Guide to Federal Work Study Employment

Introduction

This guide to student employment has been prepared by the Financial Aid Office for ArtCenter Federal Work Study students.

Information in this guide is effective as of August 1, 2026. It may become necessary to modify or change the enclosed policies and procedures. The Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time and to change or discontinue any policy. The Financial Aid Office is obligated to notify all students and supervisors of any and all changes.

Federal Work-Study Program Overview

The Federal Work Study (FWS) program is a need-based financial aid program for U.S. students that provides job funding for undergraduate and graduate students. The program is administered in accordance with federal regulations by the Department of Education by Manuel Gomez, Assistant Director of Financial Aid.

FWS awards are $2,000 for undergraduate and graduate students per term but vary annually based on federal and institutional funding. Students are notified by the Office of Financial Aid of Federal Work Study eligibility on their financial aid offer letter.

Students who participate in the program have an opportunity to work in on or off-campus positions and earn money to help with school expenses.

The Federal Work Study allocation is not guaranteed funding. The allocation represents money that a student may earn by working a job on campus.

Federal Work Study allocations are not deducted from the student's tuition bill.

Students must be hired for a job and will receive a paycheck for actual hours worked that can be used for books, supplies, or other expenses.

Eligibility for Federal Work Study

Requirements

- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the current year to determine your eligibility.
- Students submit the Federal Work Study Interest form and demonstrate “need” to be considered for FWS.

Finding a Job

- The Campus Job Board is available on **InsideArtCenter:** https://inside.artcenter.edu/campusjobs
- Job listings will include duties and required skills for each position. When a student finds a position of interest, the student applies directly to the supervisor who posted the listing. Students can email the Supervisor from Inside ArtCenter.
- Students should take their Financial Aid Offer Letter when interviewed.
- Most FWS jobs are on-campus, but some are off-campus. Community service positions may also be available.

Earning Amounts and Limits

- Current pay-rates = $18.57 to $20.25 per hour for on-campus jobs. Off-campus community service jobs pay $20.25 per hour. FWS jobs are hourly only, and students cannot be paid a fee or set salary. FWS jobs do not include benefits such as vacation or holiday pay.
- The initial award amount is up to $2,000 per term for undergraduates and graduate students. Students can check their award amount on Inside ArtCenter account. Occasionally, changes in student financial need or in policies or regulations may cause their financial aid award to be adjusted. If this occurs, the Financial Aid Office will send a revised award notification.
- The Financial Aid Office will monitor earnings and notify students and their supervisors when they are nearing their limit for the semester.
- Federal Work Study employees can work 20 hours per week when classes are in session and 29 hours per week during school breaks with prior approval. **Hours cannot exceed 8 hours per day.**
- Federal Work Study awards are to be used only during the Fall and Spring terms. No Summer FWS is available due to limited funding available. Awards cannot be transferred to other time periods or carried over to next year.
- Once the authorized amount has been earned, the student must stop working under the Federal Work Study program unless they’ve received authorization to continue from the Financial Aid Office. Students can contact their department to be hired under their department’s budget if there is no remaining federal work study eligibility.

Hiring Process

When a student is hired by a department or program, they will need to complete the following steps to get paid. Students may not begin work until the necessary forms have been filed.

New FWS students will need to contact the Human Resources (HR) Office to receive and complete the following forms or visit https://inside.artcenter.edu/pub/mod/url/view.php?id=1260

- Student Employment Authorization Form – This form is now electronic, please contact the Human Resources department to obtain signatures. When students are hired, their supervisor completes the supervisor section. The form must come through the Financial Aid Office to have the amount of their Federal Work Study award verified. Students must complete a separate Employment Authorization for each job.

- I-9 Form - The Immigration and Reform Act of 1986 requires each employee to provide documentation that verifies the employee's identity and eligibility to work. **Students must fill out Section 1 on the I-9 form and take the required documents to the Human Resources Office. The I-9 form lists the documents that are acceptable.**

- W-4 Form - Students must complete a W-4 form before beginning employment. Federal Work Study earnings are taxable income and subject to Federal and State taxes. Students are exempt from FICA taxes.

Continuing FWS students can renew their employment using these instructions: https://inside.artcenter.edu/cms/pluginfile.php/50619/mod_page/content/19/Directions%20for%20Returning%20Student%20Workers.pdf?time=1589333631423

The Student Employment Authorization Form must be completed at the beginning of each term even when students are returning to the same position.

Payroll Process and Time Sheets

- Students will need to complete their electronic timesheet for each position they hold.

- Project Trip and the Pasadena Public Library students must complete a paper timesheet and an electronic timesheet. Students and supervisors must each sign the timesheet. Timesheets will not be accepted without both signatures. Additionally, Project Trip and High School Mentor students must get both the site supervisor and the ArtCenter supervisor's signature.

- Timesheets are due by noon on Mondays. Late timesheets will not be processed until the following pay period. Supervisors will submit the timesheets to the Payroll Office.

- Students are paid bi-weekly according to the college's payroll schedule.

Student Responsibilities

- As paid workers, students are expected to perform their jobs to the best of their ability.
- Students are responsible for submitting timesheets for each time period according to the Payroll Office schedule. Timesheets cannot accumulate and be submitted after the payroll time period has passed.
- Students must monitor earnings so that they do not exceed their allocation for the term.
- Poor work performance, habitual absence or tardiness, may be cause for dismissal. More serious offenses, such as dishonesty, violation of confidentiality, falsification of timesheets, or forgery of signatures may result in permanent exclusion from on-campus work and possible dismissal from the college.
- In some offices, exposure to confidential information may be part of the position, and students may be asked to sign agreements concerning confidential information.
- All students are expected to abide by the policies in this guide. As this is a federally funded program, students are subject to federal regulations regarding fraud, forgery, or false statements regarding their employment. Penalties can range up to $10,000 in fines or imprisonment up to five years! Direct any questions on policies to the Financial Aid Office or your supervisor.
- Overtime is not available to students using Federal Work Study funds.

Positions and pay rates

Student Worker Job Classifications

Level 1

Entry-level or trainee positions with moderate to low-level responsibilities. Duties include those that can be readily learned with little or no previous experience.

Rate of pay: $18.57 per hour
Examples: Library Assistant, Departmental Office Assistant, Media Services Tech, Computer Lab Assistant.

Level 2

Requires previous knowledge or experience in the work assignment with moderate skills and responsibilities.

Rate of pay: $18.57 - $19.25 per hour

Level 3

This is a specialist position level. Previous knowledge of assigned tasks required. Often requires specialized skills, may require supervising other students.

Rate of pay: $19.25 – 20.25 per hour
Examples: CMTL Assistant, Sewing Lab TA, Models and Props Student Supervisor.

Level 4

Community Service: These positions are for Federal Work Study students only.

Rate of pay: $20.25 per hour
Examples: Project TRIP, Mentors Program, and Pasadena Learns (Public Library).

Community Service Positions

- **Project Trip:** Students work in Pasadena elementary schools reading to students and helping them learn to read. Fall and Spring semesters only. Interested students should call the Financial Aid Office at (626) 396-2215

- **Pasadena Public Libraries:** Various positions in the Pasadena libraries. Fall and Spring semesters only. Interested students should call the Financial Aid Office at (626) 396-2215

- **Armory Center for the Arts:** Students assist in studio classes or in administrative support roles. This position allows students to gain experience based on their concentration and contribute to the Pasadena community. Interested students should call the Financial Aid Office at (626) 396-2215