

## A Second Look: Appealing Your Aid Award When Family Finances Shift

If you or your parent(s) have experienced a change in circumstances or you feel that your FAFSA doesn't tell the whole story about your family's financial situation, your school might be able to reconsider your aid award!

Here are some examples of reasons or circumstances that can lead to a re-evaluation of your aid package:

- Job loss of a family member or an independent student
- Medical, dental, or nursing home expenses not covered by insurance
- Daycare expenses or tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school
- A student or family member becoming a dislocated worker
- Parent(s) enrolled at least half time in a degree, certificate, or other educational program
- A student becoming homeless

Your parent/guardian(s) receiving unemployment doesn't impact your eligibility for federal financial aid. For more information on displaced worker status, [click here](#).

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If any of these apply to you, follow these four steps:

### 1. [File your FAFSA](#).

If you've already submitted the FAFSA, skip to Step 2.

### 2. Share the change in your circumstances with the schools where you've been admitted.

The financial aid office will review the information to see if they can use "professional judgment" to adjust your award. They can consider situations that are extenuating and are having a significant impact on your family's finances. These forms are commonly called "professional judgment" or "special circumstances appeals."

### 3. Provide all the documents and information requested.

The schools you've been admitted to may ask you to provide some details about the changes in your situation or for documentation about what's happening. Send these documents as quickly as possible via email or a special upload link. If you aren't sure what information to include, ask your CBO or school counselor for help.

### 4. Keep an eye on your email.

After they have reviewed your circumstances, the school will email you to let you know if more information is needed or provide a decision about additional funds. If you don't hear from them in two weeks, check your online account or email or call to check in on the status of your financial aid appeal.

