

## Federal Work Study Overview

### Program Description

Federal Work Study (FWS) helps students finance their college education through part-time employment. There are approximately 3,400 institutions in the U.S. that participate in the program. Your total FWS award depends on your application date, your level of need, and the funding level of your school. If funds are not available, you may be put on a waiting list as long as you are eligible. Students must file a *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* as part of the application process for FWS assistance. The FAFSA can be completed on the Web at: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

### FWS Eligibility Requirements for Students and Employers

Visit your financial aid office to find detailed information on eligibility, hiring, and payroll procedures for positions qualifying to use FWS funds.

### Wages

The hourly wage cannot be below federal minimum wage and may actually be higher depending on where and what type of work you perform. The amount of money earned cannot be more than your FWS award. You will need to check with your individual institution to determine the percentage of salary paid by organizations outside the university, as each university provides restrictions on the way it allocates funds. In most cases, the school or the employer will pay a 30 to 50 percent share of a student's wages. In some cases, for high-need positions, the federal share may be as high as 100 percent.

### Job Positions

Giving back to the community is a key tenet of the program with a requirement that universities use at least 7 percent of their allocation to support students working in community service jobs. Students may be employed by your university, a federal, state, or local public agency, a private nonprofit organization, or a private for-profit organization.

## Hours

Typically, students can work 8 to 20 hours per week; however, some universities have restrictions on the number of hours. Also, there may be restrictions that pertain to maintaining certain grades to be eligible.

### Steps to take if you are eligible for FWS:

1. Check your award amount to help you to determine the hours you are able to work.
2. Determine where FWS jobs are posted. You should receive a letter from your university. If not, check with the financial aid office and look for the student employment office. Apply for jobs of interest.
3. If there are no jobs of direct impact to your career, look and apply for jobs that have a community service component at a federal, state, or local public agency, a private nonprofit organization, or a private for profit organization.
4. If you get the offer beyond the university, bring up the fact that you have FWS funds and negotiate a wage.
5. Follow the procedure at your university to get the employer approved.
6. Complete all paperwork required of your university to get on the payroll.