



Portland State
UNIVERSITY

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYER'S GUIDE

FEDERAL WORK STUDY

Portland State University

Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for becoming a Federal Work Study Community Partner with Portland State! This guide will clarify program guidelines and help answer questions around employing a FWS student from PSU.

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program is designed to provide part-time employment to undergraduate and graduate students who need help meeting the costs of higher education. As part of their financial aid package, students receive a Federal Work Study award. This award is the gross amount of income that a student can earn through FWS employment. Of this gross amount, federal funds pay for 75% of the student's wages. The partner organization pays 25% of the wages, in addition to the administrative costs (worker's compensation, social security, etc.) that are estimated at 3 to 11%.

PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS OF FWS EMPLOYMENT

Federal regulations state that FWS employment must be governed by employment conditions, including pay, that are appropriate and reasonable in terms of: types of work, geographical region, employee proficiency, and any applicable federal, state or local laws.

Work-study employment may NOT:

- impair existing service contracts, or
- fill jobs that are vacant because the employer's regular employees are on strike, or
- displace current employees (replacement is interpreted as displacement), or
- involve the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of a facility used or to be used for religious worship or sectarian instruction, or
- primarily benefit members of a limited membership organization such as a credit union, fraternal or religious order, or a cooperative, or
- involve any partisan or nonpartisan political activity associated with a faction in an election for public or party office, or
- require a student's political support or affiliation as a condition of employment, or
- involve lobbying on the federal level, or
- include employment for the US Department of Education, or
- be granted as a result of family ties (nepotism), or
- be used for organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions.

For information about ending a student's employment, visit PSU Human Resources' ["What if it doesn't work out?"](#) page.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR THE FEDERAL WORK STUDY PROGRAM

Students awarded Federal Work Study must be admitted and registered as students at Portland State University. Awards are generally granted for the standard academic year (September 16 - June 15). Students must be enrolled at least half time each term to remain eligible. Continuing students may request permission to begin earning their award during summer term

Confirming Student Eligibility

Students eligible for work study must present their Certificate of Eligibility or award offer to you for verification of their FWS eligibility. **Do not hire students without a Certificate of Eligibility or a FWS award on their Award Letter.** FWS is a limited fund and not all interested students can be awarded. Eligible students can find their certificate and award letter on their Financial Aid Dashboard in their student portal. Keep the eligibility documentation in your files when you hire a student.

Students must reapply for FWS every year and they may not continue working beyond June 15 without a new FWS award. A new hire form must be completed each year for each student. Do not allow students to work beyond June 15 without a hire form for the new award year.

Students may work during Summer term if they qualify. They must apply with the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) and if eligible will receive a Summer Certificate of Eligibility.

Changes in FWS Eligibility

A student's FWS eligibility can change over the course of the academic year and the FWS award may be reduced or canceled. OFA will notify you if a student's award has been changed or canceled.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Federal regulations require position descriptions to be updated annually and retained by OFA. Position descriptions are required to contain these [13 elements](#). **Students may not earn FWS funds for jobs not on file with OFA.** The FWS award year runs from September 16 of one year to June 15 of the next. After June 15, new job descriptions must be submitted to financial aid for the upcoming award year.

When completing or updating the job description, please give as much information as possible concerning the duties, hours, schedule, and requirements. A well-written, detailed job description will ensure students who apply are aware of your requirements and expectations.

ADVERTISING JOBS

Once your FWS contract with PSU has been executed, you'll work with the University Career Center to [post the opportunity](#) in the online jobs portal, Handshake. The Career Center will include your vacancy along with other FWS postings in the Career Center's on-line jobs (www.pdx.edu/careers).

INTERVIEWING AND HIRING STUDENTS

For each student you hire, please complete an Off-Campus Hire/Change form and return it by email to mknauss@pdx.edu. Students must also complete new hire paperwork (I-9, W-4, etc) at the PSU Human Resources office within 3 business days of being hired, if they have not done so previously.

We encourage you to interview our students and consider their skills and qualifications for your work-study position as you would an applicant for a regular position. **If you offer a position to a student, they may not begin working until all hiring paperwork has been completed and confirmed by the OFA and PSU's Human Resources. .**

Re-hiring Students

FWS is awarded annually and students need to be rehired each year. All work study authorizations end on June 15. You must notify us of your intent to rehire any students and they cannot continue working until we have confirmed their eligibility to continue beyond June 15.

PAYING STUDENT EMPLOYEES

FWS jobs are paid on an hourly basis at a rate equal to or greater than the Portland-metro minimum wage (\$15.95/hour as of July 1, 2024). For more information on student employee compensation, please visit [this PSU Office of Human Resource's page](#).

The employer pays 25% of the work-study student's salary, plus 3-11% administrative costs (which may include Social Security taxes). FWS Students are generally eligible for a [FICA exemption](#). Whenever the student is not exempt from paying FICA, the organization will have to pay the required employer's share of the FICA.

To estimate how many hours per week students may work to use their FWS funds, please refer to the following the formula:

Work-study award amount ÷ Hourly Salary ÷ Number of weeks = Number of hours per week.

For example, if a student's award was \$4000 and they were planning to work for 25 weeks, and their hourly salary was \$16.00/hour:

$$\text{\$4000 FWS award} \div \text{\$16.00/hour} \div \text{25 weeks} = \text{10 hours per week}$$

Students complete timesheets on Banweb and submit them electronically to the Student Employment Coordinator. **Students should submit their timesheets no later than the 16th of each month.** If timesheets are turned in late, the student's pay may be delayed. If time sheets are turned in late in June when we are closing our books for the fiscal year, the organization may have to pay 100% of the student's salary and a 5% administrative charge.

Portland State University Human Resources produces the student's paycheck. Students are encouraged to set up a direct deposit with the PSU Human Resources Office.

STUDENT HOURS AND SCHEDULE

Student employees are students first and cannot be scheduled to work during class time. FWS students should not work more than 20 hours a week, but based on their award may often work 5-10 hours/week. FWS does not cover over time and when students exceed the 20 hour limitation they are longer eligible for the FICA exemption.

MONITORING STUDENT EARNINGS

You, as the employer, are responsible for monitoring student earnings. The student's award letter and/or Certificate of Eligibility confirms the student's total award amount at the time of issue but remember that this amount can change. Employers will be notified of any award changes. Students MAY NOT have gross earnings that exceed the total amount of their FWS award.

Students may have more than one FWS job. In these cases, communication will be key to prevent accidental over-earning.

Fully Earned Awards

When the FWS award is fully earned, their position will be terminated. You may elect to hire the student as an employee at your agency and pay them a regular wage on your payroll.

As noted in the contract, if we receive timesheets after a student has fully earned their FWS award, you must pay 100% of the salary and a 5% administrative charge.

Billing

PSU billing will send you an invoice usually within 4-6 weeks of receiving a signed timesheet. As the contract indicates, your organization has agreed to pay the university, within 30 days of receipt of invoice, those costs representing your share of wages and the payroll assessments. The monthly bills represent the prior monthly pay period's expenditures.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Portland State University supports equal opportunity in admissions, education, employment, and use of facilities by prohibiting discrimination in those areas based on race, color, creed or religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

CONTACT INFORMATION

We're here to help make your experience with federal work-study students a success. Please contact us if you have questions.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

Matt Knauss, Student Employment Coordinator

mknauss@pdx.edu

PAYROLL QUESTIONS:

Human Resources Office

Portland State University

(503) 725-4926

payroll@pdx.edu

FWS AWARD QUESTIONS:

Office of Student Financial Aid

Portland State University

(503) 725-3461

askfa@pdx.edu

CONTRACT QUESTIONS:

Contracting and Procurement Services

Portland State University

(503) 725-3441

contract@pdx.edu