

# 2026-2027 Special Circumstance Review Guidelines

## A. Guidelines for Special Circumstances Review Requests

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) requires students and parents of dependent students to provide financial information from a prior year. The Financial Aid Office recognizes that special circumstances may arise that result in the reduction of a household's income or the addition of or increase in extraordinary expenses and that the financial information provided may no longer accurately reflect a household's current ability to finance a student's education. Students have the right to request a Special Circumstance Review if they believe one of these situations applies. The Financial Aid Office has the discretion to revise a student's FAFSA with more recent financial information or to revise a student's Cost of Attendance if a student's circumstance(s) fall within an approved category and the student provides sufficient documentation.

The categories listed below are some examples of extenuating circumstances that **may** be sufficient to warrant a Special Circumstance Review. This chart is for informational purposes only; other valid circumstances may exist, and circumstances listed below may still be insufficient for a Special Circumstance Review to be approved. The documentation listed for each circumstance is intended as an example only; each case is unique, and the Financial Aid Office may, at their discretion, request other documents.

Category	Condition	Documentation
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT OR REDUCTION OF WAGES</b>	Student, spouse, or parent who earned money in year used for FAFSA has since lost his/her job.  Student, spouse, or parent who worked full time in year used for FAFSA has since involuntarily stopped working full time.	Notice from employer of termination/employment status change, last paystub showing YTD earnings, letter of unemployment showing approval/denial of benefits, unemployment online screen print, more recent year Federal Tax Return Transcript.
<b>SEPARATION OR DIVORCE</b>	Student or student's parents have separated or divorced since the year used for FAFSA.	Copy of Divorce Decree, separation agreement, proof of separate addresses, (i.e. rental contracts and/or utility bills).
<b>DEATH</b>	Spouse or parent who worked in year used for FAFSA has died.	Death certificate, proof of income generated by the deceased.
<b>DISABILITY</b>	Student, spouse or parent has been unable to earn money in the usual way due to disability.	Proof of disability, proof of YTD earnings, pay stubs of disability checks.
<b>ONE-TIME INCOME</b>	Student, spouse, or parent received income in year used for FAFSA which cannot reasonably be expected to be received in current year and the funding is not available for educational expenses.	Proof of the nonrecurring nature of the income such as gain from sale of home to purchase another, a 401K or IRA transfer or rollover, plus current status of the funds (deposited, spent, etc.).
<b>LOSS OF TAXABLE OR UNTAXED BENEFITS</b>	Student, spouse, or parent who received unemployment benefits or some untaxed income or benefit in year used for FAFSA has since lost that income.	Letter/notice from agency indicating benefits have been terminated, unemployment online screen print.
<b>ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY SCHOOL EXPENSE</b>	Student or parent is paying for elementary or secondary school tuition for your children or your siblings in current year.	Itemized bill or copy of contract from school with <b>proof of payment</b> such as cancelled checks.
<b>UNREIMBURSED MEDICAL EXPENSES</b>	Student or parent paid medical/dental bills not covered by insurance since the year used for FAFSA.	Cancelled checks or receipts or a summarized list with dates and amounts paid.