

**FEDERAL WORK STUDY  
(FWS)  
PROGRAM SUPERVISOR'S  
GUIDE**



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH ALABAMA

**Office of Financial Aid**

390 Alumni Circle  
Meisler Hall, Suite 1200  
Mobile, AL 36688

PHONE: (251) 460-6231  
FAX: (251) 460-6517 & (251) 460-6079

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# **SECTION I**

## **Welcome to the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program**

## **Welcome to the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program**

The Office of Financial Aid would like to express our gratitude for your participation in the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program. Because of your participation, we are able to employ a talented work force of students each year. These job opportunities allow our students “self-help” financial aid and an opportunity for career, social, personal, and educational development.

The FWS Supervisor’s Guide has been created to assist you in supervision and to help us better manage the program. We hope that you will take the time to read this guide in order to better acquaint you with the FWS Program requirements.

## **SECTION II**

# **INTRODUCTION TO FEDERAL WORK STUDY (FWS)**

## **A. PURPOSE**

The Federal Work Study (FWS) Program is designed to provide financial assistance to students through part-time employment and encourages recipients to participate in community service activities. In addition to providing opportunities for students to earn a portion of their educational costs, the program provides experience in developing job skills, creativity, and responsibility. Student development and preparation for the job market are fundamental goals of the program; therefore, students are not to be paid for studying while on the job. Students will be paid “an hour’s pay for an hour’s work.”

In summary, we seek to provide FWS students with:

- Opportunities for career development
- Educational experiences
- An environment to serve others
- Opportunities for personal growth
- “Self-help” financial aid with less long-term debt

Federal regulations state that FWS students must not displace regular employees or contracted services.

## **B. ELIGIBILITY**

Students must demonstrate financial need to be eligible to participate in the FWS Program. This process involves completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Funding for the FWS Program at The University of South Alabama is limited, so early completion of the FAFSA is crucial.

Students who have been awarded FWS will receive an award notification indicating the maximum amount of gross pay to be earned per term.

Because of limited funding for FWS, the Office of Financial Aid is not able to offer this assistance to all who are eligible. Consequently, adequate funding is not available to pay students to fill all of the vacant positions.

## **C. FEDERAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Due to the specific nature of the FWS Program, there are many federal and institutional requirements that must be followed to remain in compliance. Failure to comply with these requirements and deadline dates could result in termination from the program.

The following requirements and deadline dates must be for the FWS Program:

1. The Office of Financial Aid must have a FWS Job Request Form and FWS Job Description Form on file before a department can employ a FWS student. Also, all employing departments must read and follow the FWS Supervisor's Guide, procedures, and instructions as stated.
2. A FWS Supervisor must complete all required information on the Personnel Action (PA) Form.
3. Copies of the student's class and work schedules should be kept and reviewed to ensure the student does not work during scheduled class time. The Sign In/Out Sheet that is created by the FWS Supervisor should be used on a daily basis.
4. Supervisors should maintain a personnel file for each FWS student. The file should consist of the following documents and records:
  - The Student Personnel Action (PA) Form
  - Departmental copy of the student's record of work attendance (Sign In/Sign Out Sheet)
  - FWS Student Evaluation Form
  - Schedule of student's assigned work and class time
5. FWS Student Evaluation Forms should be completed by A) April 15th each year, B) upon the student's termination or C) transfer from the job assignment, whichever occurs first. The evaluation should be kept in the student's personnel file in the employing department and a copy should be forwarded to the Office of Financial Aid.
6. There is a 25% matching share requirement for all FWS jobs, with the exception for the Students Teaching America's Youth (STAY) Program and the off-campus community service jobs.
7. Students and supervisors are responsible for making sure that the student does not earn over the student's awarded amount. To calculate how many more hours a student can work, use the following formula:  $\$1500 - \text{the amount the student has earned so far} / \$8.25 = \text{the remaining hours a student can work}$ .
8. All off-campus community service employers and elementary schools must have a contract on file with the Office of Financial Aid.
9. The first day a student can begin work is the official first day of classes, provided the student has completed the FWS orientation and submitted all necessary forms to the department and/or Office of Financial Aid.



## **D. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The FWS Program does not offer sick leave, compensatory time, vacation or holiday pay. As stated previously, students are employed under “an hour’s pay for an hour’s work” arrangement.

A student’s FWS award will usually allow him or her to work 12 to 15 hours per week. A FWS Supervisor is required to monitor the student’s earnings to ensure that he or she does not earn more per semester than the award will pay.

On-campus departments are required to monitor student earnings to ensure continued eligibility. On-campus departments will be charged for the amount of earnings exceeding the student’s award amount.

If the student is working hours to make-up time missed from work, he/she may not work more than 20 hours per week or 8 hours per day unless notified by the Office of Financial Aid. Students can only be employed in one FWS position at a time; however, the student may hold another non-FWS job.

All work should be supervised. In addition, students may not work during their scheduled class periods. In order to ensure compliance with this requirement, it is suggested that a written note from the student’s professor be requested if the student reports to work during a scheduled class hour.

FWS employees are paid at least minimum wage. However, the Office of Financial Aid determines all FWS employees hourly pay rate.

**SECTION III**  
**SUPERVISION**

# **SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

A FWS Supervisor has been entrusted with federal dollars for the student upon hiring. The student should be treated like any other employee. In order to be given the privilege of using the FWS Program, the responsibilities of the FWS Supervisor and the student should be clearly understood and enforced.

Student employment should mean more than a paycheck for FWS students. It can be used as an opportunity to learn valuable job experience. Listed below are a few suggestions to help the FWS student gain as much as possible from his/her job:

## **1. Establish a Work Schedule**

Upon hiring a FWS student, the FWS Supervisor is responsible for establishing a clearly defined work schedule that is compatible with the time requirement of both the student and department. The FWS Supervisor should provide opportunities for the student to make up time lost from work due to unavoidable circumstances. Students are not allowed to work, under any circumstances, during class time. Make-up time should be reported during the actual period that it is worked. Make-up hours should not exceed 20 hours per week.

Example: A student who normally works 15 hours per week misses 5 hours of work, only working 10 hours that week. A FWS Supervisor can allow that student to make up the missing 5 hours in the following week as long as the student does not work over 20 hours in one week.

## **2. Orientation**

The FWS Supervisor is responsible for conducting a student job orientation, which should include but is not limited to:

- A brief overview of the office structure, rules, and regulations
- The student's job and responsibilities, such as:
  - What to say when answering the phone
  - How to transfer calls
  - How to put calls on hold
  - Answers to commonly asked questions
  - Frequently used phone numbers
  - Areas of responsibility in office
  - Procedures for filing forms, etc.
- Grounds for any disciplinary action
- Whom to call if sick or time-off is needed
- What procedures to follow if his/her work schedule needs to be changed

### **3. Job Performance Evaluation**

**Evaluations are due by April 15 of each academic year.**

A written performance evaluation is required for each FWS student. The FWS Student Evaluation Form must be completed to meet this requirement. Please complete the FWS Student Evaluation Form carefully in order to give the student accurate feedback on his/her performance. After completing the FWS Student Evaluation Form, the FWS Supervisor should schedule a time with the student to review the assessment. The student must sign the form showing that the FWS Supervisor has discussed the evaluation with him/her.

By evaluating students on a regular basis, FWS Supervisors can begin to collect a work history on each student. This information could prove to be helpful should the FWS Supervisor be called upon to provide a reference for the student. You may download the FWS Student Evaluation Form at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/finaid/>.

Click:

- Important Links
- Federal Work Study (FWS) Supervisor Resources
- Federal Work Study Student Evaluation Form

The FWS Student Evaluation Form should be completed and signed by both student and supervisor. The FWS Student Evaluation Form should be kept in the student's personnel file in the employing department.

**SECTION IV**  
**General Instructions and**  
**Procedures**

# **A. HOW TO POST FWS JOB VACANCIES**

An approved FWS Job Description Form must be on file for each vacant position in order to be included on the FWS Job List. To hire a FWS student, a department must have an approved FWS Job Description Form and FWS Job Request Form on file with the Office of Financial Aid.

A department being included on the FWS Job List does not guarantee that the department will receive a FWS student. Adequate funding is not available to pay students to fill all of the vacant positions. FWS Supervisors are encouraged to recruit students by posting vacancies within their departments.

What makes for a well-crafted job description?

- It is concise.
- It has sufficient detail to communicate a clear understanding of the duties, tasks, and qualifications.
- It has a short, descriptive job title.
- It concludes with a list of duties such as, "Performs any other duties as required."

# **B. HIRING THE FWS STUDENT**

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW**

Students are required to complete the online FWS orientation. They are instructed to review the FWS Job List and schedule an interview with the contact person for the job(s) that interest them. The FWS Supervisor should conduct the interview in order to determine the student's suitability for the position. It is the FWS Supervisor's decision whether to hire the student. The student is given the opportunity to accept or reject the offer. It is recommended that the FWS Supervisor take the time to thoroughly determine a student's compatibility with a position before hiring. This will help alleviate any possible problems in the future.

## **HIRING**

Upon successfully hiring a FWS student applicant, the FWS Supervisor should complete the Student Personnel Action (PA) Form or FWS Placement Form. It is important to follow the provided instructions carefully. All information must be complete and accurate in order for a student's paperwork to be processed for Payroll.

# C. PAYROLL PROCEDURES

One of the most important responsibilities of the FWS Supervisor is timekeeping. It is important that a process of validating and reporting the hours that a student works is implemented and followed consistently. This section will outline the process and paperwork recommended for timekeeping.

The Office of Financial Aid does not require FWS Supervisors to follow these exact procedures; however, records must be kept in the FWS Supervisor's office documenting the actual hours worked in order to satisfy both time reporting and auditing requirements.

## **VALIDATION OF ACTUAL HOURS WORKED**

It is recommended that students sign in and out using a sign-in/out sheet developed by the employing office. Keep in mind that:

1. Students are not allowed to work during scheduled class hours.
2. Students are not allowed to work more than 8 hours per day or 20 hours per week (a student should only be allowed to work 20 hours to make up hours missed in a previous work week).
3. FWS Supervisors are responsible for ensuring a student does not work more hours per semester than their FWS award will pay. Please use this formula to help keep up with the remaining hours a student can work:  $\$1500 - \text{the amount the student has earned so far} / \$8.25 = \text{the remaining hours a student can work}$ .
4. FWS Supervisors are required to keep accurate records of hours worked by a student.

Departments must abide by these requirements in order to remain eligible to participate in the FWS Program. Periodic audits by the Office of Financial Aid may be performed to ensure federal and institutional compliance with proper procedures. The sign-in/out sheets should be used as a basis for completing official time sheets.

## **COMPLETION OF TIME SHEETS**

Every two weeks, the FWS Supervisor will be required to validate the student's hours worked. Once the hours are validated, the FWS Supervisor must complete, sign, and submit the time sheets to Payroll. FWS Supervisors are responsible for the hours reported. The FWS Supervisor's approval on the time sheet certifies the number of hours worked and that the work was performed in a satisfactory manner. On campus FWS students are also required to sign the time sheet.

Time sheets should be submitted completely and accurately. Hours are to be reported in fifteen minute increments, with fifteen minutes representing 0.25 hours. For example, if a student works from 8:00 a.m. until 10:45 a.m., this represents two hours and forty-five minutes or 2.75 hours.

These hours should be reported as 02.75 hours on the time sheet (not 02.45 hours).

Any student knowingly making false entries on time sheets will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs for appropriate action.

Please note that payroll procedures for the Students Teaching America's Youth (STAY) Program and off-campus community service jobs are outlined on page 19 of this handbook.



## **RECEIVING A PAYCHECK**

FWS students will be paid on a bi-weekly basis. All FWS students will be required by the University to be paid through direct deposit. FWS students who are not already enrolled in direct deposit of paychecks will be required to do so through Payroll Accounting. If a FWS student is unable to secure an account at an eligible financial institution, an account will be established on behalf of the employee at the USA Federal Credit Union. There will be a one-time \$25 share deposit required to open the account.

Pay information will be available to view online through the student's PAWS account, which may be accessed [here](#). Students will not receive a printed pay check stub.

## **MONITORING EARNINGS**

It is the FWS Supervisor's responsibility to monitor a student's earnings to ensure that the student does not work more hours than the FWS award will pay. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended, prohibits employers (including schools) from accepting voluntary services from any paid employee. Any student employed under the FWS Program must be paid for all hours worked. **If the FWS award is not sufficient to pay the student for all hours worked, the employing department will be required to pay the difference.** Please use this formula to help keep up with the remaining hours a student can work:  $\$1500 - \text{the amount the student has earned so far} / \$8.25 = \text{the remaining hours a student can work}$ .

FWS students are awarded an amount which allows them to work an average of 12 to 15 hours per week. If a FWS student is allowed to work more than this average, he or she will deplete the allocation before the semester is completed. Departments who consistently submit FWS time sheets for more hours than FWS award amounts will be subject to termination from the program.

# **D. TERMINATION AND TRANSFER PROCEDURES**

## **1. NORMAL ANNUAL TERMINATION**

Students are automatically terminated from the FWS Program on the expiration date shown on the Student's Personnel Action (PA) Form. If the student desires to re-establish eligibility for FWS for the following year, a new FAFSA must be submitted.

## **2. NO LONGER INTERESTED IN PROGRAM**

Students may voluntarily terminate their FWS award if they are no longer interested in the program. Students are required to give their FWS Supervisor a two-week notice, at which time the FWS Supervisor will inform the Office of Financial Aid of the student's resignation. The FWS Supervisor must also complete a FWS Student Evaluation Form upon the student's resignation.

## **3. TERMINATION BY SUPERVISOR**

A FWS Supervisor has the right to dismiss a student for unsatisfactory job performance. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Repeated failure to comply with the agreed work schedule
- b) Unwillingness to accomplish assigned tasks
- c) Insubordination or lack of cooperation, which results in disturbing other workers or work progress

When a student is terminated or transfers from an assignment, their current FWS Supervisor is required to contact the Office of Financial Aid immediately. Failure to comply could result in errors on the student's time sheet. The FWS Supervisor is also responsible for sending written documentation explaining the circumstances behind the termination to the Office of Financial Aid in addition to a FWS Student Evaluation Form.

After receiving notification of termination, the FWS Coordinator will meet with the student to determine whether the student will be allowed to transfer to another FWS position or will be terminated from the program permanently.

## **4. TERMINATION BY THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**

The Office of Financial Aid must immediately terminate a student's employment upon determination that the student no longer meets eligibility requirements. Changes in eligibility may result from:

- Change in enrollment status
- Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Receipt of additional resources, which were not known at the time of award (i.e. scholarships, grants, etc.)

# **SECTION V**

## **Off-Campus Payroll Procedures**

# **Off-Campus Payroll Procedures Students Teaching America's Youth (STAY) Program**

The Office of Financial Aid also employs students off-campus through the Students Teaching America's Youth (STAY) Program and non-profit community service agencies. These students work in community service jobs as reading tutors in local elementary schools as well as agencies such as American Red Cross, YMCA, Salvation Army, etc. using Federal Work Study (FWS) funds. There are some differences in payroll procedures for these off-campus students than those employed on-campus. The information below provides guidance to assist supervisors with the task of ensuring that students are paid in a prompt and efficient manner.

A master time sheet booklet for students will be emailed to supervisors at the beginning of each school year (August). Supervisors should validate the student's hours worked. Once the hours have been validated, the supervisor should complete, sign, and fax the time sheet to (251) 460-6517 or (251) 460-6079, or email it to the FWS coordinator. The time sheet must include the supervisor's signature.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TIME SHEETS:**

Off-campus employers may initially fax or email timesheets to the FWS coordinator, but must also submit original copies. These should be mailed or hand delivered to the FWS Coordinator as indicated in the Timesheet Booklet.

The original copies of off-campus timesheets must be maintained by the University of South Alabama as per federal regulations. Original records must be maintained since data from those records is submitted as part of the Fiscal Operations Report section of the FISAP.

## **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD A STUDENT HAVE ACCESS TO HIS/HER TIME SHEETS.**

The supervisor must initial any "mark-throughs" or "white-outs" on the time sheet.

All time sheets must be faxed to the Office of Financial Aid later than 4:30 p.m. on the scheduled due date indicated on each time sheet.

Keep in mind that:

- Students must not complete or fax their time sheets.
- Students must not be allowed to work during their scheduled class hours.
- Students must not be allowed to work more than 8 hours per day or 15 hours per week unless notified by the FWS Coordinator.