

Appeal for Additional Aid – Understanding the Process

We in the Wheaton Financial Aid office understand that sometimes unexpected circumstances arise that make the information reported on the financial aid applications a poor reflection of a family's current financial situation. In these circumstances (some examples of which include job loss, death, severe illness, or divorce), the Department of Education gives us the authority to adjust a family's financial information to more accurately portray their situation, allowing the student to be considered for additional financial aid.

If you have an unusual circumstance of this nature and would like to be considered for additional aid, please follow the steps below.

Steps in Filing an Appeal

- 1.) Submit Financial Applications as Requested** - Even if you think you may be eligible for an appeal, you must first file a FAFSA and Wheaton Institutional Financial Aid Application with current information exactly as it appears on your tax documents, as well as provide any additional documentation that is requested. You will then be provided a financial aid package based on those figures.
- 2.) Contact the Student's Financial Aid Counselor** – If, after viewing the award package, you feel that your circumstance prevents Wheaton from being an affordable option, you should contact the student's financial aid counselor. The counselor will then help you determine the best course of action regarding your situation, including filing an appeal if appropriate. We encourage you to be as open about your situation as possible when speaking with your counselor as you can be assured that any information that you provide will be held in the strictest confidence.
- 3.) Provide Requested Documentation** – The student's counselor will be able to determine what documentation will be necessary to present your appeal to the Appeal Committee. These documents will fall into one of two categories.
 - a. Verification Documents – Before we reconsider an appeal for additional aid we will ensure that information used for the initial award was accurate. You may need to provide IRS verified tax information, W2s, Verification Worksheets and/or other documents as requested.
 - b. Appeal Documents – These are documents that support the reason for your appeal. This may include things like an Appeal Application or a Projected Income Form, as well as outside documentation such as copies of medical bills or pay stubs. The documents you will be asked to provide will depend on the nature of your individual situation.
- 4.) Await a Decision** – After receiving all requested information, the counselor will prepare your appeal for presentation to the Appeal Committee, who will make the final decision. Your counselor should be able to give you an approximate timeline of when you can expect to receive the committee's decision. Please be patient with the Appeal Committee as they consider the details of your request. The appeal process is very complex and it may take several days or even weeks before a decision is made. We realize how important the committee's decision is to you and will do our best to provide you with the results as soon as possible.