



PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

After filing the FAFSA, some families may realize that their expected family contribution may not adequately reflect their current financial situation due to extenuating circumstances. The federal government allows schools to review any unique circumstances which are beyond the student's or family's control and may warrant special consideration.

Special circumstances may include:

- Change in employment status, income, or assets
- Change in housing status (e.g., homelessness)
- Tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school
- Medical, dental, or nursing home expenses not covered by insurance
- Child or dependent care expenses
- Severe disability of the student or other member of the student's household
- Other changes or adjustments that impact the student's costs or ability to pay for college.

Unusual circumstances do include:

- Human trafficking, as described in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.)
- Legally granted refugee or asylum status.
- Parental abandonment or estrangement.
- Student or parental incarceration.

Unusual circumstances do not include:

- Parents refuse to contribute to the student's education.
- Parents will not provide information for the FAFSA or verification.
- Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency.

Special or unusual circumstance adjustments are made on a case-by-case basis and do not guarantee any positive change in a student's federal financial aid. Documentation will be required and may vary based on individual situations. To determine eligibility for special or unusual circumstances, contact the Office of Administrative Services at oas@ozarks.edu or 479-979-1201.

Decisions on special circumstances and unusual circumstances vary by institution and cannot be appealed to the Department of Education.