

Professional Judgment Policies and Procedures

Due to varying circumstances, students and parents often find the information they provided on the FAFSA no longer realistically reflects their ability to provide educational support. When this happens, students may choose to submit a Professional Judgment (PJ) appeal to our office requesting that their situation be reviewed.

It is the policy of Eastern Illinois University's Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships that we begin to use Professional Judgment to make adjustments to the EFC on May 1st for the upcoming award year. Please allow three weeks, after submitting all requested documentation, for appeal results. Please note, a successful appeal does not guarantee additional aid, and sometimes additional aid is not immediately available.

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

- The student's parent or spouse had passed away
- The family has incurred extraordinary medical/dental expenses
- The student's parent is attending college at least half-time in a degree-seeking program
- The student's parent has retired
- The student or the student's parents have separated or divorced
- The student's or parent(s)' income has been significantly reduced in 2014
- The student or parent(s) no longer receives untaxed benefits such as child support, or other sources of income
- The parent or student has received a one-time disbursement of funds (i.e. severance package, bonus, etc...) which were unavailable for educational expenses

To request a Professional Judgment, please submit the attached appeal form(s) and additional documentation to support your request to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Please include the student's name and EIU E# on all documentation. Upon receipt and review of the appeal form, additional documentation may be requested as needed. Please check your EIU Panthermail account frequently.

Please allow at least 4 - 6 weeks, after submitting all requested documentation, for appeal results. Please note, a successful appeal does not guarantee additional aid, and sometimes additional aid is not immediately available.

The deadline for appeals for students enrolled fall semester only is November 2nd, 2015. The deadline for students enrolled spring semester only or for both fall and spring semesters is April 1st, 2016.

For adjustments to income processed after January 1, 2016, students and parents will be asked to provide current 2015 tax forms or W-2s instead of estimates. Once again, this is to provide the Department of Education with the most current, up-to-date information possible.

Accuracy in your income projection(s) is very important. It is the policy of EIU's Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to not process future adjustments for any student who underestimates his/her household income by more than 15% for an adjustment calculation.