UC San Diego

Professional Judgement: Special Circumstance – SAI Appeal Instructions

Completing a Professional Judgement: Special Circumstance – SAI Calculation Appeal is the process of allowing students/families to address income changes in the current calendar year, versus the previous year. The income change may result in a revision to the Student Aid Index (SAI), and any change in the SAI will help our office determine whether a student becomes eligible for additional financial aid. Students/families can also get an estimate of these changes by using the Financial Aid Estimator (ucsd.edu) which provides an estimate of the net price for an academic year at UC San Diego.

Does your FAFSA/ DREAM ACT SUBMISSION SUMMARY reflect a Student Aid Index (SAI) of -$1500 to 0?
If so, you have already been offered the maximum amount of Financial Aid available at UC San Diego. Submitting a Professional Judgement: Special Circumstance – SAI Calculation Appeal at this time cannot further decrease your SAI and therefore will not make a student eligible for additional financial aid. If a student's expenses exceed the estimated cost of attendance, then students can consider submitting a Special Circumstance - Cost of Attendance Appeal for additional federal loan options.

CHANGES WARRANTING A REVIEW ARE LIMITED TO THE SPECIFIC SITUATIONS BELOW:

- Layoff/Unemployment
- Disability
- Retirement
- Death of parent on FAFSA or DREAM application
- Divorce/Separation
- Child or spousal support
- Out of pocket medical costs not covered by insurance from between January and December 2026 for members included in the number of people in the household on the FAFSA or DREAM application. Expenses must not exceed medical expenses as allowed by financial aid regulations.

You will be notified by Financial Aid and Scholarships when your appeal has been processed, or if any additional information is required.

Please note: if selected for verification, your appeal will not be reviewed until after verification has been completed.

The Document Submission Tool allows you to electronically submit documents directly to the UC San Diego Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

Please review the following before continuing to the Submission Tool:

If you have not already done so, you must first create an account in the Document Submission Tool before you can request an appeal. Instructions and a link to the Document Submission Tool are available in your Financial Aid Portal under the **Financial Aid** page. Be sure to select the **2026–27 aid year**. After your Document Submission Tool account has been created, you can access it at any time by logging into the Financial Aid Portal, selecting **Financial Aid** from the **Financial Tools** tab, and navigating to the **Important Info** section.

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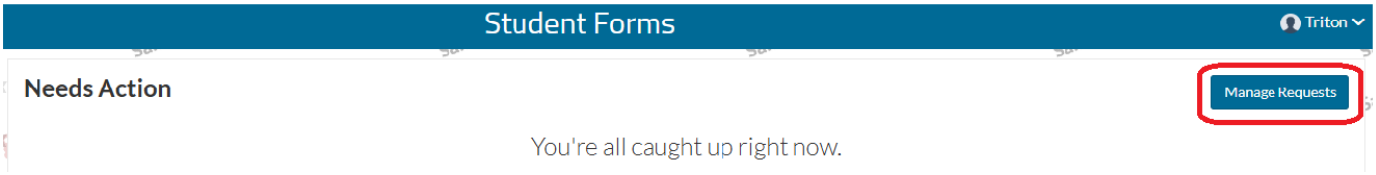
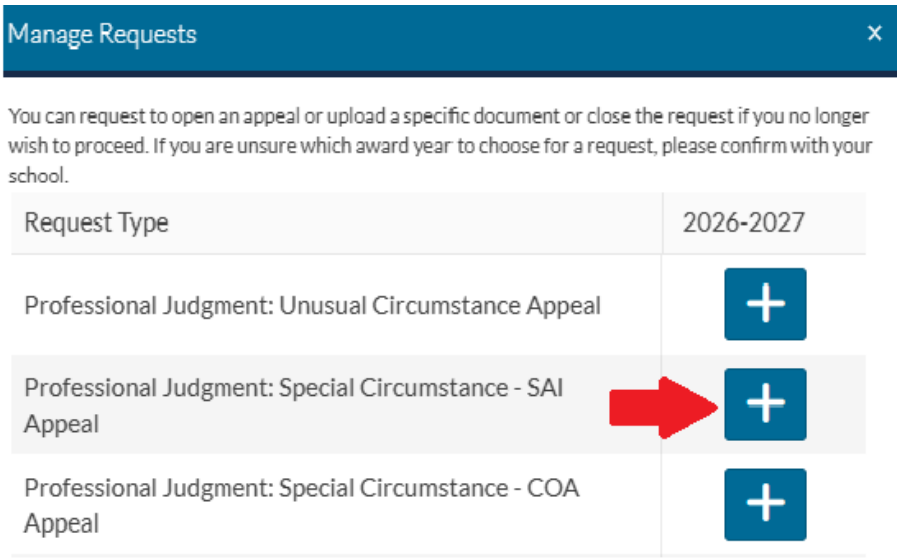
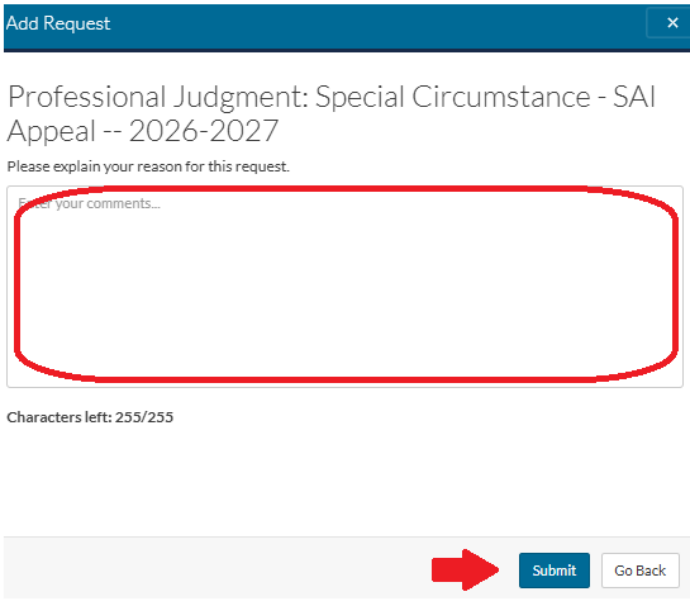
1. Once you are logged on, you may request an appeal by selecting the “Manage Requests” button.



2. Then select the “+” for “**Professional Judgement: Special Circumstance – SAI Calculation Appeal**” and the applicable school year.



3. When requesting the Professional Judgement: Special Circumstance – SAI Calculation Appeal, you will need to select at least one of the reasons for the request and an explanation. This is not your appeal statement, so please keep your explanation brief.



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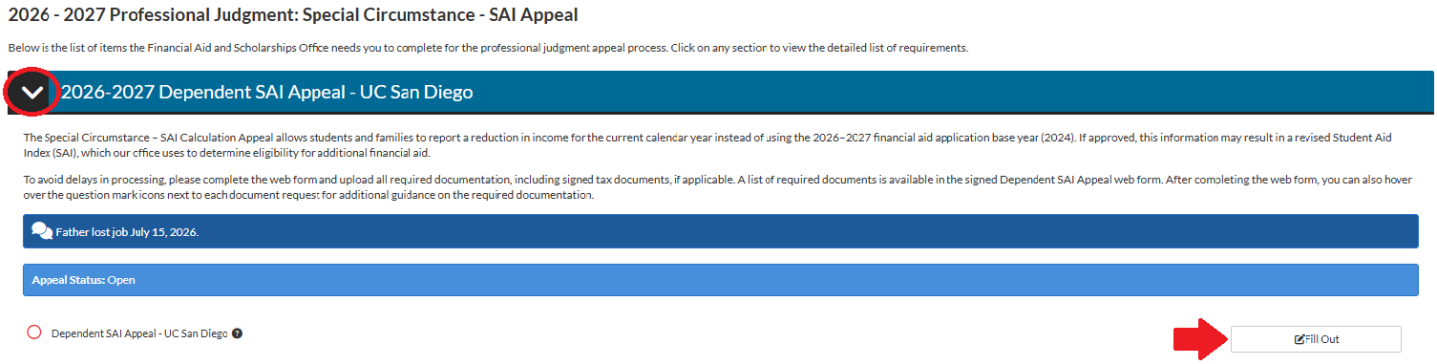
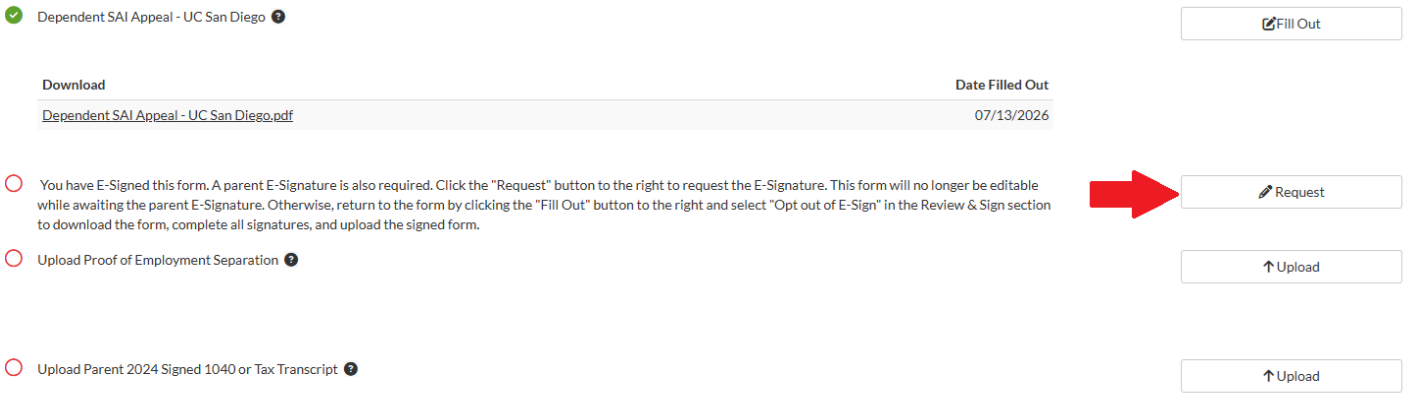
4. Click "**Fill Out**" and complete the appeal.

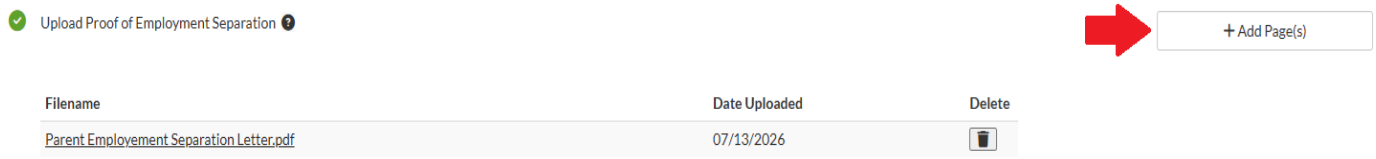
    a. Documentation requirements are noted in the appeal instructions.
    b. Please upload required supporting documents for your appeal (i.e. taxes, bills, additional statements, etc.)



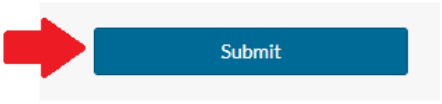
5. Dependent student appeals require a parent signature. Press "**Request**" to send your parent an email request for their signature.



6. Upload any required supporting documentation by pressing "**Upload**" and then "**Add Page(s)**" for more than one document. If you need additional information on the requested document, you can review the web form or hover over the question mark on the requested documents



7. Click “**Submit**” and “**Finish**” once all tasks have been completed.



You will receive an email once your appeal has been reviewed and a decision has been made. Please note that appeal processing is expected to begin in late Fall. In the meantime, you should plan to use the financial aid included in your initial aid offer to meet your billing deadline.