

# FEDERAL WORK-STUDY OFFSITE STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Virginia Tech  
Last Updated 8/2024

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## Federal Work-Study Description and Contact Information

Federal Work-Study (FWS) provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need and is funded by the US Department of Education and partnering employers. Positions should be paired with student majors and applications are posted in [Handshake](#). Eligible students are offered Federal Work-Study funds in their [Financial Aid Portal](#) under “Offer.” Questions about this program should be directed to:

**University Scholarships and Financial Aid’s Federal Work-Study Coordinator**

**Email:** [finaid@vt.edu](mailto:finaid@vt.edu)

**Telephone:** 540-231-5179

## Yearly Student Employee Eligibility Requirements

Federal Work-Study eligibility is determined by University Scholarships and Financial Aid. Here is a list of general requirements for students:

- File a relevant [FAFSA](#).
- Have sufficient remaining need. Students are not permitted to work as a Federal Work-Study employee if allocated funds run out or if other aid is awarded after Federal Work-Study funds are applied and a student employee has insufficient remaining funds. If funds run out or are reduced, the Federal Work-Study position ends and employers may offer to hire the student and pay 100% remaining wages for the remainder of the academic year. Students are awarded \$5,000 to \$6,000 for the year, Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters combined.
- Submit any financial aid-related documents requested.
- Enroll in at least six credits each semester in a degree-seeking program (students can only work during the fall and spring semesters).
- Meet [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#).
- Apply for position(s) through [Handshake](#) and secure a position by September 30.
- Complete Onboarding. Onboarding requirements are:
  - Complete I-9 through Virginia Tech’s New Hire Center.
  - Pass Conviction Check, which University Scholarships and Financial Aid will request. Tutors that work with Montgomery County Public Schools will need to obtain a separate fingerprinting background check.
  - Supply I-9 Documents to University Scholarships and Financial Aid.
  - Review Code of Conduct with University Scholarships and Financial Aid.
  - Submit a FERPA Release to University Scholarships and Financial Aid.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student’s educational records. The notice is also printed on the Registrar’s webpage at <https://www.registrar.vt.edu/FERPA.html>. Students will be asked to sign a FERPA Release via [DocuSign](#) before onboarding so that we can discuss Federal Work-Study details with employers.

## Offsite Federal Work-Study Hiring Procedures

Employers select applicants and forward information to University Scholarships and Financial Aid. The Federal Work-Study Coordinator will follow up with selected student applicants via email to offer positions and arrange an orientation meeting. Student hires cannot start working until after onboarding and orientation is complete and conviction checks are confirmed to be clear.

1. Student applicants should monitor their emails for an onboarding invitation and select a date and time to attend orientation. The invitation will be emailed from [finaid@vt.edu](mailto:finaid@vt.edu).
2. An email containing a link to complete Part 1 of an I-9 will be emailed from Virginia Tech's Human Resources Office, [hrrservicecenter@vt.edu](mailto:hrrservicecenter@vt.edu). This must be completed before new hires meet for orientation or onboarding cannot move forward.
3. Truescreen runs conviction checks and if any questions arise, they may also reach out via email. The email will come from "Application Station."
4. Part 2 of an I-9 will be completed in-person during orientation. New hires must present [I9 documents](#) at this time or they cannot move forward with onboarding. Returning hires that have had more than a one-year gap of employment at Virginia Tech will also be asked to re-submit I9 documentation.

## General Best Practices

### Professionalism

Please always maintain professionalism while working. Career and Professional Development lists [ways to maintain professionalism](#) on their website. They also provide great resources for [developing professional competencies](#).

### Attire

Federal Work-Study can take place in a variety of settings. Most position placements will be within office or school settings. It is best practice to check with employers and follow their dress code procedures if they are stricter. Please wear appropriate clothing. Guidelines are as follows but are not limited to:

- Do not wear clothing that offends, disrupts the work environment, or is inappropriate.
- Clothing that includes references to gangs, drugs, alcohol, politics, racism, religion, nationality, sex or discrimination is inappropriate.
- No headwear will be worn unless approved for religious purposes.
- Open toed shoes are not permitted (no sandals, flip-flops, or slip-ons).
- Jewelry cannot cause distractions or safety issues.
- Tops cannot be low cut, cut out, tank tops, spaghetti straps, or sportswear.
- Bottoms must be at least knee length and cannot be sportswear.
- No undergarments can be visible.
- Clothing must be clean and cannot have rips or holes if working indoors. Some students may work outdoors, exceptions in such cases can be made if approved by an employer.
- Hair and fingernails should be clean and neat.
- Perfume or cologne should be used sparingly or not at all. No body odor should be detectable.

## Virtual Meetings

If a Federal Work-Study student employee attends any virtual meetings, the above guidelines for clothing must be followed. Also, please be aware of meeting backgrounds and lighting. Bedrooms should not be seen and faces should be visible. Mics should be muted when not speaking. A variety of professional Zoom backgrounds are provided on the [Alumni Relations webpage](#). Do not eat during meetings and please be attentive to the presenter. If presenting, please be professional and refrain from using profanity.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

### Secure Information

If granted access on a worksite, secure confidential information at the workplace and keep written information in a safe place. Only view confidential information on secure devices.

### Limit Sharing

Only share confidential information with authorized individuals determined by the offsite workplace. Do not gossip or share information outside of the workplace or on personal social media profiles or through text messages, etc. Do not take photos of anyone at the workplace unless you have obtained permission to do so for work purposes. Sharing information outside of the workplace and taking unauthorized photos of individuals is illegal.

### Proper Disposal

Shred confidential documents when they are no longer needed. Student employees disposing of non-paper documents should consult with their supervisor for recommended disposal instructions.

### Know Policies at the Worksite

Federal Work-Study student employees should consult supervisors to ensure that they are following proper Privacy and Confidentiality and Safety procedures for their specific worksite.

### Virtual and In-Person Access

Supervisors should always be accessible during work shifts. If working remotely, Federal Work-Study Student employees should be able to contact supervisors with any questions during shifts. If working on-site, student employees should not have access to keys, pass cards, door codes, security codes, etc. If computer access is granted and a student employee must step away, computers should be locked by clicking Ctrl+Alt+Delete and Lock.

## Work Schedule, Time Reporting, and Payroll Guidelines

### Permittable Work Hours

Federal Work-Study student employees cannot work more than 20 hours a week. First year students can earn up to \$5,000 during the year and returning students can earn up to \$6,000 during the year (this is for both fall and spring semesters, please be mindful of this while scheduling for work). Students are not permitted to work during winter or summer semesters. Students employed as Federal Work-Study cannot begin work until approved and cannot work past the last day (final exam day) of each semester.

## Training and Tutor Course Planning

All Federal Work-Study student employees should be paid for time spent on any training. Some tutors spend time on course planning and should also be paid. Please be sure to document time in and out in Timeclock during these situations.

## Semester Start/End Dates

Students employed as Federal Work-Study cannot begin work until the first day of each semester and cannot work past the last day ([final exam day](#)) of each semester. Start dates must first be approved by University Scholarships and Financial Aid.

## Length of Commitment

Federal Work-Study student employees are preferred to work a full year and are not permitted to work during winter or summer; it takes time to train a worker. Student employees may voluntarily resign from a position at any time, but are asked to provide at least two weeks' notice. If a student employee resigns from a position for good cause, they will not be prevented from obtaining the same or another position later if they remain eligible and if funding is available at that time. A position may be renewed during future years if the employer is willing to rehire and if the student employee is still eligible.

## Breaks

Students cannot work more than six hours unless they take an unpaid 30-minute break. They must clock in and out for their 30-minute break. If they take a break, for any reason, they must clock in and out via Timeclock.

## Class Time

Federal Work-Study students cannot work during class time. Should they work during class, they will not be paid during that time.

## University Closings

### Holidays

Students should not work on the following times/holidays:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- During any point of summer break. Summer break starts May 15 in 2025.
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (they can work during Thanksgiving break, just not on Thanksgiving Day).
- During any point of winter break (December 19, 2024-January 1, 2025).

### Inclement Weather

Unless a student has a remote position, Federal Work-Study students should not work if the university closes due to inclement weather. Furthermore, students should not be working during delayed or early closings. Announcements are made on the [University Status](#) page.

## Reporting and Approving Time Worked

Student employees will report time worked in [Timeclock](#) Plus and should enter time as worked each day. In other words, Time In should be entered immediately when arriving to work or coming off any breaks and Time Out should be entered when starting breaks or before leaving work.

Employers and employees will be responsible for signing Timeclock logs via [DocuSign](#) at the end of each pay period. Pay periods generally end on the 15<sup>th</sup> and final day of each month and can take place during weekends. Once DocuSigns are issued, employers and employees should review and sign documents within 24 hours to avoid delays or retroactive payments. Late time that is reported will be paid retroactively if the pay period has already ended and pay out the following pay period. Repetitive late reporting can result in dismissal.

Modules and Tutorials pertaining to Timeclock, pay schedules, etc. can be found on [Controller's webpage](#).

### Pay Period Schedules

Controller's Office will post [Pay Schedules](#) to a dedicated Payroll webpage. Student employees can reference Pay Schedules to determine when they will be paid and employers can reference Pay Schedules to determine when time worked is due to be approved or if retroactive pay must be requested. If assistance is needed, employers and student employees may email University Scholarships and Financial Aid by emailing [finaid@vt.edu](mailto:finaid@vt.edu).

### Direct Deposit Setup and Pay Stubs, Etc.

Direct Deposit can be setup or updated and pay information can be found by signing into [Hokie SPA](#) and clicking Hokie Team.

## Disciplinary Action and Procedures

Federal Work-Study student employees can be dismissed or terminated from a FWS job just like any other type of employee. If the student is not meeting their responsibilities, behaving inappropriately, or having attendance issues or other issues, a verbal warning from a partnering supervisor is first recommended. The next step is a written warning to the student, then termination. This ultimately is determined by the partnering offsite supervisor and supervisors should make University Scholarships and Financial Aid aware of any incidents.

## Accident Reporting and Safety in the Workplace

In the event of an emergency, Federal Work-Study student employees should immediately call 911. Offsite supervisors are responsible for reviewing their emergency procedures on the student employee's first day of work. If an accident occurs, please email [finaid@vt.edu](mailto:finaid@vt.edu) so that our office can initiate a claim. Offsite employers will also file their own claims.

## Title IX Incidents (Sexual Harassment and Violence)

All Virginia Tech's University Scholarship and Financial Aid (USFA) Office staff are required to report any known incidents that fall under Title IX to Virginia Tech's Title IX Office. This means that if incidents are discussed with USFA staff, regardless of if a student or employer contacts our office and no matter where an incident takes place, incidents will be reported. There are no exceptions.

Here are some general resources that are available for any student employees that encounter a sexual harassment and/or violence:

- CARES Program (Campus Advocacy, Resources and Education for Survivors): 540-231-7806 | [CARESupport@vt.edu](mailto:CARESupport@vt.edu) | [womenscenter.vt.edu/advocacy](http://womenscenter.vt.edu/advocacy)
- Cook Counseling Center: 540-231-6557 | [ucc.vt.edu](http://ucc.vt.edu)
- Women's Resource Center of the NRV: 24/7 Crisis Hotline 540-639-1123 | [wrcnrv.org](http://wrcnrv.org)
- Title IX Coordinator Katie Polidoro: 540-231-1824 | [polidoro@vt.edu](mailto:polidoro@vt.edu) | [safe.vt.edu](http://safe.vt.edu)
- Dean of Students Office: 540-231-3787 | [dean.students@vt.edu](mailto:dean.students@vt.edu) | [dos.vt.edu](http://dos.vt.edu)
- Virginia Tech Police Department: 540-382-6411 | [vtpolice@vt.edu](mailto:vtpolice@vt.edu) | [police.vt.edu](http://police.vt.edu)

## Disability and Reasonable Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employees with disabilities from being discriminated against. An employee with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. If an employee qualifies as disabled as defined by the ADA, the employee is entitled to a reasonable accommodation to facilitate employment, so as long as they can perform the essential functions of the job that they are being hired to do. To initiate a collaboration, please email [finaid@vt.edu](mailto:finaid@vt.edu) so that our office can reach out to Office for Equity and Accessibility.

**Your signature below certifies that you have reviewed and will adhere to this Federal Work-Study Offsite Student Employee Handbook.**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_