

FEDERAL WORK STUDY HANDBOOK
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Federal Work-Study Handbook

Greenfield Community College

2023-2024

GCC Financial Aid Office



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FEDERAL WORK STUDY HANDBOOK GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to provide students and supervisors with the policies and procedures of Greenfield Community College's Federal Work-Study Program (FWS) and to help answer commonly asked questions. Students and supervisors are responsible for reading the handbook and being familiar with its policies and procedures.

If a student has questions or concerns regarding the guidelines, FWS job qualifications, or a conflict in the work place, the student should first discuss the matter with the supervisor. The financial aid office is available to help the student determine award eligibility and assistance with FWS related documentation.

Notification of Federal Work-Study (FWSP) eligibility is made through the financial aid awarding process and based on data provided by the student on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If a Work-Study award is not listed, it means either you are not eligible or funding has been depleted. If you are still interested, please contact the financial aid office. Jobs become available throughout the year as students leave GCC or are dismissed from their positions; therefore, we encourage all students to review the list of available jobs throughout the school year.

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What is Work-Study?

Work-study is a form of Federal Financial Aid. With the aid of federal funds, Greenfield Community College provides part-time on/off campus employment opportunities for students who demonstrate financial need.

Federal Work-Study (FWS) offers students an excellent opportunity to earn money while gaining work experience. Hours for work-study positions are flexible enough to fit with your academic schedule. Funds from the Federal Work-Study Program enable eligible students to work up to an average of 10 hours per week each semester while classes are in session, and up to 20 hours per week at other times. Students are expected to budget FWS earnings for educational expenses, like transportation costs and basic daily living expenses.

How do I get work-study at GCC?

Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a form of financial aid awarded as part of your financial aid package by the financial aid office. Students chosen for this program have shown financial need by annually submitting a [FAFSA application](#). The Federal Work-Study program at GCC is for current GCC students only. **Students must be enrolled in order to qualify for work-study pay; in other words, you will not receive a paycheck for any hours worked during a period of non-enrollment.**

Students generally work 10 hours per week throughout the fall and spring terms. College work-study pays at the same rate as the minimum wage for the state of Massachusetts. A shift differential of an additional \$1/hour is earned for any work performed after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends.

You and your supervisor are responsible for monitoring your earnings, and to ensure that you do not work hours that will bring your gross earnings beyond the authorized amount for the semester or for the academic year.

What kinds of jobs are available?

Employment is available in a number of academic, administrative, and community service areas. A few examples of FWS jobs at GCC are work in the GCC Library, the Art Department or the Science Labs, the Admission Office, and a multitude of other offices as well as facilities and grounds. A full listing is available on our website: <https://www.gcc.mass.edu/financial-aid/work-study/jobs/>.

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Some FWS positions require more experience and skills than others and most will offer on-the-job training. GCC also holds positions through the *America Reads Program* with the GCC Library, the Greenfield Public Library on Main Street, and the Literacy Project located on Bank Row.

How do I find a Federal Work-Study position?

Students with Federal Work-Study awards are not guaranteed automatic job placement, rather, like any part-time employment, jobs are available to which the student worker submits an application. The FWS Supervisor makes their own hiring decisions based on the student application and interview.

Notify the financial aid office as soon as you've been accepted for a FWS position. Both you and your FWS Supervisor will complete the necessary documents which entitle you to receive a paycheck. Students are generally hired for a specific semester but may be hired in one position for the entire academic year.

Whenever you obtain or change FWS Jobs, it is your responsibility to inform the financial aid office as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in a loss of pay. NO student can receive FWS without the proper authorization and GCC payroll forms.

Required FWS Documents

- **GCC Federal Work-Study Job Authorization/Acceptance Form** – this is your official job approval and acceptance form telling us that you were hired and accepted the job specified. Both the student worker and supervisor complete this form and return it to Student Financial Services.

You must submit this form every semester, even if you keep the same job throughout the year. ***Whenever you change or accept a new FWS position, you must complete this form and submit to Student Financial Services, for proper payroll authorization.***

If this is your first time in a campus job at Greenfield Community College, the following must also be completed:

- **W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance** - Use Form W-4 to figure the right amount of federal income tax to have withheld from your paycheck. You may want to review your withholding every year, especially after finishing your tax return. You can have more, or less, income tax withheld from your paycheck.

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- **I-9 Employment Eligibility and Verification Form** - All employees hired after November 6, 1986, and working in the United States, must complete this form. You must bring two forms of legal ID, such as your driver's license and Social Security card or birth certificate to complete the I-9.
- **Payroll Direct Deposit Form** (not required) - We strongly recommend that students sign up for direct deposit. FWS wages are paid directly to you and are not applied to your student account.

How do I get paid?

Greenfield Community College pays student employees on a biweekly basis by direct deposit or check. Students submit timesheets to their supervisors who verify the hours worked and forward the Timesheets to the GCC Payroll Office every Wednesday. You will receive a paycheck on the following Friday.

Supervisors contact Bjorn Silvia in Payroll at x1316 to request Timesheets. Bjorn can also be reached at SilviaB@gcc.mass.edu.

Copies of the most recent payroll calendar are available in Student Financial Services or Payroll.

How do I submit my timesheet?

Students must be paid for the hours they work, as that work is completed. No student can request that his/her timesheets be "held" for any extended period of time. The FWS fund functions like a regular payroll account and cannot be used as a pseudo savings plan. **Failure to submit time sheets on a regular basis will result in loss of pay.**

Both the financial aid office and payroll monitor the fund on a bi-weekly basis as a normal part of funds management. Therefore, it's crucial for the College to be aware of expenditures as they occur.

Can I be fired from my FWS position?

Yes. Student workers are released from their FWS job at the Supervisor's discretion. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to the same conditions as any other part-time employment, like not adhering to department policies and procedures, regularly missing work days/times, failure to communicate absences with the FWS Supervisor in a timely manner, and not completing work as assigned.

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As with any employment, each student is responsible for working arranged hours. Punctual, efficient, and cooperative performance on the job is always expected. If illness, study obligations, or some other unforeseen circumstance prevents a student from working, he/she must notify his/her supervisor in advance. Failure to report without adequate reason may result in termination of employment and disqualification for future Work-Study.

KEY POINTS REGARDING THE WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

Federal Law clearly stipulates that students cannot work during scheduled class time. It is the responsibility of both the FWS Supervisor and student worker to set forth a work schedule that accommodates the student's class schedule. Students can work when classes are canceled, but the Supervisor must include this information with the weekly time sheet, when is submitted to payroll.

Allowable Work Hours

- Work hours should be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time between student and supervisor.
- *Federal regulations prohibit scheduling work hours or working during scheduled class periods.*
- Work done during a regularly scheduled class period because a class was cancelled must be noted on the time sheet.
 - It must be indicated in the appropriate column of the time sheet, next to the hours worked - "CLASS CANCELLED" and initialed.
- Student must stop working when they have earned the maximum amount of funds awarded to that Work-Study position.

SUMMER WORK-STUDY

There are a small number of positions available during the summer terms.

The **Summer I session** begins shortly after the spring semester ends and runs through the third week in June. You don't have to be enrolled during the summer to qualify for Summer I FWS but you must have been enrolled during the spring semester, and not be a June graduate.

The **Summer II session** begins after July 1, and is a new academic year, covered by a new FAFSA. In order to qualify the student must have a completed [FAFSA application](#) for the new school year and have received a FWSP award. You don't have to be enrolled during the summer to qualify for Summer II FWS but you must be enrolled for the fall semester.

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A FEW NOTES FOR FWS SUPERVISORS

Employment Conditions and Limitations

A school must make FWS jobs reasonably available to all eligible students at the school. *To the maximum extent possible, a school must provide FWS jobs that complement and reinforce each recipient's educational program or career goals.*

General Restrictions on Employment

FWS employment must not displace employees or impair existing service contracts. Also, if the school has an employment agreement with an organization in the private sector, the organization's employees must not be replaced with FWS students. Replacement is interpreted as displacement. At GCC, this means that students cannot be hired to assist any department that finds itself short-staffed.

Under no circumstances can FWS wages be earned for hours worked while fulfilling course requirements. Even if an internship or practicum may be a part of a degree requirement, it does not qualify for Work-Study funding. Work-Study wages may not be paid for receiving instruction in a classroom or any other academic setting.

SUPERVISOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How is Federal Work-Study Funded at GCC?

Every year the college submits the "Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP)" for the two Campus-Based programs: Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), and Federal Work-Study (FWS).

The Department of Education awards the college FWS funding annually based on the data provided in the FISAP report and the availability of federal funding for Title IV programs. GCC's federal Work-Study award has remained level funded as far back as 2003. Historically federal funding has made up 93% of the college's overall FWS budget.

Why isn't FWS considered to be a part of my annual department budget at GCC?

FWS is federal financial aid awarded to the college solely to provide financially eligible students with the opportunity to earn money through on/off-campus employment. Your department receives an annually allocation in order to provide employment positions to these students.

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Does the financial aid office pre-select FWS student workers?

The financial aid office determines the student's eligibility for a federal Work-Study award based on several criteria on the student's FAFSA application. We do not interview students or collect references to determine the student's hiring qualifications.

As a FWS Supervisor it's important for you to know that students with Federal Work-Study Awards are not guaranteed automatic job placement, rather, like any part-time employment, jobs are available to which the student worker submits an application. The FWS Supervisor makes their own hiring decisions based on the student application and interview.

Can I require the student to complete an application form?

Clearly stating your expectations during the interview and hiring process may alleviate work place conflicts and confusion in the long run. Departments, both on and off-campus, have the right to use a FWS job application form. Some departments on campus already use an application form and find it helpful during the hiring process.

I've just hired a student worker, are there any required forms?

Absolutely!

- *GCC Federal Work-Study Job Authorization/Acceptance Form* – this tells us that you hired a student worker and initiates the payroll authorization for your FWS allotment.

You and the student must complete and sign the Job Authorization form every term, even if the same student continues to work for you throughout the year. ***Whenever you hire a student, you and the student must complete this form and submit to Student Financial Services. Your student will not be paid if this form is not returned to Student Financial Services.***

What if my student worker wants to receive payment for his hours in one lump-sum?

Students must be paid for the hours they work as that work is completed. No student can request that his/her timesheets be "held" for any extended period of time. The FWS fund functions like a regular payroll account and cannot be used as a pseudo savings plan. **Failure to submit time sheets on a regular basis will result in loss of pay.**

Both the financial aid office and payroll monitor the fund on a bi-weekly basis as a normal part of funds management. Therefore, it's crucial for us to be aware of expenditures as they occur.

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Why do I have to submit time-sheets on a regular basis?

The FWS Fund functions as a payroll fund and the fund balance must be reconciled on bi-weekly and monthly basis. GCC provides monthly reconciliation records to federal and state auditors upon their request. *Accurate record keeping depends on the regular and timely submission of time sheets.*

When is it ok for the student worker to submit his or her own timesheets to payroll?

It is the FWS Supervisor's responsibility to submit the signed time sheets to payroll on a regular basis. *This responsibility rests solely with the supervisor.* Under NO circumstance should a student worker ever be given the time sheet once it is signed by the supervisor.

Who has the authority to sign FWS time sheets in my absence?

Only you have the authority to sign your student worker's timesheets. However, advanced approval of Student Financial Services does allow for another staff member to provide a signature in your absence. We must have the appropriate supervisor approval and signatures on file and ready to provide to the auditors upon their request.

By signing the time sheet, you are verifying that the student worked the hours noted on the sheet and that the student is indeed entitled to receive a payment for those hours.

If you'd like to grant another staff member the authority to sign and submit your student worker's time sheet, contact Student Financial Services for the proper form and process.

Can a FWS student worker be dismissed from FWS employment?

As with any employment, each student is responsible for working arranged hours. Punctual, efficient, and cooperative performance on the job is always expected. If illness, study obligations, or some other unforeseen circumstance prevents a student from working, he/she must notify his/her supervisor in advance. Failure to report without adequate reason may result in termination of employment and disqualification for future Work-Study.

Student workers can be released from their FWS job at the Supervisor's discretion. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to the same conditions as any other part-time employment, like not adhering to department policies and procedures, regularly missing work days/times, failure to communicate absences with the FWS Supervisor in a timely manner, and not completing work as assigned.

How do I request weekly timesheets?

Supervisors can contact Bjorn Silvia (silviab@gcc.mass.edu) in Payroll at x1316 to request Timesheets.

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COMMUNITYSERVICE JOBS AND AMERICA READS

Employing an FWS student in these positions serves the needs of the community and gives the FWS student an enriching and rewarding experience. Each school must use at least 7% of its FWS allocation to employ students in community service jobs. Community Service jobs can be either on-campus or off-campus. *Nonprofit agencies* can qualify as community service employers if the work performed meets the definition of community services in federal regulations.

At least one of the FWS students whom GCC employs to fulfill this requirement must perform family literacy activities in a family literacy project that provides services to families with preschool age children or elementary school children; or, serve as a reading tutor for children who are preschool age or are in elementary school.

Community services eligible for FWS

Community services are defined as “*services that are identified by an institution of higher education through formal or informal consultation with local nonprofit, government, and community-based organizations, as designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low-income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs*”.

There is no restriction as to whether these jobs are located on or off-campus. At GCC these services are provided through the following on/off-campus locations:

America Reads

Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Greenfield Community College’s Library Services
The Greenfield Public Library
The Literacy Project

Community Service

Franklin County Courthouse
Local Access to Valley Arts (The LAVA Center)
GCC Office of Public Safety

To be considered employed in a community service job for FWS purposes, a FWS student does not have to provide a “direct” service. On-campus jobs can meet the definition of community services, provided that the services are designed to improve the quality of life for college and community residents, or to solve problems related to their needs, and that they meet the regulatory and statutory provisions pertaining to the applicable FWS Program employment limitations and conditions.

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Off-Campus Agreements

If you are an off-campus organization wanting to employ GCC FWS students, you must enter into a written agreement—a contract—with the Office of Financial Aid at the college. Contracts are renewed on an annual basis.

Before an agreement can be entered into, GCC must make sure the off-campus organization is a reliable agency with professional direction and staff and that the work to be performed is consistent with the purpose of the FWS Program.

The agreement specifies what share, if any, of the student's compensation and other costs will be paid by the off-campus organization. All off-campus agencies should contact student Financial Services, to make off-campus FWS arrangements and obtain yearly contracts.