

## Professional Judgment

Sometimes a student will experience special or unusual circumstances that impact their federal student aid eligibility, federal regulations permit the Financial Aid Administrator to administer professional judgment, on a case-by-case basis along with adequate supporting documentation of the student's unique situation that is beyond the student's control to make adjustments to data elements on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form that impact the Student Aid Index (SAI).

**Special Circumstances** refers to financial situations that justify an aid administrator adjusting data elements in the Cost of Attendance (COA) or in the SAI calculation (financial situations such as a significant reduction in a student, spouse or parents income, loss or change in the amount of child support, social security benefits or other benefits, separation or divorce that occurred after the FAFSA was completed, death of parent or spouse that passed away after the FAFSA was completed or extraordinary medical expenses not covered by insurance).

**Unusual Circumstances** refers to the conditions that justify an aid administrator making an adjustment to a student's dependency status based on a unique situation (e.g., human trafficking, refugee or asylum status, parental abandonment, incarceration), more commonly referred to as a dependency override.

All complete Special and Unusual Circumstance Professional Judgment requests (must include request form and all required supporting documentation) will be processed in the order in which they are received and within 60 days of receipt. A formal request to review your special and/or unusual circumstance does not guarantee changes in aid eligibility, but we will look at your individual situation carefully. Students will be notified via email once a decision is made. A Professional Judgment decision is final and may not be appealed.

Please contact one of FCTC's Financial Aid Specialists, to schedule an appointment to discuss your unique situation and the professional judgment review process. 904.547.3502 or 904.547.3505 or [FCTCFinancialaid@FCTC.edu](mailto:FCTCFinancialaid@FCTC.edu), available Monday – Friday 7:30am-4pm.