

**Special and Unusual Circumstance  
(Professional Judgement / Dependency Override)  
Disclosure 2023 / 2024**

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Federal law allows students to request an adjustment to their financial aid awards due to special and/or unusual circumstances. The Salon Professional Academy FAA (Financial Aid Administrator) is committed to evaluating all requests for adjustment on a case-by-case basis, ensuring fairness in every determination.

A student may have both a special circumstance and an unusual circumstance.

**Special circumstances:** Commonly known as a Professional Judgement, it refers to the financial situation that justifies adjusting the data elements in the expected family contribution (EFC) calculation or the components of the (COA).

Special circumstances can include:

- Weather disaster personally affecting student/family.
- Medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance.
- Unusually high dependent care costs
- Divorce or Separation
- Death of a spouse or parent who has supported the student.
- Homelessness
- Dramatic change in income or assets or the student's status
- Supporting a family member or student is a dislocated worker.
- Disability of a supporting family member
- Converting a regular IRA into a Roth IRA by transferring funds increases income on the tax return, even though the family's income level/assets did not increase.

When a student identifies a special circumstance, they must provide a written request to The Academy FAA. This request should include a detailed description of the special circumstance, ensuring that the FAA has a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

The Academy must have adequate documentation to substantiate the request/approval of a special circumstance.

- Documentation can include but is not limited to;
  - Bank statements, copies of tax returns, pay stubs, medical bills, or signed and dated documentation from a third-party person, i.e., pastor, priest, doctor, or other proof of the hardship incurred by the student/parent.

**Unusual circumstances:** Commonly known as a Dependency Override. These are unique situations that justify an adjustment to a student's dependency status. The Academy understands that each student's circumstances are unique and is here to support them.

Unusual circumstances include but are not limited to:

- Human trafficking, as described in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.);
- Legally granted refugee or asylum status;
- Abandonment or incarceration of the surviving parent(s); or
- An abusive family environment that threatens the student's health or safety

- Incapacity of parents including but not limited to:
  - Incarceration
  - Mental Disability
  - Physical Illness
  - Death of a sole surviving parent
  - Other extenuating circumstances sufficiently documented by a signed letter from a legitimate third party
- Verified as an unaccompanied youth who is homeless.

When a student identifies a special circumstance, they must provide a written request to The Academy FAA. This request should include a detailed description of the special circumstance, ensuring that the FAA has a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

The Academy must have adequate documentation to substantiate the request/approval of an unusual circumstance.

- Documentation can include but is not limited to:
  - Written statement from an attorney, guardian ad litem, or court-appointed special advocate that confirms the circumstances and the person's relationship to the student.
  - A FAA-documented phone call with an independent living case worker who supports current and former foster youth with the transition to adulthood or a public or private agency, facility, or program servicing the victims of abuse, neglect, assault, or violence
  - Director or designee of an emergency shelter or a transitional housing program funded by HUD, a director or designee of a homeless youth basic center or transitional living program; or a high school or school district homeless liaison; or an FAA from another college

FAA will determine once all documentation is received.

FAA will provide students with a final determination of their dependency status and financial aid award as soon as practicable after reviewing all requested documentation but no later than 60 days after the student enrolls.

The legislation gives FAAs the latitude and authority to consider individual circumstances and enables responsiveness to situations that cannot be fully anticipated.

The FAA will consider All professional judgments on a case-by-case basis as directed by Congress.

No adjustments can be made until verification is completed.

Conflicting information must be resolved before making any adjustments.

The decision of the FAA is final, and there is no option for an appeal.