

Davis Technical College

Student Financial Aid – Professional Judgment Policy

Effective Date: 11 November 2024

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy is established in compliance with federal regulations to promote institutional integrity in the administration of federal financial aid programs. Specifically, this policy addresses the institutional authority to use professional judgment on a case-by-case basis, to address dependency override, or a student's special or unusual circumstances.

2. References

- 2.1. FSA Handbook Application and Verification Guide
- 2.2. Davis Technical College Financial Aid Verification and C-Code Resolution Policy

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Student Aid Index (SAI)** the index that the Department of Education calculates, based on the FAFSA data, that is used to determine eligibility for need based aid.
- 3.2. **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** The application by which the US Department of Education determines a student's eligibility for federal financial aid.

4. Policy

- 4.1. **Professional Judgements Appeal:** in most cases a student must initiate an appeal with the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. If after meeting with the student, it is determined that an appeal is appropriate, the financial aid office will add the appropriate tasks (requests for documentation) for the student to complete in Student Forms.
- 4.2. **Dependency Override:** a dependent student who does not have contact with parents or cannot contact their parents may request to have their dependency status changed to independent on the FAFSA. Students must demonstrate that their situation is extenuating and provide documentation to support their circumstances.
 - 4.2.1. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid must notify a student of the process to appeal, within 60 days of receipt of the ISIR, where a student has indicated that they have unusual circumstances that prevents them from asking parent to complete FAFSA.
- 4.3. **Special Circumstance Appeal:** professional judgment can be used to adjust the data used to calculate the SAI in any of the following circumstances:
 - Loss of Wages (student, spouse, or parent)
 - Separation or divorce of parent or student after submission of application
 - Change in household size
 - Death of parent or spouse after submission of application
 - Loss of one-time income
 - Excessive medical expenses, as determined by federal regulations

- 4.4.** The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid does not accept professional judgments approved at other colleges.

5. Procedure

- 5.1.** Students requesting an appeal must provide the requested documentation through their financial aid portal. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid will review the documentation and decide on whether to approve the appeal. Any necessary adjustments to the FAFSA will be made in FAFSA Partner Portal.
- 5.2.** Students will be notified of the outcome once their appeal has been reviewed by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. If an appeal is denied a student may re-apply for the appeal if they have new or additional information.

6. Approvals and Notes

Expanded President's Council Approval: 11 November 2024
Revised: 27 June 2022
Revised: 26 July 2018
Reviewed: 20 October 2013
Effective Date: 01 July 2012
President's Council Approval: 02 April 2012