

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

Federal Work-Study (FWS) was established by Congress as part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Its purpose is the promotion of part-time employment for students with financial need in order to achieve three main goals:

1. To assist students in earning money to meet their educational costs
2. To provide work experience related to the student's chosen academic major or career field;
and
3. To improve relations between the College and the community.

Students may be employed by College of Alameda, government agencies, or private, non-profit organizations working for the public good. Because of its federal funding, the Federal Work-Study Program must adhere to strict regulations enacted by Congress and enforced by the U.S. Department of Education.

What Is It?

Federal Work-Study on your Financial Aid Award means that you are eligible to be paid Work-Study funds if you get a job on campus. Work-Study is not a grant or a loan, nor is it a guarantee of a job. You must apply and interview for a Work-Study job. The amount you will earn is \$15.75 per hour. The main advantage of Work-Study employment is that your Work-Study earnings do not count against you as a financial resource on your FAFSA.

Student Eligibility Requirements

Participation in the Work-Study Program is determined by the student's financial need (total cost of attending College of Alameda, minus family contribution) and is awarded as part of a financial aid package. To be considered to participate in the Federal Work-Study Program, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Demonstrate financial need based on the information you provided on the FAFSA.
2. Be enrolled in a minimum 6 units at Peralta Community College District.
3. Be working towards a degree, certificate, or transfer program.
4. Be making Satisfactory Academic Progress towards a declared program.
5. Not in default on any Direct Loan, or Federal Family Educational Loans (FFEL), includes Subsidized or Unsubsidized Stafford Loans.
6. Not owe grant repayment.
7. Be a US citizen or eligible non-citizen.
8. Be at least 18 years of age.

Award Criteria

At the beginning of the semester, the Financial Aid Office will offer Federal Work-Study awards to eligible students. Check your Financial Aid Award Letter on Campus Solutions to see if you were offered a FWS award. Since funds are limited, they are offered first to Pell Grant eligible students enrolled in 6 or more units and awarded based on date of FAFSA completion.

Earning Limits

On their Financial Aid Award, students are granted a work-study earnings limit. This is the maximum amount which may be earned by the student during the academic year.

It is extremely important to acknowledge the shared responsibility between the Federal Work-Study Program, the student, and the employer to monitor a student's earnings. The student must stop working when the earnings limit is reached. Email notifications will be sent to both the student and the employer when a student approaches the earnings limit. The Federal Work-Study Program must charge the over-earnings directly back to the employer at 100%.

Students and their employer should arrange their work schedules to avoid either under earning or prematurely reaching their award limit. Students approaching the limit may appeal for an increase by contacting, Laney College Financial Aid Employment Specialist.

Students should be aware that their limits may be decreased during the academic year if unanticipated resources (e.g., scholarships) affect their financial aid packages. Both the student and the employer will be notified if an award is changed.

How-To Find A Job

1. You are required to have a resume. The One Stop Career Center is available to help you develop your resume. Your resume will be an important tool for the rest of your career; and you will continue to add your experience as you grow in your position or experience new positions.
2. Jobs that are currently hiring will be posted on the Job Board page.
3. Through the job board, you will be able to apply for the jobs you are interested in. You will be asked to complete a short application and to attach your resume.
4. The employer will review all applications received and select the top applicants for an interview.
5. The employer will contact you to schedule an interview if you are selected. After the interview, the employer will select the applicant best suited for the position.
6. If you are selected, the employer will contact you to discuss your work schedule, office policies, and student rights and responsibilities.
7. Before you begin employment you must complete additional paperwork to demonstrate you are eligible for employment. Make an appointment with Stephanie Grigg, Financial Aid Specialist, at the College of Alameda Financial Aid Office to complete your employment paperwork.

Calculate Hours per Week

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) award table will help to determine how many hours a student will be able to work per week during the academic year based on the FWS award amount. The academic year is assumed to be 34 weeks (17 weeks per semester). The basic formula behind these figures is:

$$\text{(FWS Award Amount} \div \text{Weeks per Academic Year)} \div \text{Hourly Wage} = \text{Hours per Week}$$

Please note that if the student works during winter break, spring break, or during summer, this will reduce the number of hours he or she will be able to work during the regular academic term, and will also count towards the student's annual work-study award limit.

Create a Work Schedule

When creating a student's work schedule, we encourage supervisors to be flexible. The following limits apply to student employee work hours. They may not work:

- more than 20 hours per week during normal academic periods
- more than 40 hours per week during academic breaks such as Spring and Winter break
- more than 8 hours per day

Students are not permitted to work in FWS positions during scheduled class times. Exceptions are permitted if an individual class is canceled. Any such exceptions must be documented.

Students are entitled to a paid 15 minute break after working 4 consecutive hours. They must take a meal break of not less than 30 minutes within a daily work period of five hours or more. However, if the work period is not more than six hours, the meal break may be waived by the mutual consent of you and the student. Meal breaks are not paid time.

Employment Forms

First-time hires are required to fill out the following forms and return them to Laney College Financial Aid Employment Specialist, before they may begin working.

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- [W-4 2021](#)
- [California-DE-4](#)
- [I-9](#)
- [Oath of Allegiance](#)
- [Acknowledgment of Receipt of Information](#)
- [Conviction History Form](#)
- [Direct Deposit](#)– *Optional*
- [Student Employment Pool](#) – *Online Application must be completed. The confirmation page must be included with your other forms.*

Student Timesheet

Student employees will report their time worked and sick leave by logging into [Human Capital Management](#). Need help? [View this guide](#). Per City of Oakland Paid Sick Leave Ordinance: Employees shall accrue one (1) hour of paid sick leave for every thirty (30) hours worked. Employees are required to observe a 90 day waiting period before utilization of sick leave.

Work-Study Award Tracking Sheet

Students can use this worksheet to keep track of their Federal Work-Study earnings to ensure that they stay within the limits of their allotted award amount.

To use the worksheet, the student should begin by writing in the total amount of his/her Work-Study award on the total award line. This amount can be found by logging into the Student Center and viewing the student's Financial Aid Award Letter. When the first paycheck is received, the gross (pre-tax) amount of the check should be recorded in the gross pay column for the appropriate pay date. The remaining award amount can then be calculated by subtracting the gross pay from the total award. Each subsequent paycheck should be recorded in the same manner, subtracting the gross pay from the remaining award balance of the previous pay period to determine the current amount left to earn.

It is the student's responsibility to monitor his or her Federal Work-Study Award.

[FWS Award Tracking Sheet](#)

Daily Sign-In Sheet

This resource is not mandatory but is available for all departments, to help keep track of the hours a student has worked.

To use the sign-in sheet, the student should begin by writing their name at the top and the current month. Every day, when the student reports to work, they will write the date and their time in and get a staff member to sign them in (student workers should not sign other student workers in/out). Subsequently, when the student's shift is done, a staff member would sign them out before they leave.

[Daily Sign In for Student Workers](#)