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WHAT IS FEDERAL WORK-STUDY?

Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a program which provides part-time employment opportunities to eligible students to help meet the costs of post-secondary education. Based on results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), eligible students are awarded an allotment which may be earned through part-time employment in FWS approved positions either on or off-campus. The program is designed to provide students with an opportunity for employment arranged around class schedules. Students must be enrolled at least half-time (six credit hours per semester for undergraduate and 4.5 for graduate) to be eligible for this program.

Student employment provides students an opportunity to earn money for their college expenses, gives inexperienced students a chance to learn the basics of the workplace, and provides students an opportunity to work in a “field” that may be of interest and helps prepare students to enter the workforce. George Mason University (GMU) also benefits from the unique talents and experiences students bring to the campus. A job contributes to more than just financial assistance for a student’s college education; it also offers the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and skills to assist with educational and career goals. The money a student earns through this program is not used to determine their financial need on the subsequent years FAFSA.

PURPOSE OF FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

The law states two general purposes for the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program. The first and original purpose is to stimulate and promote the part-time employment of students who are enrolled as undergraduate, graduate or professional students and who need employment to pursue courses of study at eligible institutions. The Higher Education Act of 1992 added a second purpose, to encourage students receiving Federal student financial assistance to participate in community service activities that will benefit the nation and engender in the students a sense of social responsibility and commitment to the community.
THE HIRING PROCESS

Getting Started:

1) Students may begin to apply for positions starting now.

2) Federal Work-Study positions are located on HireMason, Mason’s online job and internship database. To log in please visit https://gmu-csm.symplicity.com/ and select Student/Alumni; you will use your Patriot Pass credentials to log in. If you are unable to log into HireMason, please contact University Career Services (UCS) at 703-993-2370. Please be prepared to provide your G# and Mason email address.

3) * First time students logging into HireMason – Your resume must be approved by UCS and you must also complete your HireMason profile before you are able to apply for positions. To get started you must upload a resume and Job Availability form to the Documents tab. Once submitted, it can take up to three business days for your resume to be approved.

*Returning students to HireMason – You do not have to be reapproved, any updates to your resume or additional resumes will be automatically approved.

Click here for more information on how to create a resume, along with resume templates for your convenience. http://careers.gmu.edu/students/documents/

Job Availability Form:


4) Once you have completed your HireMason profile, you can begin to search for available FWS positions, the FWS link is located on the lower right hand side of HireMason.

5) You can read through various positions by clicking on the position title, requirements to apply for the position are on the right-hand side. There is no limit to how many positions you can apply to, the more you apply to the higher your odds of being hired.

6) Once you have applied it can take anywhere from 2-3 weeks from the job closing date for a response from the supervisor. If contacted by the prospective employer, follow procedures instructed by them in order to interview for the position in which you are interested in. Please note that employers have different policies on following up with applicants. It is your responsibility to contact the employer with questions regarding your application status.
What’s next?

1) Read the Student Employment Guide for important information regarding FWS not covered in this email, including the terms and conditions.

2) If you obtain a FWS position, you and your supervisor are required to complete a current Student Employment Verification Form. These forms are available at the Office of Student Financial Aid’s front desk. It is your responsibility to return this form to the Office of Student Financial Aid before your first day of work.

3) All other hiring paperwork will be completed with your supervisor.

Payment Procedure:

1) Student employees are paid every two weeks by direct deposit through their employer.

2) You and your supervisor are responsible for keeping track of your timesheets, hours worked and earnings. You are not to exceed the total amount of your FWS award.

3) If you are attending fall and spring semesters, the aid that you have been awarded will be divided evenly between both semesters.

Obtaining a FWS position is a competitive process so an early start is essential to success. You can start interviewing prior to the first day of classes. Keep in mind that being awarded FWS does not guarantee a position.

We look forward to providing you with a positive and enriching work experience. If you have any questions, please call the Office of Student Financial Aid at (703) 993-2353 or by emailing the Federal Work-Study Coordinator at, Iramirez@gmu.edu, with your name and G#.

REQUIRED PAPERWORK

If hired:

Required Employment Paperwork:

All student employees need to complete the following forms:

1) Student Employment Verification Form (available at the Office of Student Financial Aid and Office of Student Financial Aid website)

2) Human Resources and Payroll hiring paperwork, provided by your hiring supervisor.

Your supervisor will also create your Electronic Personnel Action Form (EPAF) in order for you to have a timesheet.
Student Employment Verification Form:
The student and the supervisor are required to complete and sign a Student Employment Verification Form. The supervisor must be a Mason staff member or direct supervisor for off-campus jobs. A Student Employment Verification Form is required for each academic year and for each new position. (Please note: EPAFs will not be approved unless this form has been submitted to our office).

Important
Completed forms must be submitted to the Office of Student Financial Aid. Students are not eligible to begin working until all paperwork has been processed.

BEGINNING YOUR FEDERAL WORK-STUDY ASSIGNMENT

- The student is expected to arrange his/her schedule prior to the first day of work.
- Some departments or agencies may require students to work during holidays and/or breaks so that services may continue uninterrupted. This expectation will be made clear during the interview and hiring process.

WORK SCHEDULE

- Students must arrange a mutually agreeable work schedule with his/her supervisor and adhere to it.
- Arrange a work schedule that does not interfere with your class schedule.
- Follow the schedule carefully once it has been established. Always, notify your supervisor if you are unable to work.
- During final exams and midterms supervisors must accommodate the student’s study/exam schedule.
- Be punctual.
- Student must provide advanced notification to supervisor of inability to report for scheduled work hours.
- Students cannot be paid for hours worked when it is determined that they should have been attending class during that time.
TIMESHEETS, PAYROLL, AND RECORD KEEPING

- The student is responsible for adhering to his/her work-schedule and will only be paid for actual hours worked.
- The student will not be paid for hours worked over the award amount unless the FWS Coordinator increases the number of hours in advance or the department agrees to pay the student from its own budget. The department must notify the FWS Coordinator in advance if it intends to pay the student out of its own funds.
- The student must keep an accurate timesheet that is certified by his/her supervisor biweekly.
- The student must keep track of their hours worked and amounts paid. *For assistance on how to keep track of your FWS funds see page 8.
- Students must sign out for breaks and then sign back in after the break is completed. It is against federal regulations for any part-time employee to work more than six hours without a 30-minute unpaid break.
- Timesheets must be completed on the student’s Patriotweb.
- Student will earn a biweekly paycheck. Payment for hours worked run two weeks behind the submission of time sheet.
- During holidays or vacation periods, the submission date for timesheets may change. Please pay close attention to the timesheet schedule (link to schedule on page 8).

RESIGNATION AND TERMINATIONS

- Students should give a notification of at least two weeks if planning to resign from their FWS position.
- A student’s continued employment is contingent upon satisfactory performance as determined by their supervisor. If the supervisor decides that the student’s performance is not satisfactory, the student may be dismissed.
- If they knowingly submit fraudulent information, students will be dismissed from the program and may face legal consequences.

FWS AWARDS

You are not to exceed the total amount of your FWS award. If you are attending fall and spring semester, the aid that you have been awarded will be divided evenly between both fall and spring semesters. Any funds not used will be forfeited.

If a student goes over their FWS award the hiring department is responsible for covering the overage. The FWS Coordinator will contact the employer and the monies will be reallocated. The student must either be terminated completely from their position or be switched over to regular student wage if the employer is able to.
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Including the requirements listed above students are required to meet the followings terms and conditions. **Once a student submits a Student Employment Verification form they are accepting the following:**

- Each student must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and be determined to have financial need.
- Student must have FWS awarded on their financial aid package.
- Be enrolled at least part-time (at least 6 credits per semester; 4.5 for graduate).
- Enrolled undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to work as student employees. If you have graduated, you are not considered a current student and therefore, are not eligible for FWS student employment.
- Be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Be achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP); please look on the OSFA website for our SAP policy.
- Not be in default on any student loan.
- Submit all documents required by the Office of Student Financial Aid.
- Students **may not work more than 20 hours per week** during the fall and spring semesters and **no more than 30 hours per week during winter, spring, and summer breaks**.
- Students may not work more than 8 hours in one day, and must take a ½ hour break when working 6 or more hours.
- Student wage rates will be determined by your employer.
- No student may earn more than his/her award per academic year.
- Any unearned funds will be forfeited.
- Students may not work more than one FWS job simultaneously.
- George Mason University has the right to terminate any Federal Work-Study position due to changes in availability of FWS funds or due to changes in the student status that could affect continued eligibility for financial aid. Failure to abide by GMU policies and procedures, unsatisfactory performance, poor attendance, unethical work behavior or dishonesty may also result in the loss of your FWS award.
HELPFUL LINKS

- Resume/cover letter - [https://careers.gmu.edu/students/documents/](https://careers.gmu.edu/students/documents/)
- Student Employment Verification Form –
  Must be picked up at the Office of Student Financial Aid’s front desk
- Pay Sheet – available upon request from FWS Coordinator at lramirez@gmu.edu

CONTACT INFORMATION & OFFICE HOURS

- Contact
  Office of Student Financial Aid
  4400 University Drive – MS 3B5
  Fairfax, VA 22030
  Phone: (703) 993-2353
  Fax: (703) 993-5350
  Website: www.financialaid.gmu.edu
  Located on the bottom level of Student Union Building I.

- Office Hours
  Monday through Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
  The office is closed for all University recognized holidays.