

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

Special or Extenuating Circumstances – Professional Judgment and Dependency Overrides

Sometimes there are special or extenuating circumstances that affect which information is reported on the FAFSA. Congress has empowered the Directors of Financial Aid at Institutions of Higher Education to exercise their professional judgment (PJ) to resolve problems students may face in filing the FAFSA. Those students who believe that they qualify for special considerations should file a written request with the Director of Financial Aid giving specific details of the problem and the reason why they believe a waiver of requirements should be issued and be prepared to provide additional documentation as requested. These situations include but are not limited to the death of a parent, significant loss of income, involuntary dissolution of the family and significant tuition **expenses for the student's siblings for elementary or secondary education. PJ requests should be made BEFORE** the FAFSA is filed.

The intent of Congress is that PJ situations be reviewed on a case by case basis and the decision of one Director at a particular institution may not necessarily be the same decision reached by a different Director at another institution.

Verification

The US Department of Education through the FAFSA Central Processor selects students on a random and not-so-random basis to submit documentation to the Director of Financial Aid who will validate various data elements submitted by the student on the FAFSA. All students whose FAFSA is selected for verification by the Central Processor will be required to submit a Federal Verification Worksheet and other appropriate or required **documentation. The Director will only verify those FAFSA's selected by the processor. Failure to provide the** required documents within 20 days of notification will result in the cancellation of the request for aid and the student will be responsible to pay the entire bill. No aid will be awarded or disbursed until all corrections or changes have been reprocessed by the Federal Processor.

Conflicting or Discrepant Information

Prior to the disbursement of federal funds, the Center must insure that all student information contained in the various offices is consistent. Common inconsistencies include but are not limited to **the student's name, date of birth, HS degree or GED status, marital status, citizenship status, loan default, veteran status, selective service registration and tax filing status.** The Director of Financial Aid will review all student information and request additional documentation to resolve all discrepancies. Students who fail to provide sufficient documentation within twenty days will be denied financial aid and will be responsible to pay their entire bill. Cases of suspected fraud will be reported to the US Department of Education, Office of the Inspector General. No aid will be awarded or disbursed until all corrections or changes have been reprocessed by the Federal Processor. All corrected information received from the Federal Processor, subsequent to the initial FAFSA, will be reviewed and all conflicting information resolved before additional Federal Funds can be disbursed. Conflicting information involving information from a prior year must also be resolved before aid can be awarded. **Students should consult with the Director of Financial Aid before making any changes to their original FAFSA.**

Disqualification of Aid for Sale and Possession of Illegal Drugs

A federal or state drug conviction can disqualify a student from receiving federal aid regardless of whether the conviction was for possession or sale. Students with a conviction on their record should consult with the Director of Financial Aid regarding their eligibility.