



# Financial Aid Office

## Work-Study Handbook

# FY21

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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Financial Aid Office at Texas Southmost College is to assist students in obtaining on-campus employment experience during their education at our institution. Work-Study is a beneficial program that allows students to gain valuable skills, experiences and networking opportunities to be prepared for the job market after they graduate.

This program will help you reduce your need for student loans, leaves you with less debt and lets you explore careers.

## Introduction

The work-study program is another type of financial aid for undergraduate college students, which provides part-time employment to assist with their educational costs. Unlike other employment, employers understand that the students' education comes first. They ensure that their job duties and class schedule does not interfere with school performance.

Work-study jobs are either:

- On campus in various college departments
- Off campus in non-profit, governmental, or other community-based organizations

TSC pays work-study and student-employees on a bi-weekly basis and at least the federal hourly minimum wage. All students considered for employment under the college work-study program are given an equal opportunity without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, natural origin, gender, age or handicap.

TSC participates in two work-study programs:

- Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program, funded under the authority of Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended under Title IV, Part C; 42 U.S.C. 2751-2756b) and administered by the U.S. Department of Education, and the
- Texas College Work-Study Program funded by the State of Texas and administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

This handbook is designed to provide students and supervisors with the policies and procedures of TSC CWS program and to help answer commonly asked questions. Students and supervisors are responsible for reading the handbook and being familiar with its policies and procedures. If a student has questions or concerns regarding the guidelines, assigned position, or a conflict in the workplace, the student should first discuss the matter with the supervisor. If the student needs further clarification or feels that a conflict still exists, an appointment should be made with a Financial Aid Specialist. Although this information is current at the time of publication, future changes in policies may be necessary. When such changes occur, all active student WS employees and their supervisors will be notified.

## What is Work-Study?

Work-Study provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial aid need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and provides an opportunity for students to work in their field of study. Work-study earnings are to be paid directly to the student.

### Federal Work-Study

The Federal Work-Study Program is funded under the authority of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and subsequent amendments. This program is jointly funded by the federal government under Title IV-C and by Texas Southmost College. This award may be granted to students that are residents or non-residents of the State of Texas. However, it will depend on the funding source.

### Texas Work-Study

The Texas Work-Study Program also funds jobs to eligible students. This program differs from the federal program in that it is restricted to residents of the state of Texas.

All students considered for employment under either Work-Study Program are given an equal opportunity without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, natural origin, sex, age or handicap. The Work-Study Program is not intended to interfere with the student's education. Both the student and employing department benefit from the program. The student will get paid every two weeks based on an hourly pay rate.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

### Advantages

- Gain work experience;
- Possibility of full-time position after receiving associate degree;
- Employing departments work around student's class schedule;
- Opportunity to develop friendships with other student-employees during college years;
- Transportation cost savings (student are already on campus).
- Work-Study creates an atmosphere to practice communication, interpersonal skills, time management and other work place techniques within the student's job.
- Employment through Work-Study enhances your education and adds a new perspective to your studies. You will see things from another point of view, which will help to develop your analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Your Work-Study supervisor may become an excellent reference. Your WS job adds a new dimension to your career planning and distinguishes your background from other job seekers.

### Disadvantages

- Pay rate is at least the federal minimum wage;
- May only work a maximum of 15 hours per week (*Hours depend on approved referral*).

# Work-Study Employment Process

## 1. Eligibility

The TSC Financial Aid Office will consider students for work-study who:

- Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students must submit a FAFSA for each academic year in which they want to participate in the work-study program.
- Are U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents.
- Have financial need, as defined by work-study program regulations.
- Meet [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) requirements.
  - Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
  - Maintain a cumulative completion rate of 67% of the attempted courses.
  - Timeframe to Complete Academic Program: The maximum attempted hours are 150% of the credits required to complete the student's program of study.
- Are registered at least half-time:
  - 6 Credit Hours in fall and spring semester, and
  - 1 Credit Hour each summer session
  - *Effective 5/1/22, A student can be employed in an FWS job during a period of nonattendance, such as a summer term, including a summer term before the student begins attendance in a program for the first time. Such students must be planning to attend school during the next period of enrollment and must have financial need for that period—his/her current FWS earnings must be used to cover expenses for it and will count as estimated financial assistance. See Volume 6, Chapter 2 for more information.*
- State Work-study Applicants must be Texas residents to qualify for the state (Texas) Work-Study Program.

Not all students who qualify for work-study will secure employment:

- There are limited funds for work-study programs.
- There are limited jobs available.
- The Financial Aid Office cannot over-award students. At any time, work-study awards may be reduced or cancelled for some students in order to adjust unmet need against other types of financial aid, such as scholarships, state grants, student loans and/or sponsorships.

## 2. Hiring Process

Hiring a work-study student-employee is a process involving the student, departmental supervisor, Financial Aid Office and Human Resources:

1. Student need to stop by the TSC Financial Aid Office to find out if he/she is eligible.
2. Student reviews the work-study vacancy list posted online in the Financial Aid website or on a Bulletin Board outside the Financial Aid Office
3. Print CWS Application online at [www.tsc.edu/financialaid](http://www.tsc.edu/financialaid) , Types of Aid, Work-study, and Work-Study Opportunities or the student can get a copy at the Financial Aid Office.
4. Submits the following documents to the Financial Aid Office:
  - College Work-Study Application
  - A resume with 5 references (Name and phone number)
5. Hiring department will review work-study applications at the financial aid office and will take a copy only the applications that their department is listed or it states “Open or Any Position Available” on the student’s application.
6. Hiring department schedules interviews with selected candidates by following the “College Work-Study Procedure – TSC Employment Process”.
7. Supervisor conducts professional interviews with each candidate in which they:
  - Question the student about his/her experience, strengths and abilities.
  - Allow the student ample time to respond and clarify their answers.
  - Thank the student for their interest and time.
  - Conclude the interview.
  - Supervisor calls the references listed on the resume.
8. Hiring department submits packet to the Financial Aid Office. This packet includes:
  - CWS Employment application with resume
  - Interview Questions
  - Interview Check Sheets
  - Reference Rating Sheets
  - Confidentiality Agreement(s)
9. The Financial Aid Office creates and completes the “College Work-Study Referral Form”. The referral form specifies the number of hours and maximum total pay for which the student is qualified per semester.
10. Financial Aid forwards the complete packet to the Office of Human Resources.

11. The Office of Human Resources conducts a Criminal Background Check (CBC). Once the CBC has cleared, the Office of Human Resources signs the “Referral Form” and returns it to the Financial Aid Office.
12. Human Resources will notify student that he/she has been selected for the Work-Study position and will set up an appointment with student to complete additional employment forms.
13. The Office of Human Resources will provide “Authority to Report to Work” Form to student. The student will need submit the form to his/her hiring department on the first day of employment.
14. Supervisor and student accepting work-study position will:
  - Will review all documents.
  - Agree to terms in the contract.
  - Sign all documents.
15. Supervisor returns all the original signed documents to the Financial Aid Office.
16. Student is now ready to begin employment at Texas Southmost College.

### 3. Transferring to Another Position

Work-study student employees may transfer to another position but they have to start the whole process again:

- submit their Work-study application to Financial Aid Office indicating the new desired department they wish to transfer to.
- The hiring departments will conduct interviews and will select the student with the highest score from his/her Reference Rating Sheet.
- The hiring department will submit all interview forms to the Financial Aid Office.
- Financial Aid Office will process the Work-Study Employee Transfer Form and submit to the previous work-study supervisor along with a work-study termination notice.
- Previous work-study supervisor will sign and submit the Work-Study Employee Transfer Form and Termination Notice to the Financial Aid Office.
- Once all documents are complete, they will be sent to Human Resources for processing.

Students may transfer from one position to another, but may only:

- Transfer at the beginning or end of a payroll period.
- Hold one position at the college at a time, including non-work-study positions.

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Students

- May inquire about award amount, rate of pay, and the number of weekly work hours stated on your “College Work-Study Referral Form”. You have a right to this information.
- Find a suitable job by getting a clear description of the assignment and the supervisor’s expectations.
- Follow the proper hiring procedures. Review the “Hiring Process” section.
- Clock in and out using TimeClock Plus.
  - *Under no circumstances should the student work more than the approved hours stated on the “College Work-Study Job Referral Form”.*
  - Do not work extra hours voluntarily.
  - Put your school before your job.
  - Approve your hours in TimeClock Plus on time.
- Punctuality – All students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for work.
- Perform assigned tasks in an efficient and timely manner.
- **Not work during scheduled class time.**
- Adhere to all ethical and privacy rules required by the college and your employing department. Ask your supervisor for clarification if necessary.
- Notify your supervisor immediately when illness or other circumstances keep you from coming to work. Ask your supervisor ahead of time how to best notify them.
- Do not abuse rest and coffee breaks. This privilege is up to the discretion of your supervisor and HR policies.
- Do not share any user name, passwords or security questions with anyone.
- Cell phone usage is not permitted during working hours.
- Headphones or air pods are not permitted during working hours.
- Discuss any work-related problems with your supervisor. If the problem cannot be resolved, the student should contact the Human Resources Office.



- Student must be enrolled at least 6 credit hours for the entire semester. Dropping below half-time enrollment or 6 credit hours makes a student ineligible for the work-study program. Should this occur, the student will be terminated from the program.
- Follow the correct procedures for changing work-study jobs and resigning. See “Transferring to Another Position” and “Terminating Employment” sections of the handbook.
- It is extremely important to adhere to all ethical and privacy rules required by this institution and the hiring department. Students are not authorized to request or release any confidential information unless authorized by your supervisor. If in doubt at any time, ask for clarification from your supervisor.
- Students must follow **TSC Policies and Procedures Dress Code**.

**A work atmosphere should exist for students. Students on Federal Work-Study are not receiving grants or gift aid by participating in the program. They are expected to work and earn their federal work study awards. If you don't work, you don't receive the funds that were awarded to you.**

### TSC Policies and Procedures Dress Code.

“An employee’s personal appearance and hygiene is a reflection on TSC’s character. Employees are expected to dress appropriately for their individual work responsibilities and position. Generally, TSC encourages all employees to dress in a “business casual” fashion. Fridays are “denim days” and appropriate jeans are allowed when worn with a TSC sanctioned t-shirt or school colors”.

## Supervisor

- Ensure that a full-time employee of your department supervises all student employees. At no time, should one part-time employee supervise another student employee.
- Follow all the proper procedures for requesting a work-study student employee. See “Requesting a Work-Study student employee” section of the handbook.
- Define and clearly communicate to the student, before they accept the position:
  - Work schedule and hours (work with the student’s class schedule)
  - Pay rate
  - Job expectations
  - Nature of the work
  - Policies and procedures
  - Expected duration of employment
- **Ensure that all student employees read the “College Work-Study Program Handbook” on their first day of work.**
- Train the student employee on all assigned duties and tasks.
- Ensure that students are not working during class time. In general, students are not permitted to work in work-study positions during scheduled class times. Exceptions are permitted if an individual class is cancelled or if the instructor has excused the student from attending for a particular day. Any such exceptions must be documented.
- Track the student employee’s balance of hours each pay period.
- Verify that the hours on the student employee’s TimeClock Plus before approving the hours.
- Keep separate file for each student employee’s records, such as Referrals, timecards and class schedules.
- Ensure that the student employee complies with all rules and regulations listed in the “College Work-Study Program Handbook.”
- Evaluate the student employee at the end of each semester. See “Evaluations”.

**Mentor our Work-Study students! The role of the supervisor is that of a teacher who trains, motivates, communicates, guides and evaluates the student employee.**

## TimeClock Plus and Payroll

TSC pays work-study and student employees every two weeks, according to TSC Payroll Calendar (Part-Time Employees) Schedule B. All work-study student employees must approve their hours in TimeClock Plus before 10 a.m. on the due date as noted on the payroll schedule:

1. Students must approve their hours for everyday worked during the job's payment cycle.
2. Supervisor reviews hours worked, comparing to student's work schedule.
3. Both, the student and supervisor approve hours worked.
4. Payroll will either send a check to the student employee's department on the scheduled payday, or make a direct deposit to their bank account.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to review all worked hours in TimeClock Plus for accuracy before they are approved. Both the student and supervisor should keep a current balance of the student's approved hours. If the hours are not approved by the deadline, the FWS student may not receive payment until the following payroll date.

If the TimeClock Plus is unavailable or supervisor does not have access to his/her work-study file, the supervisor should send an email to payroll with the student's ID number and approved hours.

Time card schedule and Timesheet template can be found at:

<http://www.tsc.edu/index.php/human-resources/benefits-and-compensation-/payroll-calendar.html>



**Note:** Falsifying/Padding of time reports is a federal offense that will result in permanent termination from the program. Each student should take time to properly clock in/out each workday to ensure that only time actually worked is entered.

# Attendance Policies

## General Attendance

TSC maintains normal working hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hours may vary depending on work location and job responsibilities. Supervisors will provide employees with their work schedule. Should an employee have any questions regarding his/her work schedule, the employee should contact the supervisor. TSC does not tolerate absenteeism without excuse. Employees who will be late to or absent from work should notify a supervisor in advance, or as soon as practicable in the event of an emergency. Chronic absenteeism may result in disciplinary action. Employees who need to leave early, for illness or otherwise, should inform a supervisor before departure. Unauthorized departures may result in disciplinary action.

## Tardiness

Employees are expected to arrive on time and ready for work. An employee who arrives late is considered tardy. TSC recognizes that situations arise which hinder punctuality; regardless, excessive tardiness is prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Breaks

Meal breaks should be at least 30 minutes in length and the employee should be completely relieved from duty. Meal breaks are unpaid and must be approved by a supervisor.

## Abandonment/Involuntary Resignation

An employee who is absent for more than three (3) consecutive scheduled workdays without approval and notification to their supervisor is considered to have abandoned employment. This applies to an employee during normal course of employment as well as the scheduled return from vacation or leaves of absences.

# Evaluations and Terminations

## Evaluations

Supervisors give student employees an evaluation (review) at the end of each semester. The supervisor:

1. Completes a “College Work-Study Employee Evaluation/Termination Notice”.
2. Evaluates the student employee’s performance.
3. Modifies the student employee’s duties, if needed.
4. Shares the evaluation with the student employee, providing:
  - Areas of improvement
  - Praise for successes
5. Submits the form to the TSC Financial Aid Office by the end of the each semester.

## Terminations

### Voluntary Termination (Resignation)

A student has the right to terminate their work-study employment at any time.

- The students are encouraged to give the supervisor at least one week’s written notice.
- The supervisor must complete and submit a “College Work-Study Evaluation-Termination Notice” to the Financial Aid Office on the **same day as termination**.

### Involuntary Termination for Job Performance Problems

Supervisors must follow counseling process for student-employees with job performance problems before terminating them:

1. Verbal Warning - Privately explain to the student how they are not meeting expectations and help them develop an improvement plan. Allow a reasonable amount of time for the student to improve and provide them verbal direction during this time.
2. Written Warning - Inform the student in writing how they are failing to meet expectations, if they have not improved, and give them a deadline to meet improvement goals.
3. Termination Notice – Develop a termination notice and forward to HR for approval. Make sure to include the date when verbal warning was given, include copy of written warning and termination notice.
4. If Termination Notice is approved by HR, you may proceed with the following steps:
  - Meet with the student-employee and an impartial witness to notify of him/her of termination.
  - Outline in detail how they have not met expectations.
  - Avoid argument; stay calm.
  - Assure the student-employee that you will respect their confidentiality about the termination.
5. Mention the student’s positive attributes as an employee (if applicable).
6. Complete and submit a “College Work-Study Evaluation-Termination Notice” and all the above documents to the Financial Aid Office on the same day as termination.

## Requesting a Work-Study

College departments can request work-study student employees from the Financial Aid Office by:

1. Department determines the required number of work-study positions needed for the academic year.
2. Department completes a “College Work-Study Request Form”.
3. Financial Aid determines the number of positions granted to each requesting department after the College Work-Study budget has been approved.
4. Financial Aid Office prepares a “College Work-Study Referral Form” for student employees, advertises vacancies, or both.

***NOTE TO SUPERVISORS: Working during scheduled class time is prohibited!***

*In general, students are not permitted to work in work-study positions during scheduled class times. Exceptions are permitted if an individual class is cancelled or if the instructor has excused the student from attending for a particular day. **Any such exceptions must be documented.***