

## Professional Judgment Appeal

### Department of Education Guidance on PJ Appeals

The Office of Financial Aid can use their professional judgment to make adjustments on your Student Aid Report (SAR) because of special circumstances. You will have to provide enough documentation to support any adjustments. The Office of Financial Aid Administrator's decision as to whether or not to make changes is final and cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education. Listed below are examples of circumstances for which a professional judgment might be considered at UTHSC.

Other circumstances may be considered if warranted. Documentation must be attached in order for the request to be reviewed.

- If the student's EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) is already zero (0), the professional judgment will not be reviewed because the student is already eligible for the maximum federal financial aid available.

- ***Submission and approval of a professional judgment does not guarantee a change in student's financial aid eligibility.***

- **You must submit ALL documentation listed for the specific circumstance you are requesting. Additional documentation not listed may also be required. Please complete Steps 1, 2 & 3 on this form before submitting this form for review.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last First Student ID*

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
*City State Zip*

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Please identify the special circumstance(s) from the list below and check the applicable circumstance. \* **Additional documents may be requested.**\*

\_\_\_ **Employment/Income Change for Student and/or Spouse**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Letter from employer(s) on letterhead, certifying last date of employment or reduced work wages.
- Most recent pay stubs.
- Personal letter of explanation.

\_\_\_ **Employment/Income Change for Parent**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Letter from employer(s) on letterhead, certifying last date of employment or reduced work wages.
- Most recent pay stubs.
- Personal letter of explanation.

\_\_\_ **Divorce/Separation for Student**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Copy of Divorce Decree. If not legally separated, proof of different addresses (utility bills, lease indicating period of separation).
- Personal letter of explanation.

\_\_\_ **Divorce/Separation for Parent**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Copy of Divorce Decree. If not legally separated, proof of different address (utility bills, lease indicating period of separation)
- Personal letter of explanation

\_\_\_ **Deceased Spouse after filing FAFSA**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Copy of Death Certificate
- Personal letter of explanation

\_\_\_ **Deceased Parent after filing FAFSA**

- 2023 and 2024 Tax Return Transcript, W-2s, and/or 1099 statement.
- Copy of Death Certificate.
- Personal letter of explanation.

**Step 2:** For the person(s) affected by the special circumstances, please provide a typed detailed personal letter of explanation of the changes that occurred. The statement must include:

- **Employment/Income change** - Statement should explain the dates of employment, time periods in which reduction or loss of wages occurred.
- **Divorce/Separation** - Statement should include the date of the divorce or separation. It should also include amounts and dates on which any additional income is to be received. This may include alimony, child support, etc.
- **Decease** – Statement should include the time frame of FAFSA completion and when parent/spouse became decease.

**Step 3:** Certification

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Digital signatures cannot be accepted.***

If you have any questions, please call (901)448-7703 or email [fao@uthsc.edu](mailto:fao@uthsc.edu). You may submit this form in person, email, or mail. Digital signatures cannot be accepted.

**Financial Aid Office**  
910 Madison Avenue, Suite 530  
Memphis, TN 38163

Office Use Only

**Approved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rejected** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Director/Associate Director:**

**Date:**