

FIN006: Work-Study Program Guidelines

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August 15, 2023	FIN006

1. Overview and Purpose

This document outlines the policies and procedures for the Federal Work-Study (FWS) and Westfield State University (WSU) Work-Study programs. These programs provide part-time employment opportunities for eligible students to help meet their educational expenses. The primary purpose of the work-study program is to provide financial assistance through meaningful work experience, which can enhance a student's academic and career goals.

This document covers eligibility requirements, the process for finding and securing a work-study position, guidelines on work hours and payment, and the responsibilities of student employees. All student employees and their supervisors are expected to be familiar with and adhere to these guidelines.

2. Eligibility Requirements

To participate in the Federal or University Work-Study program, students must meet the following criteria:

- **Financial Need:** Students must demonstrate financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). A FAFSA must be filed annually by the priority deadline of March 1st.
- **Enrollment Status:** Students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 credit hours for undergraduates, 5 credit hours for graduates) in a degree-seeking program at Westfield State University.

- **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP):** Students must be meeting the university's SAP standards, which include maintaining a minimum GPA and completing a certain percentage of attempted credits. SAP is reviewed at the end of each academic year.
- **Work-Study Award:** Students must have a work-study award as part of their financial aid package. Award amounts vary based on financial need and available funding.

Students can check their eligibility and award status through the university's student portal.

3. Job Search and Placement

Securing a work-study position is a competitive process and is the responsibility of the student. The Student Financial Services Office maintains an online job board with a list of available on-campus and off-campus positions.

3.1. Finding a Position

1. **Access the Job Board:** Log in to the Westfield State University student portal and navigate to the “Financial Aid” section to find the “Work-Study Job Board.”
2. **Search for Jobs:** Browse available positions. Students can filter by job type, department, or location.
3. **Apply for Positions:** Follow the application instructions for each position. This typically involves submitting a resume and a brief cover letter. Students may apply for multiple positions.

3.2. Hiring Process

1. **Interviews:** Departments will contact qualified applicants to schedule interviews.
2. **Job Offers:** If a department wishes to hire a student, they will extend a formal job offer.
3. **Hiring Paperwork:** Once a student accepts a job offer, they must complete the necessary hiring paperwork with the Student Financial Services Office before

their first day of work. This includes the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification form, W-4 tax withholding form, and a direct deposit authorization.

4. Work Hours, Pay, and Timesheets

4.1. Work Hours

- Students may not work more than **20 hours per week** during the academic year (fall and spring semesters).
- During official university breaks (winter and spring break), students may work up to 40 hours per week, provided their supervisor approves and the hours do not exceed their total work-study award.
- Students are not permitted to work during their scheduled class times.

4.2. Pay Rates

Pay rates for work-study positions are based on the skill level and responsibilities of the job. The current pay rates are as follows:

Level	Pay Rate (per hour)	Description
I	\$15.00	Positions requiring minimal prior experience or training.
II	\$16.50	Positions requiring some specialized skills or prior experience.
III	\$18.00	Positions requiring advanced skills, significant responsibility, or a high level of independence.

4.3. Timesheets

- Students are responsible for accurately recording all hours worked on their electronic timesheet, which is accessible through the student portal.
- Timesheets must be submitted for supervisor approval by the end of the day on the last day of each pay period.
- Pay periods are bi-weekly, and a detailed pay schedule is available on the Student Financial Services website.

5. Student Employee Responsibilities

As a work-study employee, students are expected to:

- Perform their job duties to the best of their ability.
- Adhere to their work schedule and be punctual.
- Communicate with their supervisor in advance if they are unable to work their scheduled hours.
- Maintain confidentiality, as many positions involve access to sensitive information.
- Adhere to all university policies and procedures.
- Monitor their work-study earnings to ensure they do not exceed their total award amount.

Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from the position.

6. Contact Information

For questions about the Work-Study program, please contact the Student Financial Services Office:

- **Location:** Westfield Administration Building, Room 210
- **Phone:** (555) 123-4567
- **Email:** financialservices@westfieldstate.edu
- **Office Hours:** Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

7. Related Policies and Resources

- [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) Policy](#)
- [Student Employment Handbook](#)
- [FAFSA Website](#)

8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Can I have more than one work-study job?

A: No, students are only permitted to have one work-study position at a time.

Q: What happens if I earn my full work-study award before the end of the year?

A: Once you have earned your full award, you must stop working. Your supervisor will be notified when you are approaching your limit. In some cases, a department may be able to continue employing a student using their own departmental funds, but this is not guaranteed.

Q: Is my work-study income taxable?

A: Yes, earnings from the work-study program are considered taxable income and must be reported on your federal and state tax returns.

Q: Can I receive my work-study funds directly without working?

A: No, work-study funds are earned through employment and are paid in the form of a paycheck for hours worked. They are not applied directly to your student account.

9. Revision History

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
08/15/2023	1.0	Student Financial Services	Initial document creation.
10/28/2024	1.1	Student Financial Services	Updated pay rates for the 2024-2025 academic year.