**Professional Judgements**

The Department of Education allows institutions to review, on a case by case basis, unusual circumstances that impact federal student aid eligibility. With adequate documentation the institution can make data element adjustments to the FAFSA that impact the Expected Family Contribution or EFC.

**Types of Professional Judgements:**

* SAI Appeal: An SAI Appeal is used in situations where the parent or student has had a change in their income. Types of situation that could be considered are:
  + Loss of employment.
  + Change in marital status.
  + One-time disbursement of income.
* Dependency Override:
  + Death of a parent or guardian.
  + Whereabouts of parent unknown.
  + Student is a victim of abuse.
* PLUS Automatic Override
  + Parents only income is from government assistance such as Social Security Disability.

**Acceptable documentation:**

* SAI Appeal:
  + Separation of employment letter.
  + Most recent pay stubs. Typically, the last 3 pay periods.
  + Award letter from Unemployment Office.
  + Signed written statement from individual appealing their SAI.
  + Court documentation.
  + Divorce papers.
  + Death certificate.
  + Other documents as determined.
* Dependency Override:
  + Signed written statement from student.
  + Written statement from a third party, preferably from a professional, familiar with the situation.
  + Court documentation.
  + Death certificate.
  + Police reports.
  + Other documentation as determined.
* PLUS Automatic Override:
  + Statements from agency stating monthly or weekly benefits.

**Common situations that DO NOT qualify for a PJ:**

* Circumvent verification. Verification must be completed before a PJ can even be considered.
* Parents not wanting to put their information on the FAFSA.
* Student living on their own.
* Student not being claimed on the parent’s taxes.