



606 W. Main | Highland, KS 66035 | [www.highlandcc.edu](http://www.highlandcc.edu) |   

## Special & Unusual Circumstances

The Financial Aid Department understands students and their families may at times experience unique situations, and, as much as possible, we are here to help.

Financial Aid Administrators may adjust, with appropriate documentation, FAFSA elements or cost of attendance allowances that are specific to a student's situation.

There are two categories of unique situations: special and unusual circumstances.

**Special circumstances** are financial situations that support a change to the [cost of attendance](#) or expected family contribution (EFC)/student aid index (SAI) calculation.

Examples of special circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Change in employment status, income, or assets;
- Change in housing status (e.g., homelessness);
- Change in family size due to divorce, marriage, death, adoption, or other circumstance;
- Tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school;
- Additional family members enrolled in college;
- Medical, dental, or nursing home expenses not covered by insurance;
- Child or dependent care expenses; and
- Severe disability or illness of the student or other member of the student's household.

**Unusual circumstances** are conditions that support a change to a student's dependency status based on a unique situation.

Examples of unusual circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Human trafficking, as described in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000;
- Legally granted refugee or asylum status;
- Parental abandonment or estrangement; or
- Student or parental incarceration.

Please note Unusual or Special 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.

**Process for Appeal:** Students who find themselves with special or unusual circumstances should complete the [Special Financial Circumstances Appeal OR Unusual \(Dependency\) Circumstances Appeal](#) and contact the Financial Aid office to speak with a financial aid counselor. The counselor will research the student's situation and verify the information presented by the student. Additional information or documentation may be required from the student. Notice of the need for any additional documentation or a decision will be sent to the student within 10 business days.