

## 2026-2027 Special Circumstance Review

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.

For **independent** students, extenuating circumstances generally apply to the student and/or student's spouse.

For **dependent** students, extenuating circumstances may apply to the student and/or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Circumstances that **may** warrant an adjustment include (but are not limited to):

- Involuntary loss/change of employment
- Divorce/separation
- Death of a parent/spouse
- Disability of a student/parent/spouse
- Loss of benefits
- Unreimbursed medical expenses
- Declared states of emergency

Circumstances that **do not** warrant an adjustment include (but are not limited to):

- Parents refuse to contribute to student's education
- Parents are unwilling to provide information on the FAFSA or for verification purposes
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency
- Student and parents do not get along
- Student is a single parent or is pregnant
- Student/Parent/Spouse chooses to stop working or to work less
- Vacation expenses
- Standard living expenses
- Mortgage payments
- Car payments
- Other discretionary expenses

If you have questions about the definition of these circumstances or whether your circumstance(s) is eligible for a Special Circumstance Review, contact the Financial Aid Office at [financialaid@rcbc.edu](mailto:financialaid@rcbc.edu).

A student may only submit a Special Circumstance Review Request if they have satisfied all verification requirements for the award year. To make an adjustment to a student's financial information, the Financial Aid Office must obtain, at minimum, clear documentation of the extenuating circumstance(s) and all financial information that will be used to make any adjustments. Each Special Circumstance Review is different, and the Financial Aid Office may request additional documents at their discretion. Failure to provide requested documentation may result in a Special Circumstance Review Request being denied. The decision of the Financial Aid Office regarding a Special Circumstance Review Request is **final and may not be appealed**. The submission of a Special Circumstance Review Request does not guarantee approval. Approval of a Special Circumstance Review Request does not guarantee an increase in financial aid.

