



Professional Judgement Policy

A Financial Aid Officer (FAO), on a case-by-case basis only, can adjust the data used to calculate a student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This adjustment is valid only at the Arizona College. Arizona College may perform Professional Judgment (PJ) to adjust elements of the student's FAFSA data and elements in the student's cost of attendance. The PJ changes for an EFC element are submitted electronically, via FAA Access to CPS Online by selecting "EFC adjustment requested" for the Professional Judgment field. The next ISIR will indicate "Professional Judgment Processed."

Arizona College requires the reason for the adjustment to be explained and documented. The student must explain the special circumstances that differentiate the student, not to conditions that exist for a whole class of students. A signed statement from the student detailing the situation along with documentation that substantiates what the statement says are required as part of the Professional Judgment submission. Examples of documentation include, but are not limited to, pay stubs, tax returns, unemployment notifications, etc.

Additionally, a student must provide a written explanation and supporting documentation for any element of the cost of attendance that he/she is seeking to have adjusted through the PJ process. An FAO must resolve any inconsistent or conflicting information shown on the output document before making any adjustments. An FAO's decision regarding adjustments is final and cannot be appealed to the US Department of Education as the statute states that nothing within it shall be construed as limiting the authority of aid administrators to make data adjustments for some situations. Professional Judgments cannot be used to waive general student eligibility requirements or to circumvent the intent of the law or regulations. The resulting EFC after a PJ must be used consistently for all FSA funds awarded to that student. In addition, verification must be completed before a Professional Judgment adjustment to any values used to calculate the EFC is applied. Arizona College is not permitted to make a Professional Judgment for a student after that student has ceased to be eligible.

When PJ is completed, the student's financial aid award package will be recalculated to include the updated awards. All documentation collected in the PJ process will be retained. The student must reapply for PJ each award year even if the student's situation has not changed.



Dependency Override Policy

A Financial Aid Officer (FAO), on a case-by-case basis only, can adjust the data used to calculate a student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This adjustment is valid only at the Arizona College. Arizona College may adjust elements of the student's FAFSA data to make a determination that a dependent student is independent. The dependency override changes are submitted electronically, via FAA Access to CPS Online by selecting "FAA override from dependent to independent" for the dependency override field. The next ISIR will indicate "Dependency Override Processed."

Arizona College requires the reason for the adjustment to be explained and documented. The student must explain the special circumstances that differentiate the student, not to conditions that exist for a whole class of students. A signed statement from the student detailing the situation along with documentation that substantiates what the statement says are required as part of the dependency override submission. Examples of documentation include, but are not limited to, statements from other family members, statements from close friends, statements from clergy, teachers, etc.

An FAO's decision regarding adjustments is final and cannot be appealed to the US Department of Education as the statute states that nothing within it shall be construed as limiting the authority of aid administrators to make data adjustments for some situations. Dependency overrides cannot be used to waive general student eligibility requirements or to circumvent the intent of the law or regulations. The resulting EFC after a dependency override must be used consistently for all FSA funds awarded to that student. Arizona College is not permitted to make a dependency override for a student after that student has ceased to be eligible.

When the dependency override is completed, the student's financial aid award package will be recalculated to include the updated awards. All documentation collected in the dependency override process will be retained. The student must reapply for dependency override each award year even if the student's situation has not changed.