



Cleveland State

COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Enrollment Services Center

3535 Adkisson Drive • Cleveland, TN 37320
Phone: (423) 473-2310 • Fax: (423) 614-8711

Professional Judgment Appeal

The Office of Financial Aid can use their professional judgment to make adjustments on your Student Aid Report (SAR) because of unusual 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 judgement might be considered at Cleveland State Community College. 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 maximum federal financial aid available.
- Submission and approval of a professional judgment does not guarantee a change in student's financial aid eligibility.

Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Address: _____
City State ZIP Code

Telephone: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Reason for Appeal

Please see the reason(s) that apply to your situation on the next page and furnish all documents requested.

By signing below, I certify that I have read the professional judgement information sheet. I also certify that all information and documentation given are accurate and true. I understand that misrepresentation of information may result in repayment of federal and state financial aid received. Faxes are not acceptable. This document requires actual signatures. Please sign and submit to the Financial Aid Office by mail or in person.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

- Please include all 2013 US Income tax documents and appropriate 2014-15 Verification Worksheet in addition to the required documentation below. Tax transcripts must be signed. If not, they will be held for a signature.
- After November 30, 2014, a professional judgment for loss of income will not be considered until 2014 tax transcripts and W-2 forms are received.

Reason for Professional Judgment Appeal and required documentation

1. A parent of a dependent student has been unemployed for at least 10 consecutive weeks in 2014.

- A statement from parent indicating the date, on which he/she became unemployed, the situation that led to the unemployment and any prospects he/she might have for employment in the near future.
- Verification of unemployment income or employment office denial of unemployment funds on official letterhead.
- Documentation of all earned income from January 1, 2014 to present. This documentation could be in the form of the latest check stub indication "year-to-date" earnings or a statement on official letterhead from previous employer(s) verifying 2013 earnings.
- Documentation of all other anticipated income the parent might have received or anticipates receiving from January 1 to December 31, 2014, both earned and untaxed.
- Signed copy of parents' 2013 Federal Tax transcript (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ) including copies of W-2 forms.

2. The death of a parent after a dependent student has filed the 2014-2015 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- Signed copy of parents' 2013 Federal Tax transcript (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ) including copies of W-2 forms.
- Copy of death certificate.

3. Divorce (or pending divorce) of parents after a dependent student has filed the 2014-15 FAFSA.

- Copy of official divorce decree (must be signed by a judge) or attorney statement of pending divorce.
- Signed copy of parents' 2013 Federal Tax transcript (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ), including copies of W-2 forms.
- Statement from parent with whom student resides (or parent contributing to more than half of student's support) indicating any

additional income that parent will receive in 2014 because of the divorce. Included would be such things as child support, alimony, ex-spouse's making house payment, etc.

4. Parent of dependent student had untaxed income in 2013 (Social Security, child support, alimony, unemployment, etc.) that has ceased.

- Statement from parents stating what the income was and why it ceased.
- Verification of the 2013 untaxed income on official letterhead.
- Verification from the source (*on official letterhead*) of the untaxed income documenting the date on which it ceased and the amount received in 2014.

5. An Independent student/spouse or Dependent student has been unemployed for at least 10 consecutive weeks in 2014.

- Statement from student indicating the date that he/she (*or spouse*) became unemployed, the situation that led to the unemployment, and any prospects there might be for employment in the near future.
- Verification of unemployment income or employment office denial of unemployment funds on official letterhead.
- Documentation of any earned income from January 1, 2014 to present. This documentation could be in the form of the last check stub indicating "year-to-date" earnings or statement on official letterhead from previous employer(s) verifying 2013 earnings.
- Documentation of all other anticipated income the student (*or spouse*) might have received or anticipates receiving from January 1 to December 31, 2014 both earned and untaxed.
- Signed copy of student's and spouse's 2013 Federal Tax transcript (*1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ*) including copies of W-2 forms.

6. The death of a spouse after an independent student has filed the 2014-15 FAFSA.

- Signed copy of 2013 Federal Tax transcript (*1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ*), including copies of W-2 forms.
- Copy of death certificate.

7. The divorce (*or pending divorce*) of an independent student who has already filed the 2014-15 FAFSA.

- A judge (*must sign copy of official divorce decree*) or attorney statement of pending divorce.
- Signed copy of student's and spouse's 2013 Federal Tax transcript (*1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ*) including W-2 forms.
- Statement from student indicating any additional income he/she will receive in 2014 because of the divorce. Included would be such things as child support, alimony, ex-spouse's making house payment, etc.

8. An Independent or Dependent student had untaxed income in 2013 (Social Security, child support, alimony, unemployment, etc.) that has ceased.

- Statement from student stating what the income was and why it ceased.
- Verification of the 2013 untaxed income on official letterhead.
- Verification from the source (*on official letterhead*) of the untaxed income documenting the date on which it ceased and the amount received in 2014.

9. Unusual necessary medical/dental expenses.

- Copy of Schedule A of the federal 1040 tax form.
- Cancelled checks or receipts showing amounts paid with statement from insurance company showing expenses were not reimbursed.
- Statement from pharmacy showing pharmaceuticals paid for by student/parent not covered by insurance—co-pays may be included.
- Statement from physician showing out-of-pocket payments, i.e. co-pays.

10. Disability of student/parent.

- Medical documentation of disability and any benefits received as a result of disability.
- Statement from employer showing earnings for the current year until student/spouse/parent became disabled.
- Unemployment compensation documentation of amounts and duration of payment(s).
- Income from all sources taxed and untaxed for the current calendar year.

11. Dependency status override.

Students not meeting federal criteria for independent status may request a professional judgement to override the requirements. Dependency overrides will be considered on a case-by-case basis in unusual circumstances.

Please indicate below the circumstances surrounding your request to be considered independent and attach documentation.

Documentation **must** be provided by at least two third party sources, preferably persons in an official capacity, such as high school guidance counselor, court, clergy, or social service representative. Letters must be on the organization's letterhead. If letterhead is not

available, all documents **must** be notarized. No exceptions.

Circumstances that do **NOT** merit dependency overrides include: (1) parents who refuse to contribute to the student's education; (2) parents who are unwilling to provide information on the application or verification form; (3) parents who are not claiming the student as dependent for tax purposes; (4) students who demonstrate total self-sufficiency; and (5) students living away from home.

Please attach a letter detailing your situation.

12. Other

If none of the above conditions apply to your situation, please explain your extenuating circumstances and provide documentation to substantiate your request.

Please attach a letter detailing your situation.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____