

WORK-STUDY HANDBOOK

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

Purpose:

This handbook has been designed to clarify student employment policies and procedures for the entire college community. Student employees, supervisors, and other interested parties will find this handbook helpful in answering questions that may arise.

What is the Federal Work-Study Program?

It is a federally funded self-help aid program designed to provide work opportunities for students, enabling them to earn funds for meeting educational expenses. In addition, it is possible for students to gain work experience in their areas of academic and/or non-academic interests.

Standard Funding: On-Campus is funded by a 75% Federal contribution and 25% Institutional match. Usual Off-Campus funding breakdown is 50% Federal and 50% Agency.

How To Apply

Students must apply every year by submitting the following information by the appropriate deadlines:

* Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA should be completed as directed and filed with the processor (Federal Student Aid Program). The priority deadline for receipt of this form at the processor is March 1 for the fall semester and October 1 for the spring semester. Additional information or verifying documents may be requested by the Financial Aid Office at any time.

For more information on application procedures and other aid programs, see the current Unity College Catalog or contact the Unity College Financial Aid Office.

Eligibility

Federal Work-Study employment may be awarded after it is determined that a student:

1. Is maintaining satisfactory progress in his/her course of study toward a recognized degree.
2. Is not in default on any loans for attendance at any institution.
3. Does not owe a refund on any grants previously received for attendance at any institution.
4. Has demonstrated financial need.

What about Summer Work-Study?

Work-Study is not automatically available during any period of non-enrollment, such as summer or vacations. Interested students should contact the Financial Aid Office.

Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (W-4)

All employees must complete a W-4 form for tax purposes before Work-Study checks can be issued. The W-4 must be properly completed and returned to the Financial Aid Office. The form requires name, permanent address, social security number, and the number of exemptions the student wishes to claim. The completed forms are kept in the Business Office Payroll Records, and may be changed at any time.

Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9)

All employees must complete an I-9 form to verify eligibility to work. This form must be done before starting work. Original documentation, usually Social Security Card and Drivers License are used to complete this form, which is to be completed in the College's Human Resource Office, or during the Fall Semester Job Fair.

Employment Voucher

Each term students receive an Employment Voucher, which states the following:

1. The student's name
2. The period of employment
3. The total number of hours a student may work that term
4. The average number of hours per week
5. The wage rate

The Employment Voucher should be used both as an authorization for the student to begin work, and as a planning tool for the supervisor and the student for the term's employment. Both the supervisor and the student should plan accordingly so employment needs will be filled throughout the term. The supervisor should keep the original Employment Voucher on file until the end of the academic period of employment.

Employment must cease immediately when the maximum number of hours have been worked. It is the responsibility of both the supervisor and the student to keep accurate records of the number of hours awarded, hours worked for a particular term.

Job Acceptance Form

Employment is finalized each term by the completion of a Job Acceptance Form which is returned to the Financial Aid Office. It is to be filled out by the student and the supervisor, and states:

1. The supervisor has presented a job description to the student.
2. A work schedule has been arranged.
3. The student is aware of his/her responsibility to notify his/her supervisor when he/she will be unavailable for scheduled work.
4. Any problems will be brought to the attention of the supervisor and/or, if necessary, to the attention of the Financial Aid Office.
5. The student is aware that he/she may be dismissed due to failure to fulfill the responsibilities of the job.
6. The student accepts a particular position for a specific number of hours.
7. The student understands he/she may not work during any scheduled class hours.

STUDENTS MAY NOT CHANGE JOBS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TERM, NOR WILL ANYONE BE ALLOWED TO FIND ANOTHER JOB DURING THAT TERM IF DISMISSAL RESULTS FROM FAILURE TO FULFILL THE RESPONSIBILITIES OUTLINED IN THEIR JOB DESCRIPTION.

NOTE: FAILURE TO RETURN THE JOB ACCEPTANCE FORM TO THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE WILL RESULT IN A DELAY OF PAY.

TIMESHEETS:

Timesheets must be properly filled out and submitted to the Financial Aid Office. The amount of time worked each day is recorded on the time sheet rounded to the nearest quarter hour. At the end of the work week (Saturday, or last day of the week that the student works) a total is entered. The student should sign the timesheet and the supervisor approves the hours worked by his/her signature.

It is the **SUPERVISOR'S** responsibility to certify that work is done as indicated on the timesheets, and that satisfactory performance is attained. A student employee is to be paid "an hour's wage for an hour's work". The Work-Study award is not a gift or entitlement, but is a self-help opportunity to earn money for educational expenses.

NOTE: Timesheets must be turned in on time. Excessively late timesheets **may not be accepted**.

Last Term I Timesheet – Must be turned in no later than December 31st.

Last Term II Timesheet – Must be turned in no later than May 31st.

Complete your timesheets on a daily basis and sign it promptly at the end of each two-week period so that it can be turned in on time. Late timesheets will be paid on the next scheduled payroll.

STUDENT COMPENSATION

Wage Rates

Federal Work-Study students are generally paid either the State of Maine minimum wage or Federal minimum wage depending which is greater. Some work-study positions, however may have a different hourly wage rate based on evaluation of the position duties and responsibilities. Students are not, and cannot by Federal Law be compensated on a salary, commission or fee basis. They must be paid on an hourly wage rate for actual time on the job. Any student found to be falsifying hours worked will be subject to immediate dismissal. Such acts constitute Federal Fraud.

Payroll Procedures

Paychecks are issued to student employees on every other Friday.

Timesheets **MUST** be turned in by noon on the Wednesday following the end of each two-week payroll work period (refer to the work-study payroll calendar for specific dates). Late timesheets **WILL NOT** be processed until the next payroll date. Incomplete timesheets will be processed on the next regularly scheduled payroll date after they are complete.

Payroll is made by check, which may be picked up after 10:00 A.M. in the Bookstore during regular bookstore hours. Each student receives a pay "stub" which shows the amount actually earned minus any deductions. Students who cannot pick up a particular paycheck **MUST** make personal arrangements with the Business Office. Checks not picked up within two weeks will be mailed to the student's permanent mailing address.

Payroll Advances

These are granted in the case of a family emergency where the student must go home immediately and no other financial arrangements can be made.

Payroll advances are granted **ONLY** for an emergency. The following kinds of situations are not considered emergencies:

1. Car repairs
2. Vet bills
3. School vacations and off-payroll weeks
4. **Timesheets not turned in on time**
5. **Timesheets incomplete**
6. Off-campus living expenses
7. Early departure before a Friday payroll

Requests for a payroll advance must be approved by the Director of Financial Aid before being processed for payment by the Business Office.

Lost Paychecks

If your paycheck is lost or stolen, report it immediately to the Financial Aid Office. A stop-payment will be processed and a replacement check issued the very next payroll after the stop-payment clears.

OBTAINING A JOB

Job Fair

At the beginning of the school year there will be a Work-Study Job Fair to provide students with an opportunity to find out about the varied type of work-study positions available on-campus and to interview for open positions which are the best match for the students skills, interest, and schedule. It is the student's responsibility to secure a work-study position through the job fair. **The work-study positions are for the academic year. Students are not permitted to change positions during the year, unless there are extenuating circumstances.** At the end of the academic year students who expect to receive Federal Work-Study for the following year should confirm with their supervisor whether or not they will return to that position for the next year.

Most students who are awarded Federal Work-Study choose to utilize the work opportunity to earn resources to assist with their educational expenses. Students are not however required to do so. Students deciding not to work or to utilize only a portion of their allotted earnings, should notify the financial aid office as to their decision, so that their records of available students can be updated.

WORK-STUDY PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Responsibilities

1. Before any student can begin working he/she must have a **W-4 and I-9 completed** and **before being paid there needs to be a job acceptance signed by worker and supervisor**. The I-9 form is completed with the Human Resources department and the W-4 and Job Acceptance forms are submitted to the Financial Aid Office.
2. The student employee is expected to work out a satisfactory work schedule with his/her supervisor and abide by it. Employees should arrive for work on time and work all hours scheduled. Any changes should be discussed in advance with the supervisor. When illness or an emergency prevents the student from reporting for work, he/she must contact the supervisor as far in advance as possible. Leaving a message for the supervisor does not give the student permission to be absent. Frequent tardiness or absence is sufficient reason for termination.
3. As employees of the College, student workers must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. They are expected to exhibit interest in their job and to perform tasks in accordance with the supervisor's expectations. Confidentiality is a must when dealing with College records and other information, which is handled as a result of the student's job. **BREACHES OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISHONESTY ARE VALID REASONS FOR AUTOMATIC DISMISSAL WITHOUT ANY WARNINGS.**
4. If a student employee has problems with a supervisor, he/she should first discuss it directly with the supervisor involved. After every effort has been made to resolve the problem, report it to the Financial Aid Office, which will give every assistance available.
5. The principle of "an hour's pay for an hour's work" applies to student employees. Only time actually worked should be reported on the timesheet. Time absent from scheduled hours for any reason is not to be included on the student's timesheet. Each employee is responsible for accurately reporting his/her own work hours.

NOTE: Student employees are not to work during regularly scheduled class hour(s).

SUPERVISORS SHOULD KEEP A COPY OF THE STUDENT'S CLASS SCHEDULE TO INSURE THAT THEY DO NOT ASSIGN WORK OR ALLOW STUDENTS TO WORK DURING CLASS HOURS!

Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Supervisors are responsible for accurately determining their work-study needs and submitting a written request for employees to the Financial Aid Office. New position requests must include a complete job description detailing duties, responsibilities, qualifications, location, and supervisor's name. Supervisors are then informed of approved positions, and may only hire eligible students.
2. Supervisors are expected to develop a work schedule with each student employee that will allow her/him to earn the total award as well as meet the needs of the department/office. The Job Acceptance Form should clearly identify the number of hours the supervisor can schedule with the student.
3. Supervisors are expected to make sure each student has completed a Job Acceptance Form and returned it to the Financial Aid Office.
4. Each position must have a job description, which includes the following items: 1) name of employer and/or department/office 2) location 3) purpose 4) duties and responsibilities 5) length of employment 6) qualifications and 7) name of supervisor. It is the supervisors' responsibility to review and adjust each job description at the beginning of each term. A copy of each job description is kept in the Financial Aid Office in compliance with government regulations. They may also be used as a source of information for students who would like to change jobs.
5. A job description should be provided to the student so he/she will be aware of what the job involves. A review by the student and supervisor together can clearly explain what is expected and provide sufficient opportunity for questions and clarification.
6. Supervisors are expected to see that student employees have enough work to do. Since it is illegal to pay a student with FWS funds if the student is not working, check with the Financial Aid Office for temporary projects if there is a slack period.
7. Supervisors are expected to provide adequate supervision. This means whatever is necessary to enable actual comparison of performance against the job description to determine how well the job is being done and where improvements are needed. These comparisons should be discussed with individual employees. If students do not know how they are doing they cannot adjust their performance. Provisions should be made to assist workers in performing up to standards. If supervisors do their part, there should never be a case where a student is dismissed for lack of ability to do a job.
8. **SUPERVISORS** must ensure the accuracy of timesheets. **NO** paycheck will be issued for a timesheet lacking the student and/or supervisor's signature.

9. All problems with a student employee should first be discussed and handled directly with the student involved. The Financial Aid Office is available as a resource only after all other avenues for a resolution have been exhausted.

Financial Aid Office Responsibilities

1. The Financial Aid Office staff, comprised of the Director of Financial Aid, the Associate Director of Financial Aid and the FWS Coordinator are available from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, to provide information and assistance.
2. The Financial Aid Office will supply all forms and materials to both students and supervisors concerning the Federal Work-Study Program.
3. The Financial Aid Office will make every possible effort to provide a wide variety of positions suited to a wide range of student skills and interests. A listing of available jobs is available for review in the Financial Aid Office, Career Resource Center, and the Library.
4. Office staff will be happy to provide information and counsel to those students and supervisors with questions, concerns, etc., regarding Work-Study employment. Procedures and policies will be clarified and alternatives discussed, if appropriate.

Warnings/Dismissals

Students are expected to be punctual, efficient, and cooperative in performing their work. Failure to fulfill these expectations could result in dismissal.

Dismissals are left to the discretion of supervisors. However, the following steps should be taken before a student worker is dismissed:

1. A verbal warning should be given to a student worker who is not performing his/her job satisfactorily. The problems should be discussed and the student should once again be informed of his/her responsibilities.
2. If no improvement is shown after a reasonable length of time, the student is then given a written warning, which includes a specific date of re-evaluation. A copy of this written warning is to be sent to the Financial Aid Office.
3. If there is still no improvement shown by the date of re-evaluation the supervisor has the right to dismiss the student.

When a student is dismissed, the remainder of their Work-Study hours **ARE FORFEITED** for that semester.

It is fully intended that a good communicative relationship will be developed between supervisor, student workers, and the Financial Aid Office, so that conflicts can be resolved before they get to the point of dismissal.

OFF-CAMPUS WORK-STUDY

Any public or private non-profit organization or agency is eligible to employ Work-Study students if the organization is structured to serve the general public and is professionally directed and staffed. They cannot, however, be of a political, sectarian, or Co-op nature. Jobs with community service organizations are encouraged. The Career Resource Center is available to assist with identifying possible off campus Work-Study opportunities. See the Financial Aid Office to check if an agency meets Federal requirements.

Agency Participation

An off-campus agency must agree to:

1. Contract with Unity College.
2. Reimburse Unity College for their share of a student's wages.
3. Maintain time records for each student employee.
4. Adequately supervise a student's work

Students may approach off-campus agencies on their own about the possibility of Work-Study employment during the academic year. If both the student and the agency are determined eligible to participate in the program, the Financial Aid Office will forward the necessary paperwork for completion of the employment arrangement. At the end of each term the off-campus agency will be billed for its share of the Work-Study earnings.

Students seeking off-campus employment should be aware they are representing Unity College as well as themselves and they are selected because of their experience and past performance, both in the classroom and the Work-Study Program. As a result, they have increased expectations placed on them.

Students seeking off-campus employment must first understand all the rights and responsibilities of Work-Study students in general. In addition, they must be personally interviewed by a member of the Financial Aid Office and they must have the recommendation of a professor in their area of concentration before employment is approved and finalized.

A successful off-campus employment period can provide valuable experience for the student, can further develop the reputation of the quality of Unity students, and can encourage off-campus employment for future Unity students.

Examples of Eligible Off-Campus Agencies

Audubon Society
Boys/Girls Club

Library
YMCA/YWCA

Historical Society
Hospital

Crisis Center
Day Care Center
Museum
Federal Government

State Government Agency
School or College
U.S. Forest Service
Park

Town or City sponsored
Program