



PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT POLICY and DEPENDENCY OVERRIDES

Section 479A of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 authorized the financial aid administrator to exercise Professional Judgment (PJ) on a case-by-case basis for special or unusual circumstances.

Due to extenuating circumstances, students and parents often find the information they provided on the FAFSA does not realistically reflect their ability to provide educational support. When this happens, students may choose to submit a Financial Aid Professional Judgment Appeal to the Financial Aid office requesting that their situation be reviewed.

Webb Institute Financial Aid office will provide individual consideration of each student's circumstances to the extent possible. Appeals will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office.

The deadline to submit an appeal for the academic year will be September 30th. Forms can be received from the Financial Aid office. Please allow three weeks, after submitted all requested documentation, for appeal results.

Please note that a successful appeal does not guarantee additional aid, and sometimes additional aid is not immediately available.

Students that were selected for verification must complete the verification process prior to any professional judgment decisions.

If the appeal is approved, the aid eligibility will be reevaluated. No additional aid is guaranteed with a successful appeal, and any potential increases in aid eligibility are subject to fund availability.

Examples of professional judgment reasons include, but are not limited to the following:

- Death of the dependent student's parent after application
- Death of the independent spouse after application
- Unusually high medical/dental expenses not covered by insurance (out-of-pocket expenses)—must have paid statements and not already itemized on tax return. Medical expenses must exceed \$3000
- Separated or divorce of parent or student after application
- Dependent care expenses
- Loss of wages:
 - Dependent students' parents' income has been significantly reduced in academic year
 - Independent students' income has been significantly reduced in academic year
 - The student or parent no longer receives benefits such as child support or other sources of income

DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE

A student may have unusual circumstances that justify a dependency override that will allow the financial aid administrator to change the student's status from dependent to independent. All dependency overrides are made on a case-by-case basis along with supporting documentation. The student must consult with the financial aid administrator to discuss circumstances and to request an appeal for review of dependency status form.

Once the documentation has been submitted, the financial aid administrator will review the paperwork. A notification will be delivered to the student within two weeks' time.

Please note that extenuating circumstances do not include financial hardship, a parent's unwillingness to provide financial support, parents not claiming the student as a dependent for income tax purposes, or a student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.