



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTHERN MAINE

## SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

Each year the University of Southern Maine offers Federal Work-Study funds to hundreds of students as part of their financial aid awards. The variety of skills and abilities these students possess are assets to all University departments and offices. To the maximum extent possible Federal Work-Study positions should complement and reinforce the student's education program or career goals. Generally, a student can be assigned duties similar to other University employees.

This guide is designed to help USM employers navigate the process of hiring and supervising students. A list of names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and Web sites is provided at the end of this guide for questions or issues not addressed here.

**FEDERAL WORK-STUDY** is need-based financial aid funded with Federal and University funds. Students apply for Federal Work-Study, grants and loans by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The Student Financial Aid Office determines a Federal Work-Study award based on the student's financial need (using Federal guidelines) and availability of funds.

Students eligible for Federal Work-Study employment are notified by the Financial Aid Office, usually on their original financial aid award notice. **Only students awarded Federal Work-Study funds by the USM Financial Aid Office can be employed on the Federal Work-Study program. A student MAY NOT begin working in anticipation of receiving a Federal Work-Study award.** Awards may be adjusted if the student's eligibility changes. The Financial Aid Office will notify the student and employer if the student's Federal Work-Study award is adjusted. Federal Work-Study eligibility is determined annually and is not guaranteed in subsequent years. Current USM students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 credits or more each semester) to earn Federal Work-Study funds. A student must begin work by October 1<sup>st</sup> or the Federal Work Study award may be canceled.

**DEPARTMENT FUNDED EMPLOYMENT** differs from Federal Work-Study employment in that wages are paid by the hiring department, not federal financial aid funds. A student paid with department funds must be enrolled in at least 3 credit hours during the semester s/he is employed. If employed during the summer, s/he must be pre-registered for 3 credit hours in the fall. *The student must remain enrolled to continue earning department funds.* Departments determine the wages for these positions and are encouraged to follow the Federal Work-Study wage bands.

### AUTHORIZED EMPLOYERS

Regular University employees are authorized to employ Federal Work-Study students. Before the start of each academic year supervisors are asked to complete an Authorized Signature Form indicating who has been designated to sign a student Work Authorization and approve weekly time on the PeopleSoft system. Names can be added or deleted by sending a memo to the Student Payroll Office.

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[www.usm.maine.edu/fin/fwslinks00.htm](http://www.usm.maine.edu/fin/fwslinks00.htm)

**Student Supervisors:** Although students may supervise other student employees, only regular University employees may approve work authorizations and approve time on PeopleSoft. While students in supervisory positions may sign time cards to verify the hours reported, a regular University employee must countersign. Also, even though a student may supervise other students, hiring and termination must be conducted by a regular University employee. In any case, a University employee should be aware of any new hire or issues that may result in termination.

## ESTABLISHING FEDERAL WORK-STUDY POSITIONS

Approved Federal Work-Study Job Titles and Wage Bands are available on the Student Payroll web site: <http://usm.maine.edu/hrs/payroll/spayroll/>.

## ADVERTISING POSITIONS AND INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

**Advertising:** Students seeking Federal Work-Study employment are directed to the Student Payroll site where a list of approved Federal Work-Study positions is maintained. In addition to the Web site listing, supervisors may advertise approved positions in any appropriate manner they choose, such as posters, student newspaper advertisements, in-class announcements or direct student contact. The Financial Aid Office does not advertise or maintain a list of department funded positions.

**Interviewing:** As with regular employees, each department determines which student will best meet its needs by interviewing applicants and assessing his/her strengths and abilities. Provide the student with a written job description outlining your expectations of employee conduct and the duties of the position and make sure these are clear to the student. Work with the student to construct a work schedule that accommodates both the office needs and the student's schedule.

## HIRING STUDENTS

Once a supervisor has decided to hire a student, a Work Authorization, Memorandum of Understanding, Form I-9, Form W4 and Form W4ME must be completed and submitted at the same time to the Student Payroll Office to establish the student on the University payroll system. These forms can be accessed on the Student Payroll Office Web site and are described below.

**Work Authorizations:** USM employers must complete an authorization for each student before s/he begins working. Separate work authorizations for each student must be submitted for summer and academic year employment prior to the student's start date. Students who hold more than one work-study position must have a separate work authorization for each position. **Students cannot be paid until their work authorization is received and processed by the Student Payroll Office.** An approved Job Description Form for any new position must be on file with the Financial Aid Office prior to the student's start date.

Supervisors who are USM employees must complete the on-line work authorization ("WebAuth") and submit it to the Student Payroll Office. A student's Social Security Number must be used when completing the work authorization, not a University assigned student ID number. Neither Student Financial Aid nor Student Payroll can issue blank Work Authorizations. If the student will be earning

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*[www.usm.maine.edu/fin/fwslinks00.htm](http://www.usm.maine.edu/fin/fwslinks00.htm)*

department funds, the department's account number must be supplied. Questions regarding the WebAuth should be directed to Student Payroll, 780-5202.

Off-campus employers cannot use the WebAuth process and must request a work authorization by calling the Financial Aid Office at 780-5120 or by sending an email message with the student's name and social security number. Students working at an off-campus location may also request a work authorization from the Financial Aid Office.

**Memorandum of Understanding:** This document outlines basic responsibilities and expectations of students and supervisors. It must be signed by both and returned with the work authorization form before the student begins work.

**Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9):** Federal law requires employers to verify the employment eligibility of employees by completing an Employment Eligibility Verification Form. To complete the I-9, the student is required to show two forms of identification such as: a driver's license, state ID, military ID, birth certificate, Social Security Card, passport, etc.

**Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (Form W-4 and W4ME):** New employees must complete a Form W-4 and W4ME. Please refer to instructions on WebAuth for compliance with these regulations. Off-campus employers should refer student employees to the Student Payroll Office in Gorham, the Portland Business Office, Lewiston-Auburn College or one of the off-campus centers to complete the I-9 and W-4 forms. For assistance contact the Student Payroll Office at 780-5202.

#### REPORTING TIME WORKED

Students who have submitted a valid work authorization, Memorandum of Understanding, I-9, W-4 and W4ME forms can report time worked on the PeopleSoft web payroll system if they are working in an approved on-campus Federal Work-Study job. Students employed by approved off campus agencies in approved jobs must complete paper time cards and fax them to the Student Payroll Office at 780-5554 by noon on Monday. Employers are responsible for authorizing time on PeopleSoft or submitting paper time cards by the due date. Please check the payroll schedule for these dates. Late time approval or time card submission will cause the student's paycheck to be delayed. **Emergency Loans will not be issued for late time cards or missing paperwork. Departments will be charged for hours worked prior to providing all required forms.**

#### EARNINGS MONITORING

**It is the joint responsibility of the department and the student to monitor the student's earnings.** Student employees cannot exceed their Federal Work-Study allocation. Federal and state employment laws require a student be paid for all hours worked, even if they are in excess of the Federal Work-Study award. Any department allowing a student to exceed their Federal Work-Study award will be charged for any hours in excess. **Departments will be charged for excess earnings.** Once you have been notified of the over earnings, the student must stop working through the Federal Work-Study program. If you wish to continue employing the student with department funds, a new work authorization is required.

## EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT EMPLOYEES

**Satisfactory Performance:** Student employees are expected to meet the same basic performance standards as other employees: be at work on time according to an agreed work schedule, perform work in a satisfactory manner, be professional and courteous, maintain confidentiality, report hours worked honestly and meet other expectations and requirements as explained by the supervisor. Supervisors should be clear about their expectations and hold students accountable for their work and actions.

**Unsatisfactory Performance and Termination:** If a student's performance does not meet agreed upon standards, a conversation with the student to explain what must be done to bring job performance up to standards is appropriate. If this does not result in better performance, the supervisor should send the student a letter indicating the problem, explaining how the student can resolve the situation and warning the student that the student's employment with the department will be terminated if performance does not improve. If the student continues to perform below expectations, termination is appropriate. Termination should be done verbally and in writing, explaining the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter should be sent to the Financial Aid Office.

**Termination Without Notice:** Violations of confidentiality, theft, misrepresenting hours worked and other egregious actions are grounds for termination without notice. The Financial Aid Office must be notified immediately (with a copy of the letter to the student explaining the reason for termination) when a student's employment is terminated without notice.

## EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS

**Type of Work:** Federal regulations specifically prohibit the use of Federal Work-Study funds to pay for work that is religious in nature, related to partisan or nonpartisan politics or that benefits a private individual. A student can be paid for general office work or to help develop classroom materials. A student cannot be paid to type a dissertation or assist with private consulting. A student may work for an individual professor, as long as the work is in line with the professor's official duties and is considered work for the institution itself.

**Academic Credit:** A student may receive both academic credit and Federal Work-Study payment for the same job, with restrictions. Students should be referred to the Student Financial Aid Office if this is being considered.

**Enrollment:** Only USM students enrolled in 6 credits or more may earn Federal Work-Study. Students who drop below 6 credits can no longer earn Federal Work Study and must stop working immediately. Students attending both fall and spring semesters may earn Federal Work-Study during semester breaks. Students enrolled for fall only must stop work the last day of the fall semester and may not continue to work during semester break. Summer Federal Work-Study and academic year Federal Work-Study are separate awards and earning periods requiring separate work authorizations. A student may not "carry-over" unearned Federal Work-Study from summer to the academic year or vice versa. Unearned Federal Work-Study funds at the end of the summer or academic year are forfeited by the student.

Students being paid from department funds for the summer must be enrolled in 3 credit hours for the summer or be pre-registered in at least 3 credits for the fall.

**Benefits and Raises** Students do not receive "fringe benefits", merit raises, step increases, bonuses, fixed salaries, premium time (i.e.: time and a half, double time) or paid time off. Federal regulations prohibit using Federal Work-Study funds to pay for time lost due to illness, jury duty, vacation, holiday, school closing or for any other reason. **Students can be paid only for hours actually worked.** Students who work more than forty hours in one week are paid time-and-a-half from the department's account for hours worked over forty. **Federal Work-Study cannot be used to pay overtime.** Pay rates are standardized. A student employee cannot displace or replace a regular University employee.

**Payment:** Wage and hour laws require a student be paid within a "reasonable" amount of time (one month for Federal Work-Study purposes). If a student begins working for you prior to your submission of a properly completed job description and work authorization and two payroll periods have passed without the required information, Student Payroll will charge the department's account to pay the student for hours worked through the week ending of the current payroll.

## RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

**For questions about Federal Work-Study, job descriptions, supervising contact:**

Tammy Whittington	780-5377	tamaraw@usm.maine.edu
Sue Jensen	780-5494	sjensen@usm.maine.edu
Gayle Giroux	780-5120	ggiro@usm.maine.edu

**For questions about Student Payroll, work authorizations, I-9's, W-4's contact:**

Katharine Kuhn	780-5202	kkuhn@usm.maine.edu
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**Web resources:**

<b>Student Payroll Office</b> Web Authorization Form Memorandum of Understanding Form I-9, Form W-4, Form W4ME Payroll Schedule Authorized Signature Form Worksheet for Time Input	<a href="http://www.usm.maine.edu/hrs/payroll/spayroll/">www.usm.maine.edu/hrs/payroll/spayroll/</a>
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<b>Financial Aid Office</b> Federal Work-Study Job Listing Supervisor Handbook Job Description Form Job Titles and Wage Bands	<a href="http://www.usm.maine.edu/fin">www.usm.maine.edu/fin</a>
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