assistance program that confirms the circumstances and the person's relationship to the student;
- a documented determination of independence made by a financial aid administrator at another institution in the same or prior award year;
- utility bills, health insurance or other documents that demonstrate a separation from parents or legal guardians;
- a documented phone call or written statement which confirms the unusual circumstances with: a State, county or Tribal welfare agency;
- an independent living case worker who supports current and former foster youth with the transition to adulthood;
- a public or private agency, facility or program servicing the victims of abuse, neglect assault or violence.

Actions by the student that demonstrate the ability to support oneself do not forgive the parent of their obligation to provide reasonable support for their child's education. Failure of parents and student to get along does not warrant dependency overrides. A parent's belief that the child should pay for their own college costs does not warrant this override. This override is granted very conservatively and only when very compelling and documentable circumstances exist. Student will be notified of a Final determination up to 4 weeks after all documents have been received.

Any student who has obtained an adjustment for unusual circumstances and a final determination of independence shall presume to be independent for each subsequent award year at the same institution unless the student informs the institution that their circumstances have changed, or the institution has conflicting information about the student's independence.