elevate
SALON INSTITUTE

Special and Unusual Circumstance
(Professional Judgement / Dependency Override)
Disclosure 2026/2027

Federal law provides students with the right to request an adjustment to their financial aid awards due to special and / unusual circumstances. Elevate Salon Institute FAA (Financial Aid Administrator) will evaluate all requests for adjustment on a case-by-case basis and the determination is final.

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

Special circumstances: Commonly known as a Professional Judgement, refer to the financial situation that justify making an adjustment to 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 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.

A student must provide a written request to The Institute FAA with a detailed description of the special circumstance.

The Institute 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, ie: pastor, priest, doctor, or other proof of the hardship incurred by the student/parent.

Unusual circumstances: Commonly known as a Dependency Override, refer to conditions that justify an adjustment to a student's dependency status based on a unique situation.

Unusual circumstances include but 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

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- 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.

A student must provide a written request to The Institute FAA with a detailed description of the special circumstance.

The Institute 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 make a determination 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.

Legislation provides FAA's the latitude and authority to consider individual circumstance and enables responsiveness to situations that cannot be fully anticipated.

All professional judgments will be considered by the FAA on a case-by-case basis as directed by Congress.

No adjustments can be made until verification is completed.

Conflicting information must be resolved prior to making any adjustments.

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

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