

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY ON- CAMPUS STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK (2025-2026)



Virginia Tech
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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 U.S. Department of Education and partnering employers. Eligible students are offered Federal Work-Study funds in their [Financial Aid Portal](#) under “Offer.” Students can apply to FWS job opportunities in [Handshake](#). Questions about this program should be directed to:

University Scholarships and Financial Aid

E-mail: finaid@vt.edu

Telephone: 540-231-5179

2025-2026 Federal Work-Study Award Information

- Students are awarded up to \$6,000 for the 2024-2025 school year, fall and spring semesters combined. **First-time FWS recipients can receive up to \$5,000 and returning FWS recipients can receive up to \$6,000.**
- Students are not permitted to work as a Federal Work-Study employee once their FWS award is exhausted. If funds run out or are reduced, the Federal Work-Study position ends and employers may offer to hire the student and pay 100% of the remaining wages for the remainder of the academic year.

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.
- 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, 2025.
- Complete Onboarding through Virginia Tech’s New Hire Center (Human Resources).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student’s educational records. Student employees may have inquiry access to student records if required for job responsibilities.

Employers must inform students of their FERPA responsibilities via employment contract or the Student Employee Confidentiality Agreement.

Violation of FERPA (accessing data for personal reasons; disclosures) is a dismissible offense.

Employers may download a copy of the [Student Employee Confidentiality Agreement](#) to discuss with the student employee. The agreement should be maintained with the hiring department for two years after the student employees' last day of employment with the department.

Contact the [University Registrar](#) if you have questions relative to compliance with these guidelines.

The notice is also printed on the Registrar's webpage at <https://www.registrar.vt.edu/FERPA.html>.

On-Campus Federal Work-Study Hiring Procedures

Finding a Job

Students apply for on-campus FWS job opportunities on [Handshake](#). Student hires cannot start working until onboarding is complete and conviction checks are confirmed to be clear in the Virginia Tech New Hire Center (hrservicecenter@vt.edu).

1. Student applicants should monitor their e-mail for an onboarding invitation and background check.
2. Part 1 of an I-9 will be completed in the New Hire Center.
3. Part 2 of the I-9 will be completed in-person when they report to their job at the specified time (first day or before). New hires must present [acceptable identity and employment authorization documents](#) at this time or they cannot begin work. 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.
4. Truescreen runs conviction checks and if any questions arise, they may also reach out via email. The email will come from "Application Station."

Employment Resources

Career and Professional Development offers several employment resources for student success.

- [Advising appointments](#) (good for resume and cover letter reviews)
- [CareerOutfitters](#) (free professional clothing): Watch for more information about a FWS student-exclusive CareerOutfitters pop-up event during the school year!
- [VMock](#)
- [...and more!](#)

General Best Practices

Professionalism

Always maintain professionalism while working. Career and Professional Development lists ways to get career ready and develop professional competencies, found [here](#).

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 than the guidelines listed below. Student employees must 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. For examples of appropriate work attire, please visit Career and Professional Development's website [here](#).
- 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.
- Undergarments should not 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. Be aware of meeting backgrounds and lighting. Bedrooms should not be seen, and faces should be visible. Microphones 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, be professional and refrain from using profanity.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Secure Information

If granted access to confidential information at the workplace, secure it 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 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 Worksites

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 per week. Being mindful of award amounts, first-time FWS recipients can earn up to \$5,000 during the year and returning FWS recipients can earn up to \$6,000 during the year (this is for both fall and spring semesters). 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 specified date of each semester (listed below) 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 a 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 at a time 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 the department's specified time management system, [Banner Time Entry \(BTE\)](#) or [TimeClock Plus \(TCP\)](#).

Class Time

Federal Work-Study students cannot work during class time. Should a student 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 14, 2026.
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (they can work during Thanksgiving break, just not on Thanksgiving Day).
- During any point between December 18, 2025 and January 1, 2026.

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 the department's specified time management system of [Banner Time Entry \(BTE\)](#) or [TimeClock PLUS \(TCP\)](#), and should enter time as worked each day. In other words, "Time In," or clocking in, should be entered immediately when arriving to work or coming off any breaks and "Time Out," or clocking out, should be entered when starting breaks or before leaving work.

Employers and employees will be responsible for reviewing time worked for each pay period. In addition to reviewing time worked each pay period, they will need to keep track of how much of the employee's FWS award is remaining to ensure the student does not earn more money than what their FWS award is for. Pay periods generally end on the 15th and final day of each month and can take place during weekends. 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 Banner Time Entry (BTE); TimeClock Plus (TCP); pay schedules; etc. can be found on [Controller's website](#).

Pay Period Schedules

Controller's Office will post [Pay Schedules](#) to a dedicated Payroll webpage. Student employees can reference "Wage Schedule" on the Pay Schedules tab 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.

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](#), clicking "Hokie Wallet," and then "Enroll in Direct Deposit."

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 is ultimately determined by the supervisor and supervisors are required to 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. On-site 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 so that USFA can initiate a claim.

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 | womenscenter.vt.edu/advocacy
- Cook Counseling Center: 540-231-6557 | ucc.vt.edu
- Women's Resource Center of the NRV: 24/7 Crisis Hotline 540-639-1123 | wrcnrv.org
- Title IX Coordinator Katie Polidoro: 540-231-1824 | polidoro@vt.edu | safe.vt.edu
- Dean of Students Office: 540-231-3787 | dean.students@vt.edu | dos.vt.edu
- Virginia Tech Police Department: 540-382-6411 | vtpolice@vt.edu | 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 activities; 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 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 so that our office can reach out to Office for Equity and Accessibility.

2025-2026 Federal Work-Study Student Checklist

Important Dates and Deadlines	To-Do List
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Accept your FWS award in your financial aid portal within 30 days of it being offered to you. · July 1: Handshake opens for students. · August 17: First possible day to work for FWS Fall 2025. · August 29: Campus Student Employment Job Fair. Register in Handshake. · September 15: Priority deadline to secure a FWS position. · September 30: Deadline to secure a FWS position to guarantee funding.** · Early November: FWS student-exclusive, after-hours event with Career and Professional Development including a pop-up shop with Career Outfitters, Iris, and other resources. More information to follow! · December 17: Last day to work for FWS Fall 2025. · January 2: First day to work for FWS Spring 2026. · January 31: Deadline to secure a FWS position (spring-only award). · May 13: Last possible day to work for FWS Spring 2026. <p>**If you do not accept your FWS award within 30 days of it being offered to you AND secure a FWS position by September 30, your FWS award may be canceled, and we cannot guarantee that you will be able to get it back. You can request to be placed on the FWS waitlist should more funding become available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Accept your FWS award in your financial aid portal within 30 days of it being offered to you. <input type="checkbox"/> Set up direct deposit in HokieSPA so you can be paid (regardless of having an on-campus or off-campus position). <input type="checkbox"/> Create a Handshake account. Handshake opens on July 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Check out VMock to help make you job search ready. <input type="checkbox"/> Apply and interview for jobs. <input type="checkbox"/> Sign-up to take a professional headshot with Iris, the professional photo booth. <input type="checkbox"/> Secure a position. <input type="checkbox"/> Bring identity documents with you to Blacksburg so you can complete your employment paperwork when hired. New-hire paperwork must be completed before you can start working. <input type="checkbox"/> Register in Handshake for the Campus Student Employment Job Fair (August 29). <input type="checkbox"/> Craft the perfect elevator pitch for the job fair with tips from Career and Professional Development here. <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Campus Student Employment Job Fair (August 29). <input type="checkbox"/> Notify your employer that you are eligible for FWS if you accept a regular student wage position. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep track of your FWS award balance after every pay period via messaging in HokieSPA.

Your signature below certifies that you have reviewed and will adhere to the details of this Federal Work-Study Onsite Student Employee Handbook.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____