



Professional Judgement

Policies and Procedures Manual

**Revised
4/1/2019**

Professional Judgement

● Income Adjustment

A student may request an income adjustment when their current income is significantly less than the base year income used on their FAFSA. With proper documentation, the financial aid administrator can change data elements on the ISIR to better reflect a student's current circumstance. In all cases, the income used will be for a 12-month period, although not necessarily a calendar year. Documentation may include, current pay check stubs, termination notice, proof of unemployment, letters/emails from current or previous employers, etc.. If the income adjustment is approved, the FA administrator will resubmit the FAFSA electronically with the adjusted data elements. When the new ISIR is received, the FA administrator will recalculate the student's eligibility and disburse accordingly. Income adjustments can only be done after an initial FAFSA has been filed and verification has been completed, if selected.

● Cost of Attendance Adjustment

In rare cases a student can request an adjustment to their Cost of Attendance. The student must document the additional expenses for which the adjustment is being requested. Because the current Need Analysis formula includes allowances for different expenses, the students actual cost must be greater than the allowance that already exists. These costs should be something that is out of the control of the student, rather than a choice by the student (i.e. High car payments for an expensive car purchase, or choosing to live in an expensive house would not be considered for an adjustment).

● Dependency Override

Students may request a dependency override so that an otherwise dependent student can fill out the FAFSA as an independent student. Valid cases for a dependency override must involve unusual circumstances. The following conditions, either alone or in combination, do NOT constitute unusual circumstances:

- a student does not live with his/her parents
- the student's parents do not claim the student on their taxes
- the student does not receive any financial support from the parents
- the student's parents refuse to fill out their portion of the FAFSA
- the student is completely self-supporting

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In all cases the student must document their unusual circumstances. If an override is granted, the FA Administrator will resubmit the students FAFSA so that it is processed as an independent student. In some cases, this can be performed with an initial submission of the FAFSA, rather than as a correction to an already submitted FAFSA.

Regardless of the type of Professional Judgment being requested, all determinations are final and cannot be appealed. If denied, the student can always provide additional documentation to have their request reconsidered.