UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

Work-Study Handbook
For Students and Supervisors

A guide to the Work-Study Program

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I. Introduction

A. Student Handbook Statement

These guidelines, policies, and procedures have been developed to meet the needs of student workers and their supervisors. Students entering the work-study program are required to follow all policies and procedures outlined in this manual. Any questions regarding this handbook should be addressed to the Work-Study Program Coordinator.

B. Types of Student Employment

1. Federal Work-Study (FWS)

The Federal Work-Study Program is a federally funded work program which provides employment to eligible students with financial need, helping them to earn money to pay educational expenses. To be considered for FWS, students must complete the FAFSA by the priority deadline. FWS funding is financial aid, and as with other types of financial aid, student eligibility is determined by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid based on financial need.

2. Texas College Work-Study (TXCWS)

The Texas College Work-Study Program is a state-funded work program which provides employment to eligible students with financial need, helping them to earn money to pay educational expenses. To be considered for TXCWS, students must complete the FAFSA by the priority deadline. TXCWS funding is financial aid, and as with other types of financial aid, student eligibility is determined by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid based on financial need.

3. Texas College Work-Study Mentorship (TXCWSM)

The Texas College Work-Study Mentorship Program is a state-funded work program which provides employment to eligible students with financial need, helping them to earn money to pay educational expenses. Employment consists of mentoring, tutoring or advising college or high school students to improve student access, success and completion of higher education. To be considered for TXCWS, students must participate in the Urban Experience Program and should complete the FAFSA by the priority deadline. TXCWS funding is financial aid, and as with other types of financial aid, student eligibility is determined by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid based on financial need.

C. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is a federal law which requires that (a) a written institutional policy must be established and (b) a statement of adopted procedures covering privacy rights of students must be made available via annual notice in the catalog to currently enrolled students.

The University of Houston shall maintain the confidentiality of educational records in accordance with the provisions of the Act and shall accord all the rights under the Act to eligible students who are attending or attended the University. Students in the work-study

program may have access to educational and financial records containing personally identifiable information about current and former students, the unauthorized disclosure of which is prohibited by the previously disclosed Act. If it is found that a student has violated FERPA, they will be immediately terminated from their position and will be reported to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the institution.

II. Policies and Procedures for Students

A. General Guidelines

The work-study programs are designed to help students meet educational expenses through meaningful employment. University Career Services (http://www.uh.edu/ucs/) assists students who qualify for work-study funding in finding part-time employment. Jobs vary throughout the university and range from clerical assistance in various departments to working in the library or the rec center. Many students also work for approved, off-campus community service organizations in a variety of capacities.

B. Eligibility

A student may be eligible for work-study funding if the student meets all the following requirements:

1. Be admitted to the University of Houston
2. Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the priority financial aid deadline and indicate our school code: **003652**
3. Demonstrate financial need, based on the institution's cost of attendance (COA) and the student aid index (SAI) as determined by the FAFSA data
4. Completed verification, if selected
5. Be enrolled and **maintain** enrollment of at least half-time (6 credit hours for undergraduate, 5 credit hours for graduate/professional)
6. Meeting satisfactory academic progress (http://uh.edu/sap)
7. For Texas College Work-Study and the Texas College Work-Study Mentorships Programs, a student must be a Texas resident, and cannot have an athletic scholarship.

C. Finding a Work-Study Job

All Work-study positions are posted on UH Career Services' portal, Cougar Pathway (http://www.uh.edu/ucs/cougarpathway/) for on-campus and off-campus, community service employers. A student must accept the work-study financial aid offer and register with Cougar Pathway before they can apply for work-study positions. The hiring process for WS positions is the same for all employees. A student must sign up for direct deposit, complete an I-9, and not have a delinquency or financial hold with the University of Houston. A Criminal History Record Investigation will be conducted. A student must not begin working until all documentation is approved by the Office of Human Resources.

D. Employee Rights and Responsibilities

A student-employee has the right to:

1. Information regarding their financial aid offer amount, rate of pay, average number of hours per week, and general work-study procedures
2. Instructions regarding procedures to be followed if the student cannot report for a scheduled work period
3. A clearly defined work schedule, which accommodates the student's course schedule and academic requirements
4. Adequate training to perform assigned tasks
5. A safe, clean, and professional working environment
6. Supervision and direction from University of Houston faculty or staff or the staff of the off-campus organization
7. Instructions for recording hours worked, as well as information regarding the University's payroll procedures and payroll calendar

A student-employee has the responsibility to:

1. Maintain the established work schedule -- If unable to work designated hours, the student-employee must notify the supervisor and mutually arrange a new schedule.
2. Be punctual -- If delayed or unable to attend work, the student-employee must immediately contact the supervisor.
3. Notify the supervisor in advance of any absences
4. Clock in and out on a daily basis, following department procedures
5. Not work during scheduled class times -- Working during class times is only permitted if the class is cancelled or dismissed early with written proof (i.e., email from professor, copy of syllabus).
6. Observe the dress code expected for the work site
7. Understand the expectations of the individual supervisor
8. Perform all tasks to the best of their ability -- If a student-employee has any questions or problems, they should consult the supervisor.
9. Notify the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid in the event of an inappropriate work environment
10. Maintain professionalism and accuracy in all transactions with the public or campus community
11. Spend time at work participating in work activities – Student-employees are not allowed to sleep, read, watch streaming, study or do homework while working. If a supervisor allows a student to work on homework, it must be while serving a need of the work site at the same time (i.e., answering the phones, greeting visitors, etc.).
12. Adhere to rules and regulations established for student-employees at the work site.

E. Timesheet Guidelines

1. **Student-employees are not allowed to work during scheduled class time.**
2. Student-employees may work a maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session.

3. During approved winter and spring breaks, student-employees may work a maximum of 39 hours per week.
4. Student-employees may not work more than eight hours per day, on any given day.
5. A minimum 30-minute break is required for students working more than six consecutive hours.
6. Student-employees cannot use mobile devices to punch in and out without prior written consent from the Work-Study Program Coordinator.
7. **Payable time and/or absences must be approved, and all high exceptions cleared by the supervisor before noon every Wednesday.**
8. Students are paid biweekly (http://www.uh.edu/human-resources/payroll/).
9. For students employed by off-campus employers –
    a. **Timesheets are due by close of business every Tuesday.**
    b. Timesheets must be printed out, signed, and dated by student and supervisor.
    c. If a student fails to clock in and out, there must be a written explanation and the supervisor must initial the manually-entered hours.
    d. Timesheets must be submitted via email by the supervisor in PDF format to both the recipients listed below:
        i. To: the work-study general mailbox – workstudy@uh.edu
        ii. CC: the student-employee
    e. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a delay of pay to the student-employee and possible non-renewal of the agreement with the off-campus organization for the following academic year.

Student-employees will only be paid for hours worked. If any student-employee intentionally submits fraudulent time punches or timesheets to their employer, the WS office will refer the student to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action.

F. Pay Rates

All jobs offer competitive wages and most pay more than minimum wage based upon experience and skills. Students working at the University of Houston under the work-study programs are paid an hourly-wage under regulations set by the University's Office of Human Resources. WS students working off-campus are also paid on an hourly basis at wage rates set by the off-campus employer.

G. Cancellation

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid may cancel a student's work-study offer if the student:

1. Fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress (http://uh.edu/sap)
2. Fails to obtain employment within two weeks from the start of the semester
3. Fails to report to the work site within seven days of the starting date on the Program Authorization Form
4. Has received additional aid or scholarships of which the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid was unaware of at the time the work-study offer was made
5. Works during scheduled class times

6. Fails to submit a timesheet for two consecutive pay periods, if employed by an off-campus organization.

H. Termination

The work site supervisor may terminate the employment of a work-study employee whose job performance, conduct and/or dependability is unacceptable according to departmental and work-study standards. The supervisor is responsible for justifying the termination and notifying the Work-Study Program Coordinator and HR. *Improper use of university property and falsification of timesheets will result in termination without grounds for appeal*.

I. Breaks and Holidays

Student-employees may work during semester breaks with the approval of their supervisor, if funding is available. Students are not permitted to work on holidays that are observed by the University of Houston. Students are also not provided paid leave for illness, vacation, or due to inclimate weather conditions.

J. Rehire Procedures

Student-employees who are seeking to be rehired must be eligible and have been offered work-study funding as a part of their financial aid award. A new application for the desired position will need to be submitted via Cougar Pathway.

III. Policies and Procedures for Supervisors

A. Hiring a Work-Study Student-Employee

1. All employers are required to attend the mandatory work-study training at least once per year. The training is generally held during June and July.
2. A Work-Study Agreement for the upcoming academic year will be sent after training, and will need to be completed and submitted. The agreements must contain:
    a. A job description for each position which lists duties and responsibilities, as well as required knowledge and skills
    b. The name and address of the work site
    c. The supervisor's name, email, and telephone number
    d. An IRS letter verifying tax exempt status, for off-campus, community service organization
3. Off-campus WS Agreements will be reviewed by the Work-Study Program Coordinator, Assistant Director, and Executive Director of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. If approved, the signed agreement will be returned to the organization.
4. The organization will post all positions in Cougar Pathway. Once the posting has been approved, all eligible students with work-study eligibility will be able to apply.

B. Interviewing Student-Employees

Supervisors will be notified when students apply for their positions. After reviewing the students' resumes, the supervisor will need to contact the students to arrange interviews. It

benefits both the employer and the potential student-employee to discuss the following during the interview:

- Description of job duties
- Experience and skills needed to perform the job
- Personal conduct and dress expected
- Hours of operation and student's schedule of weekly hours
- Training and mentoring provided
- Expected date by which a hiring decision will be made and start date
  Please note that the employment laws that apply to interviewing regular employees also apply to the interviewing of student-employees.

How to prepare for the interview:

- Write interview questions that are criterion-based, behavior-based, job related, and non-discriminatory.
- Decide whether skills testing will be required.
- Set aside enough time to do an interview of substance that covers all requirements for the student-employee to successfully perform the job.
- Give each candidate a copy of the position description.

C. Conducting the Interview:

- Make the candidate feel welcome and at ease.
- Give the candidate an overview of how the interview will run.
- Wait for good answers and avoid talking too much.
- Review attitude toward previous employment experiences and supervisors, and the expected schedule.
- Determine interests, goals, strengths, and challenges.
- Take notes during interview as needed to make a hiring decision later.

D. Hiring a Student-Employee

Employers should notify the student of the hiring decision within one to three days to ensure timeliness, and update the student status in Cougar Pathway to "hire." Complete the Program Authorization Form and send to workstudy@uh.edu as soon as the student accepts the position. Student-employees are paid by the hour and paychecks are issued via direct deposit biweekly. The hourly rate should be at least the current federal minimum wage, but can be higher. Holidays, weather-related cancellations, and sick days are not to be counted as hours worked. Student-employees are not paid for lunch or break periods. Overtime is not authorized for work-study student-employees. Please remember the following guidelines for a student's eligibility to work:

- **Students are not allowed to work during scheduled class time.**
- Students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 hours for undergraduates, 5 hours for graduate and professional students) to be eligible to work.
- Work-study funding will be cancelled if the student drops below half-time status or withdraws from University of Houston.

- Students may work up to 20 hours per week during normal school sessions.
- Students may work up to 39 hours during winter and spring breaks.
- Students may only work a maximum of eight hours per day.
- A minimum 30-minute break is required for students working more than six consecutive hours.
- Students cannot use mobile devices to punch in and out without prior written consent from the Work-Study Program Coordinator.
- **Payable time and/or absences must be approved, and all high exceptions cleared before noon every Wednesday.**
- Students are paid biweekly (http://www.uh.edu/human-resources/payroll/).

For students employed by off-campus employers

- **Timesheets are due by close of business every Tuesday.**
- Timesheets must be printed out, signed, and dated by student and supervisor.
- If a student fails to clock in or out, please provide an explanation and the supervisor should initial the manually-entered hours.
- Timesheets must be submitted via email by supervisor in PDF format to recipients listed below:
    - To: the work-study general mailbox – workstudy@uh.edu
    - CC: the student-employee

E. Orienting Student-Employees

Good personnel practices require that every employee be oriented to the organization of the work place and trained to perform necessary tasks. It benefits both the department/organization and the student to establish a formal training program and keep the lines of communication open, clear and constructive. Spend enough time discussing the following to prevent future confusion:

- Performance standards
- Variations in work schedules for holidays and examination periods
- The student's responsibility for University facilities and equipment
- Safety and health practices
- Training in skills and procedures necessary to perform the job
- Confidentiality of records and files under FERPA
- System access and security procedures
- Procedures for recording hours worked and completing timesheets
- Dress code in the workplace
- Telephone etiquette
- "No homework" policy -- Student-employees are not allowed to study or do homework on the job unless they are fulfilling a role for the work site at the same time, such as answering phones, covering a reception desk, etc.
- Policy prohibiting smoking on-campus and at the work site

Provide answers to the following question:

1. Who is the student's supervisor?
2. To whom should the student direct problems or questions?
3. Who should be contacted in case of absence or change in work schedule?

F. Work-Study Supervisor FAQs

When can a student-employee start working?

Once the student has completed the interview process and the CWS Program Authorization Form has been submitted to the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, the Work-Study Program Coordinator will send the student the required additional paperwork. This includes the student signing up for direct deposit, completing an I-9 and a background check. The student cannot have a delinquency or financial hold with the University of Houston. Once all documents have been received, a start date will be requested from HR. This date will be sent to the department/organization and student. A student must not begin working until all documentation is approved.

Are student-employees required to take lunch breaks?

All student-employees are entitled to have a 30-minute lunch break if they work six consecutive hours. If a student-employee works eight hours, he/she is entitled to take a lunch break of one hour. This should be noted on the timesheet.

Who is responsible for keeping track of hours worked and remaining hours that a student may work within the semester?

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that hours have been calculated accurately prior to approval of payable time, or submission of the timesheet to the Work-Study Program Coordinator (if student is employed by an off-campus employer). The supervisor should keep a biweekly running tally of the number of hours worked by the student-employee to ensure that the student's hours are accurate and that he/she does not exceed the work-study funding offered. If the student-employee reaches his/her allocation, the employing department is responsible for covering the student's salary for additional hours worked.

For students employed by off-campus employers, who must sign the student-employee's timesheet?

Both the student-employee and supervisor are required to sign the timesheet in order for it to be processed. The supervisor's signature must be legible in order to verify that the **timesheet has been signed by the supervisor on record**. Any timesheets not signed or signed in pencil by either the student-employee and the supervisor will be returned to the supervisor and not processed for that time period. After the supervisor has signed the time sheet, a PDF of the timesheet should be emailed to workstudy@uh.edu.

For students employed by off-campus employers, when should timesheets be submitted?

All timesheets **must be submitted into the Work-Study Program Coordinator via email by close of business every Tuesday.** It is the organization's responsibility to submit these to the Work-Study Program Coordinator. All time sheets turned in late or those that have

adjustments must also include a written statement explaining why it is late, as well as the reason the adjustments were made.

G. Student Evaluations

All supervisors should evaluate on-campus FWS students, and provide their students with feedback on their performance. Supervisors should take the time to guide students, and help them grow as professionals.

H. Terminations

If student-employees do not perform their duties satisfactorily and need to be terminated, the supervisor must discuss the matter with the Work-Study Program Coordinator prior to terminating the student. *Improper use of university property or falsification of timesheets will result in a termination without grounds for appeal.*

CWS CONTACT INFORMATION

Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid

Welcome Center
4400 University Drive
Houston, TX 77204

workstudy@uh.edu

Office Number: 713-743-1010
Fax Number: 713-743-9098

Hours of Operation
Monday – Thursday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Associate Director, Student Aid Programs,
Dr. Carlos E. Gonzalez