Federal Work Study FAQ’s for Supervisors

What is a Federal Work Study (FWS) Award?
Financial Aid grants eligible students an “award,” which is a specific amount of money the student may earn through hourly wages. They must earn this through actual worked hours, which you will approve through a timesheet, the students may spend this money on anything (does not need to be school related). They may not earn more than the award amount; your department will be responsible for paying hours above the award, which is why you should pay close attention to the award amount and how much they have earned.

Can Students Work Independently or Remotely?
NO! FWS requires that a supervisor be present to work, so take-home work or remote work is not allowed. Also, YOU must supervise the student at least 75% of the time (other staff can back you up 25%). GSA’s are not to be considered supervisors. If you cannot provide supervision, have another staff member request FWS. (Example- If your administrator spends more time with the student than you do, they should be the supervisor)

How Many Hours Can I Schedule a Student?
Students may work up to 20 hours per week during the classes. However, many students cannot work 20 hours while taking classes (they may not be scheduled during class time), so it is important you talk with students before hiring them to see if they can meet your schedule expectations.

Can Students Work During Holidays/Weekends?
If your office is open during a holiday or weekend (supervisor must be present!) students may work during these periods. During non-class periods (holiday breaks) students may work up to 40 hours per week.

Can Another Supervisor Take Over if I Travel or Have a Leave of Absence?
Yes, we can transfer your students to another staff/faculty member while you are gone or permanently if necessary. YOU MUST notify us if you will be going on an extended leave/trip to ensure our records are correct and new supervisor is trained and timesheet is set up.

Hiring Questions:

Can I Request an Unlimited Amount of Positions?
Due to equitably handling resources during COVID-19 we may need to limit per supervisor. This will be based on the number of requests, available students, and the ability of supervisors to meet FWS regulations. You can request FWS positions if you are a full-time staff or faculty online [here](#). The number of positions approved will be sent by [fws@fit.edu](mailto:fws@fit.edu).

**How Do I Find Students?**

Students must have the FWS award from Financial Aid to apply, these students can view all positions on Career Services’ [website](#). You may also advertise your positions in your department or on FitForum as long as you include a statement that students must have a FWS award. However, historically, there has never been enough eligible students to fill all requested positions (we average 1000 positions requested per year!), so we cannot guarantee you will hire a student. Be sure to include an engaging position description in your request so students will be interested in working for you!

**If a Student Wants to Work, Can I Hire Them on the Spot?**

You must complete the electronic .pdf hire form (read the supervisor procedures manual). You can offer them the job, but they may not begin working until you have approved their hire with Career Services and receive their official start date from [fws@fit.edu](mailto:fws@fit.edu).

**Can I Decide the Payrate or Give Students A Raise?**

The payrate is set by your job description (see the supervisor procedures manual for the payscale). All students you are hiring for the first time must start at the minimum rate. You may give returning hires a pay increase within the payscale (keep in mind they will deplete their award faster the higher the pay rate).

**Can Students Work All Year?**

Students may be hired in the traditional academic year, Fall through Spring. FWS is not available in the summer. They are hired per academic year, not per semester (though students may voluntarily change jobs through the year). Students may begin working the first day of Fall classes, IF they have received their start date confirmation from [fws@fit.edu](mailto:fws@fit.edu).

**Can I Split my Student’s Tasks Between Another Supervisor?**

You as the hiring supervisor are responsible for being present with your student, however, if another staff member requires help and you can supervise this work, they may work on projects with other staff. If you cannot directly supervise these tasks, they may only make up less than 25% of the student’s hours.

**My Students Say They are in the FWS Civic Workforce?**

In an effort to increase community involvement, FWS funds may be used to pay eligible workers for community and civic projects. Florida Tech is participating in this program and
your students may work for both you and in the Civic Workforce (this is an exception to students only holding one job at a time as these are sanctioned small projects). If your student is hired in the Civic Workforce, they will have a separate timesheet under the Civic Engagement office. You are not to approve any Civic hours on your timesheet. If you would like an update on how many Civic hours student has used contact fws@fit.edu.

**Timesheet Questions:**

**I Don’t Have or Know My Timesheet Code?**

HR creates a timesheet code so you can approve your student’s hours in Access, check with your department payroll administrator to see if you can approve time, if you don’t have an admin, directly contact hr@fit.edu.

**How Do Students Get Paid – Do I Have to Approve Time?**

Students will complete an hourly timesheet bi-weekly in Access like staff do. A payroll calendar will be provided to you, it is your responsibility to ensure your student knows how to submit time and meets the payroll deadlines. First time students need instruction from supervisors. We highly recommend the direct supervisor approves timesheets to ensure accurate payment, but we will allow a timesheet proxy to approve time (someone who will approve student’s timesheets for you). If you have a proxy YOU are still responsible for accurate payments and must provide hours (time log or sign in/out sheets) to proxies. Career Services will be checking for compliance if you have a proxy.

**What are Retro Hours?**

When either a student or supervisor does not complete the timesheet by the payroll deadline, those hours will need to put on the retro line of the next payroll period in order to be paid. When this happens, payroll requires that the days and hours worked are put in the comment box. Please make every effort to avoid needing to use retro hours, especially if the student is close to the end of their award, as they may go over without you realizing it.

**Do I Have to Make the Student Complete their Timesheet?**

While this is a common supervisor complaint, it is your job to make sure the student does their timesheet on time by giving them reminders. If they repeatedly ignore your reminders contact fws@fit.edu to intervene. However, most often they are forgetful due to juggling classes and will need you to tell them each pay period to do their timesheet. The university is legally required to pay worked hours, you can NOT withhold pay for missing a timesheet.

**How Do I Track the Student’s Hours/Award?**
You can look up their timesheets in Access or use the Excel tracker sheet provided in the Hire Confirmation E-mail to count down their award. It your responsibility to ensure students do not earn more than their award (department will pay overage). Career Services may provide courtesy low hours reminders, but is not responsible for tracking.

**Conduct Questions:**

*My Student Worker is Not Fulfilling Expectations?*

For most students this is their first time job, which means they will require formal training, mentorship, and clear communication of expectations. If they are repeatedly not able to complete the job after counseling and warnings, you may let them know you are closing the position at the end of the semester. If you would like to end (terminate) their position in the middle of a semester, you will need HR approval (read next question).

*Can I Terminate (Fire) a Student Worker?*

You may not terminate a student without HR approval. You should make efforts to counsel students on expectations or provide written warnings before jumping to this step. HR has an Employee Counseling Notice you may use. If there is no improvement or the situation is serious contact fws@fit.edu so HR can get involved in next steps.

*My Student Worker Stopped Showing Up?*

If the student withdrew from the university, their position will be immediately ended. If they are absent and you do not know why, make efforts to contact the student (by phone or e-mail), if they do not respond to you contact fws@fit.edu. If they respond and would like to continue working, counsel them on calling out procedures, absence expectations, and/or a verbal/written warning as necessary.

*My Student Worker Has Asked to Resign or Change Jobs?*

Students may resign at will, they should communicate this with you beforehand. Notify fws@fit.edu immediately if they would like to be ended. They may only switch to a new position at the beginning of a payroll period.

Please Read the Supervisor Procedures Manual for More Information

For Further Questions Contact: fws@fit.edu