

**WORK STUDY  
INFORMATION GUIDE  
FOR STUDENTS**



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## **What is Federal Work-Study?**

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program is a government subsidized student employment program designed to assist students in financing their post-secondary education. In order to be eligible for Work-Study, students must document financial need every year by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible.

## **Advantages of Work-Study Jobs**

- Students have the benefit of working in an environment suited to their skills, preferences and possible career goals.
- Students and Work-Study employers arrange a work schedule around the student's class schedule. The student will not be asked to work during class times, and employers are flexible in allowing time off for studying for exams.
- Work-Study wages are **NOT** counted towards next year's student contribution for financial aid. Wages from non-Work-Study positions **will** be counted towards next year's student contribution for financial aid and may reduce eligibility for need based financial aid.
- Professional experience and contacts are developed. These can be valuable when beginning a career or applying to graduate school.

**Work Study gives you an opportunity to “earn as you learn.”**

**Note:** Studies have consistently shown that students who work no more than 20 hours per week do better academically than students who do not work. Additional time demands appear to force students to manage their time more efficiently, thus necessitating a higher commitment to study time by the student.

## **What types of jobs are available?**

The On-Campus jobs are as diverse as the personnel needs of the University. Various departments here on campus are in need of students that possess many different skill levels.

Off- Campus positions with employers/agencies approved to participate in the Federal Work-Study Program offer further variety. These positions are available through non-profit organizations and are usually in areas of community service.

Community Service positions benefit the student as well as the community by increasing awareness of community needs through employment in areas that are dedicated to

improving the quality of life for community residents. Community Service Work-Study is a great way to make a difference in the lives of others and earn your Work-Study (WS) award at the same time.

### **How much will I be paid?**

All jobs pay at least \$6.75 per hour. The job titles and duties are the same as those for non-WS employees. Students working at Lamar University under the Federal Work-Study Program (FWS) are paid on an hourly wage basis under wage regulations set by the University.

### **Am I eligible for benefits?**

No. Work-Study students are not eligible for paid vacation, sick leave, holidays, or medical and dental insurance through their Work-Study job. FWS students do not qualify for leaves or unemployment benefits.

### **Required working hours**

Federal Work-Study is part of the financial aid package. Students may earn up to the amount of their award as listed on SIS in the Accept Awards section. Students may not earn more than the amount of the Work-Study award. The Federal Work-Study Program reimburses employers for 75% of the students' earnings up to the amount of the award. Any wages earned after that amount must be paid 100% by the employer. It is the student's and the employer's responsibility to monitor earnings to be sure the award amounts are not exceeded.

The work schedule is to be determined by the student and the employer. Students should never be scheduled to work during class time. **Also work-study students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours in one week.**

### **How do I get a job?**

Students accepting a work-study award are expected to secure a work-study position in which they "earn" their work-study award. Students should begin the job search early in order to have a broader range of jobs to choose from. To obtain assistance in obtaining a work-study position you may want to contact Lamar University's Office of Student Financial Aid or any of the many departmental and administrative offices on Lamar

University's campus. Students will be able to begin working and earning their award as soon as the award period begins.

### **What if I do NOT get a job?**

Acceptance of a work-study award does not guarantee a work-study job. If students are enrolled at least half-time and do not get a work-study job within the first eight weeks of the start of class, their Federal Work-Study award will be cancelled for that semester. Once cancelled, the work-study award will not be automatically reinstated. If your class schedule or other circumstances prevent you from obtaining a work-study job, contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to discuss further options.

### **Dress Code**

The Work-Study Program does not establish a dress code for student employees. Neat, clean, and tasteful clothing is always appropriate. Remember, student employees on campus are representing Lamar University to prospective students and/or parents, as well as currently enrolled students. Suggestive or potentially offensive clothing (i.e., halter tops, short shorts, torn jeans, offensive or suggestive language on clothing, etc.) is never appropriate work attire.

However, depending upon where the student is employed, a dress code may be required. Each department is entitled to set a dress code. Work-Study employees who are employed in departments with a dress code are required to adhere to that dress code. The department should review dress code requirements with Work Study employees prior to hiring. Always check with your supervisor if you need advice regarding what clothing is appropriate for safety, comfort, and appearance.

### **How do I get my Work-Study money?**

To receive your work-study funds, students must get a job, work up to 20 hours per week, and earn it! Students are strongly encouraged to begin the job search as soon as possible. Many popular work-study positions tend to be filled very quickly.

Work-Study students are paid monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Students must sign in as they report to work and sign out as they leave on each occasion.

### **Will I get Work-Study every semester?**

Work-Study eligibility is based on performing the assigned job duties in a satisfactory manner, maintaining financial aid academic eligibility, continuing to show financial need, and the timeliness of your Financial Aid Application.

If the student's eligibility changes at any time during the award period, the work-study award may be re-evaluated. This often occurs when the Office of Student Financial Aid learns of additional resources, e.g., scholarships or tuition waivers, and must reduce the amount of the work-study award.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

By accepting a work-study position, students become members of a department or agency that depends on them. Students should report to work on time, notify the supervisor when they will be absent or late, and dress appropriately for the work location (dress code should be discussed during the interview). When asking for time off, students should consider the employer's needs as well as their own. In addition, some work-study positions may require access to confidential material—misuse of this information is grounds for dismissal.

If problems develop on the job, the first point of contact should be the supervisor. If the problem cannot be resolved, the student should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid. Quitting a work-study job should be a decision of last resort. Work-Study jobs are hard to secure so finding another one will be quite difficult.

Students agree to abide by the regulations and policies as outlined in the Student Work Study Program Guide. Failure to comply with these policies and regulations may result in possible cancellation of your work study award and loss of your work-study position. Acceptance of a position through the work-study program implies a commitment to the employer for at least one semester.

### **Additional Employment**

If work-study students earn the **total** amount of the work-study award prior to the end of the award period, they may wish to continue their relationship with the employer. This is considered additional employment, **NOT** another work-study position. The employer must pay 100% of the student's wages out of their own departmental funds. Students should note that income earned in a non-work-study position will be counted toward next year's student contribution to financial aid. Before accepting additional employment, the student may wish to discuss the implications with the Office of Student Financial Aid.

## **Common Work-Study Questions:**

**Q. What is Work-Study?**

A. The Work-Study Program (CWS) provides jobs for students who need financial aid and who must earn a part of their educational expenses. You may apply if you are enrolled at least half-time (six [6] credit hours) as a degree-seeking student in an eligible program.

**Q. How do I apply?**

A. Complete a FAFSA yearly and request interest in CWS on the FAFSA application.

**Q. When do I apply?**

A. Due to the length of time in filing and receiving results from a financial need service, it is recommended that a student complete these documents in February.

Priority deadline for all Financial Aid applicants is **April 1<sup>st</sup>**.

**Q. What determines the amount of Work-Study awarded?**

A. The amount of your Work-Study Program award depends on the student's financial need and the availability of funds at the University.

**Q. Once I have hired, how is the student paid?**

A. All Work-Study students are paid monthly. Paychecks will be released for hours worked the preceding month on the subsequent 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Q. Are Work-Study jobs on-campus or off-campus?**

A. Both. A Work-Study job may be located off-campus with a public or private non-profit agency.

**Q. Can students have more than one Work-Study job?**

**A.** No. Due to the demand for Work-Study Program employment, each student is limited to one Work-Study Program job. This is an institutional policy. Therefore, each student should carefully consider the amount of his/her award, the rate of pay and the job's work hours prior to applying for or accepting a position.

**Q. May a student have a Non College Work-Study job in addition to their Work-Study employment on campus?**

**A.** No. A student must choose either Work-Study employment or a Student Assistant position. A student assistant position is considered an on campus job, just as work study, but without the benefits of work-study. If the student rejects Work-Study for a Student Assistant position, the earnings from such employment may affect future financial aid.

**Q. What if the student does not earn their entire award? Can they carry the remainder of their award to the next term?**

**A.** Carry over of work-study funds is at the discretion of the Student Financial Aid Office. Work-Study funding is awarded for a specific academic period either fall only, spring only, or fall and spring. A Fall/Spring award is an academic year award. This means that if the student has money left over from the Fall award, the Office of Student Financial Aid may increase the Spring award at their discretion. This balance **MUST** be utilized by the end of the Spring semester. However, a remaining award that is not earned at the time will not be carried forward into summer or the next academic year.

Lamar University  
Student Work-Study Compliance Agreement

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Please read and sign on the appropriate line at the bottom of the page. Please make a copy for your records.

- ❖ I understand that my employment under the Federal Work-Study Program is governed by the terms and limitations listed, and agree to comply with these terms during the period of my employment.
- ❖ I must notify the Office of Student Financial Aid if I receive additional funding from other sources.
- ❖ I must maintain enrollment for a minimum of six (6) hours in order to retain CWS employment.
- ❖ I will only be paid for actual hours worked.
- ❖ Earnings are limited to the amount of the WS award shown on my most current award letter.
- ❖ I will adhere to the dress code, work schedule and procedures I agree to with my supervisor.
- ❖ Students can be terminated from their job if they do not arrive on time, leave early without permission, or simply do not show up.
- ❖ Federal Work-Study earnings are taxable income.
- ❖ I have read the attached book on Federal College Work-Study.

You are encouraged to use your work-study earnings to pay your tuition bill.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_