

Professional Judgement for Change of Dependency Status and Special Circumstance Regarding Income Reduction

Federal student aid programs are based on the principle that students and their families should be the primary source of support for college education. A student who does not meet any of the criteria listed under Step #3 of the FAFSA are considered a dependent student and must provide parent financial information. Under certain ***Unusual Circumstances*** a Financial Aid Administrator may make a ***Professional Judgement*** and override a student's dependency status or make a change due to ***Special Circumstances for "Income Reduction"*** based on mitigating factors.

1. Circumstances considered for granting a Dependency Status Override:

- Student's removal from parent's home due to situation that threatened the student's health or safety.
- Incapacity of parents to provide information due to medical condition or inability to be contacted.
- Other extreme circumstances that can be sufficiently documented. Examples of documentation to attach, as applicable to the situation:
 - Legal documentation - such as arrest, court papers, Child Protective Services records, correctional facility records/incarceration reports.
 - Medical documentation - such as death certificate, hospital records, reports of institutionalization.
 - Statement regarding knowledge of your parental situation from an unrelated professional – such as a school official, minister, social worker, physician, lawyer, law enforcement officer, supervisor. Statement should include the person's full name, title or position, phone number and signature.
- Student is self-supporting and can document self-sufficiency (lease and one utility bill in student's name) and at risk for homelessness.

******Circumstances that are NOT grounds for a dependency status change******

- Student has ongoing disagreements with parents
- Parent does not claim student for income tax purposes
- Parent/ Step-parent refuses to provide information for FAFSA or for verification: student will be eligible for the Federal Unsubsidized Student loan only!
- Parent does not contribute to student's education

2. Special Circumstances for Income Reduction

Below is a list of possible circumstances which may allow a student to be considered for a Special Circumstance Income Reduction:

Dependent Students

- Loss of Employment for a parent or parent retires
- Loss of Untaxed Income
- Natural Disaster
- Death of Parent
- Separation/Divorce of Parents
- Disability
- High Medical Bills

Independent Students:

- Loss of Employment for Student/Spouse or either retires
- Loss of Untaxed Income
- Natural Disaster
- Death of Spouse
- Separation/Divorce from Spouse
- Disability
- High Medical Bills

*******You must have a valid FAFSA for the CURRENT award year on file before this request will be accepted and reviewed for determination. You must also provide the required documentation that will substantiate your statement. *******

*******After the information has been reviewed, a decision will be made and you will be notified via email to your personal (if on file) and your Kilgore College email address within 14 days of submission. *******