

**2025-2026 – Professional Judgment Appeal**Upload: [goucher.edu/faupload](https://goucher.edu/faupload)  
Fax: 410-337-6504

Please note that if your situation is you are homeless or at risk of homelessness, then e-mail us ([financialaid@goucher.edu](mailto:financialaid@goucher.edu)) for additional instructions instead of submitting this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Last Name\_\_\_\_\_  
Student First Name\_\_\_\_\_  
Goucher ID # (or last 4 of SSN)\_\_\_\_\_  
Best Phone # for Student\_\_\_\_\_  
Student E-Mail\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name\_\_\_\_\_  
Best Phone # for Parent\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent E-Mail

Families may experience circumstances that warrant basing financial aid eligibility on 2024 or projected 2025 income, rather than the federally required 2023 “Prior-Prior Year” income information. This is usually due to a significant recent family event in 2024 or 2025, such as the loss of a job, loss of untaxed income or benefits, one-time increase of income in 2023, death of parent/spouse, or other extraordinary, unusual expenses.

If you feel that you have extenuating circumstances not addressed on your 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you may complete this form and submit the required documentation to request a reevaluation of your financial aid eligibility. Appeal requests, if approved, are granted on a one-time, case-by-case basis.

**Situations that WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED:**

- Voluntary private secondary tuition
- Car payments/insurance
- Personal bankruptcy
- Reduction of business income
- Loss of home equity
- Consumer debt

**Instructions:**

- Confirm that Goucher has received a 2025-2026 FAFSA, including any required documents.
  - Current students can confirm this on the “Documents” screen [in Net Partner](#).
  - New students who have not yet deposited should check their Admissions & Financial Aid Status Portal (<https://apply.goucher.edu/account>) to view their Financial Aid Checklist.
- Review pages 2 & 3 and indicate the situation for which you are requesting a professional judgment review.
- For all situations, complete the asset clarification section at the bottom of page 3.
- On page 4, type a clear and brief explanation and sign the Statement of Understanding. (You may attach a supplemental document, but please keep your explanation limited to a single page or less.)
- You must also submit a 2025-2026 Verification Form, [available on our web page](#). (Undergraduate students who provide parent information should submit the Dependent verification form.)

**Response and Turnaround Time:**

Please allow at least 4 weeks for a response. Federal regulations require us to respond to submissions within 60 days of the initial submission date. **Please make sure you submit this form with all appropriate required documentation.** If additional documentation is needed, then it must be submitted promptly when requested. Failure to submit any required documents within 60 days of the original submission date will result in a denial. If denied due to unsubmitted documentation, the student may submit a new form to reapply once all documentation is available.

## CHECK THE BOX BELOW THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SITUATION

### ☐ Unemployment/Dislocated Worker or Loss of Income after January 1, 2023

Examples include: Termination/layoff, significant reduction in work hours or income from work. Loss of child support or other income/benefit. *A reduction of business income will not be considered.*

#### **Required Documents:**

- Signed and dated letter (on company letterhead) from employer listing the following: last date of employment, total earnings from January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in question to the last date of employment.
- Copy of last pay stub.
- Copy of severance/benefits/unemployment eligibility, such as benefits statement or letter from unemployment office.
- Any appropriate documentation of termination of benefits/support/income.
- Statement of expected 2025 wages and unemployment compensation. Parents of dependent students should specifically submit the [Parent 2025 Estimated Income form available on our web page](#).
- Both 2023 & 2024 federal tax documentation. May submit signed copies of federal returns and schedules, or an [IRS Tax Return Transcript](#). Documentation is required even if tax information was imported into the FAFSA.
- Copies of all 2023 & 2024 parent W-2 forms (if dependent) or student & their spouse's W-2 forms (if independent).

### ☐ Unusual Medical and Dental Expenses

Examples include: Expenses incurred between January 2023 and the present that are not covered by insurance. *Unpaid bills and voluntary medical/dental procedures will not be considered.*

2023 Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2024 Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Required Documents:**

- Itemized list of expenses clearly showing **only payments specific to the total(s) indicated above**. Must be accompanied by proof of out-of-pocket payment (receipts) made by student, spouse (if married), parents (if dependent).
- Both 2023 & 2024 federal tax documentation. May submit signed copies of federal returns and schedules, or an [IRS Tax Return Transcript](#). Documentation is required even if tax information was imported into the FAFSA, and should be showing medical expenses on the appropriate schedule.
- **Medical expenses must exceed 11% of Adjusted Gross Income and be clearly documented as out-of-pocket.**

### ☐ Recent Separation or Divorce of Parent or Student

Examples include: Parent (if dependent) or student (if independent) marital status changed after the 2025-2026 FAFSA was filed. *Parties in question living in the same house will not be considered.*

(For dependent students) Name of parent who provides the most financial support: \_\_\_\_\_

Exact date (MM/DD/YYYY) of separation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Required Documents:**

- Copy of separation agreement, divorce decree, or substantial evidence (mortgage/lease/utility bill) proving parents (if dependent) or spouse (if independent) live in separate residences.
- Copy of all parent W-2 forms (if dependent) or student & their spouse's W-2 forms (if independent).
- For any year with a jointly-filed return, a [completed "Parent Tax Separation" form](#).
- Both 2023 & 2024 federal tax documentation. May submit signed copies of federal returns and schedules, or an [IRS Tax Return Transcript](#). Documentation is required even if tax information was imported into the FAFSA.

## ☐ Recent Death of Parent or Spouse

Examples include: Parent (if dependent) or spouse (if independent) deceased after the 2025-2026 FAFSA was filed.

### Required Documents:

- Copy of death certificate.
- Copy of all parent W-2 forms (if dependent) or student & their spouse's W-2 forms (if independent).
- For any year with a jointly-filed return, a [completed "Parent Tax Separation" form](#).
- Both 2023 & 2024 federal tax documentation. May submit signed copies of federal returns and schedules, or an [IRS Tax Return Transcript](#). Documentation is required even if tax information was imported into the FAFSA.

## ☐ One-Time, Non-Recurring Increase of Income after January 1, 2023

### Required Documents:

- Documentation of the amount and nature of the one-time non-recurring disbursement.
- Both 2023 & 2024 federal tax documentation. May submit signed copies of federal returns and schedules, or an [IRS Tax Return Transcript](#). Documentation is required even if tax information was imported into the FAFSA.

## ☐ Impacted by Federally Declared Disaster

If the federally declared disaster also resulted in any of the other scenarios, such as unemployment, please check off that section as well and provide those documents.

### Required Documents:

- Any third-party documentation showing financial impact to the family directly caused by the disaster.

## REQUIRED FOR ALL SITUATIONS

### Clarification of Assets

Regardless of the special situation, please clarify asset information for the student and parent(s). Please make sure to provide the parent name. Parent 1 and Parent 2 should match who was identified as contributors on the FAFSA. Indicate what was correct at the time of submitting the FAFSA.

Type of Asset	Student	Parent 1 Name:	Parent 2 Name:
Cash/Checking/Savings	_____	_____	_____
Investments Net worth including real estate (do not include the home in which you live)	_____	_____	_____
Businesses/Farms Market value of land, buildings, machinery, equipment, inventory, etc.	_____	_____	_____

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**TYPE BELOW A CLEAR AND BRIEF EXPLANATION OF YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES**

BE SURE TO LIST SPECIFIC DATES – You may send a separate document, but please limit explanation to 1 page.

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

- I/we certify that all information provided, and all supporting documentation submitted, is true and accurate.
- I/we understand that completion of this form does not guarantee additional aid, and payment deadlines and procedures need to be adhered to during the review process to avoid potential late fees.
- I/we understand that all required documents must be submitted with the appeal, and any follow-up documents must be submitted immediately upon request.
- I/we understand that failure to submit all necessary documents, including follow-up documents, within 60 days of the original submission date of this form will result in an automatic denial.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent Signature (Required for students w/ Dependent status.)

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Date

(ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES NOT ACCEPTED. Please print & sign in ink, scan as a PDF, and then upload or fax.)

**Please submit this form with all required documents as a single complete submission.**