The Federal Work Study Program

Harvard Graduate School of Education
Financial Aid Office

2021.2022
Overview: Federal Work Study Program (FWSP) at HGSE

What is the FWSP?

The FWSP is a need-based employment program available to students who have completed a HGSE financial aid application and have received a Federal Work Study offer (FWS) as part of their aid package. You must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. to be eligible for this program.

Why is FWS an Advantage?

The federal government pays a significant portion of your work study wages (typically 70%), providing an incentive and significant savings to an employer who hires work study students.

What Types of Jobs are Available?

A wide variety of opportunities are available on campus and off-campus, such as program administration, research, library work, and tutoring in schools. There are jobs that span all areas of the university, both at HGSE and elsewhere.

Locating Job Opportunities

You will search for jobs independently and apply for jobs directly with employers. General information about FWS for students and employers is available on the SEO website.

- Start by visiting the Harvard University Student Employment Office (SEO) website at www.seo.harvard.edu. This is the primary source for FWS-eligible job listings.
- Check the Career Services Office's HGSE Hub or program/department websites and bulletin boards on campus.
- Consider a Field Experience Program (FEP) Internship: www.gse.harvard.edu/academics/other/fep (Some internships offer pay through FWSP funding.)
- Inquire with faculty, staff, and students you meet.
- Consider creating job possibilities off-campus with a non-profit organization.

FWS Wage Rates & Employment Dates

Students may begin their FWS job at the official start of the academic year and must end their employment at the official end of the academic year. Therefore, the FWS employment period for the 2021-2022 academic year is September 7, 2021 to May 14, 2022 for full-year students. Part-year students may only work during their fall or spring enrollment period.

The minimum rate of pay for FWS positions is $12 per hour for the 2021-2022 academic year. See the SEO website for guidance.

When Can You Start Working?

A complete FWSP Referral must be in place before you begin working and all your pre-employment paperwork must be completed. The SEO will notify you once the referral has been processed and work may begin. September 1, 2021 is the earliest date you may start working a FWS job.

Referral & Hiring Forms- What’s a “Referral”?

A FWS Referral is an online form used to authorize your eligibility to work at a job using FWSP funding. All FWS positions require an online referral form, which you complete on the Student Employment Office's website at www.seo.harvard.edu. You must complete a referral after being hired but before beginning work at a FWS job.
Payroll Forms to Complete

Before you begin working, you must also complete the appropriate pre-employment tax documents. These consist of an I-9 Form, W-4 Form, and M-4 Form, and all may be found on the Student Employment Office website at: www.seo.harvard.edu on the “Complete Hiring Documents” page. Original identifying documents must accompany the I-9 for submission to your payroll office. Usually one of the following is used: an original U.S. Passport or both an original Social Security Card and an original U.S. Driver's License, or Certificate of U.S. citizenship or Documentation of U.S. Permanent Resident status.

Working at Your FWS Job

Maximum Weekly FWS Hours

There is no maximum number of hours you may work at a FWS job, but most students work less than 20 hours per week. Although your financial aid package splits your FWS offer evenly between terms you can earn more in one term than the other, provided your gross earnings do not exceed your total FWS amount. For example, if you have a $5,000 FWS offer for the academic year you may earn $2,000 during the fall term and $3,000 during the spring term.

Plan Your FWS Hours & Schedule

The total you earn in gross wages (pre-tax earnings) at your FWS job(s) may not exceed your FWS offer for the academic year. ALL earnings above this amount must be charged to your employer. For each FWS job held, students complete a corresponding referral. The SEO will set a “ceiling” on the referral, indicating the maximum you may earn at a job during the academic year. Do not earn more than this amount. If you do, 100% of your earnings that exceed your FWS ceiling will be charged back to your employer.

Reporting Your Time Worked

At the end of each week you must report your time worked. This is done online through the Harvard PeopleSoft system for on-campus jobs. If time worked is reported incorrectly all earnings will be charged to the FWS employer. After reporting your time, you will be paid!

Track Your Earnings!

Remember to closely track your FWS gross earnings for each job you work! The academic year spans two tax years, so you must add gross earnings from fall term to gross earnings from spring term to arrive at an accurate figure. It is YOUR responsibility, as well as your employer's and your payroll office, to ensure that you have a referral for each FWS job and that you do not earn more than your FWS ceiling for a job.
FWS Jobs & Internships – Information for Employers

Harvard Student Employment Office

The Harvard Student Employment Office (SEO) manages the university's Federal Work Study Program. The SEO website, www.seo.harvard.edu provides detailed information about FWS eligibility for students and employers, and guidance for the hiring and payroll processes. It also houses a job database where employers may post job openings and students may search for openings.

Students and Employers - Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a FWSP position, a student must have a FWS offer as part of their financial aid package. Employers must meet the basic eligibility criteria and agree to pay a share of the student's wages (see below).

**On-campus positions:** All on-campus positions at Harvard are eligible for FWSP.

**Off-campus positions:** Positions in organizations located in the U.S. which are non-profit and have documented 501 (c) 3 status are FWSP eligible. Organizations include federal, state, or local government agencies. (For-profit organizations whose business activity is related to the student's concentration may also be eligible.)

FWSP Pay Rates - Graduate Students

$12.00 per hour is the minimum pay rate for HGSE FWS students. The SEO website includes guidance on setting pay rates for student workers.

Employer’s Share of Student’s Wages

The federal government usually pays 70% of a FWS student's gross wages. The employer pays the remaining percentage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Location</th>
<th>Employer's Share of Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-campus (at Harvard University)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus, non-profit sites</td>
<td>30%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus, for-profit sites</td>
<td>50%* (these positions are rare)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Off-Campus employers must also pay an additional 6-12% to cover FICA and workers’ compensation.

Start Dates for FWS position & Timing of Pay

**On campus positions:** Students may begin working at a FWS job once 1) all hiring and FWS forms have been submitted and 2) the student and supervisor have received an official e-mail from the SEO confirming that the student's FWS offer may be used for the job.

**Off-campus jobs:** Off-campus sites must also complete an “Off-Campus Agency Agreement” with the university and submit a copy of their 501 (c) 3 to the SEO. The SEO must have received these items, along with the FWS hiring forms, before the student may begin working.

We advise students to allow for up to 3 weeks for receipt of their first paycheck after starting a job.

The next section, “FWS Payroll Process – FWS Referral, Hiring Forms, and Time Entry” lists the steps to take to have the student's position approved as a FWS job and the student hired on the FWS payroll.
Scheduling FWS work – How many hours per week?

When planning weekly hours over the course of the job, whether for the semester, the year, or a portion of the year, it is important to consider these “student factors”: the amount of the FWS ceiling, the hourly wage, the expected start and end dates of the work, and the student’s varying availability during the year (allowing for winter and spring break and exams, etc.).

Planning and Tracking Your FWS Student’s Wages

If a student's wages at a job exceed the FWS ceiling for a job, then **100% of the excess wages will be charged back to the employer.** The employer will then be responsible for all these wages.

The responsibility for monitoring FWS wages belongs to both the student and the employer. Tracking and monitoring FWS earnings verifies that a student is not paid more than the FWS “ceiling” set for a position. Students should contact the SEO at seofwsp@fas.harvard.edu with questions about their ceilings. When students take on multiple FWS jobs, ceilings may sometimes be adjusted.

Employers' budgets are often limited, and employers who hire FWS students may depend upon the government's sizable subsidy of their FWS wages. Calculating a student hire's total expected FWS wages and then tracking these earnings on a weekly basis will help ensure that a student's gross FWS wages never exceed the job ceiling set by the SEO, and that all the student's wages are thereby paid through Federal Work Study.

Time Entry Issues or Questions?

If a student encounters difficulty in submitting time entry for a week, they should contact their employer or payroll office immediately.

Questions about FWS offers?

Please have students contact the HGSE Financial Aid Office by phone (617-495-3416) or e-mail at finaid@gse.harvard.edu with questions about a FWS offer.

FWS Payroll & Hiring Steps: Forms, FWS Referral, Time Entry

**On-campus sites:** students may begin working at an on-campus job once their FWS eligibility and position has been approved by the SEO AND all hiring forms, including the I-9 and the FWS referral, explained below, are on record with their payroll office.

**Off-campus sites:** the SEO must also have received the “Off-Campus Agency Agreement” and copy of the agency’s 501 (c) 3.

Once hired, students take the following steps to be added to the Harvard FWS payroll:

1. Register the FWS job on [SEO website](#) by submitting a FWSP Referral Form.

The referral requires basic job information, employer's billing & contact info, pay rate, etc. We encourage employers to complete this with students to ensure accuracy in the completion of the referral. Incomplete referrals delay approval of positions, hiring of students onto the Harvard payroll, and receipt of the first weekly pay.

Ensure the student chooses the correct referral type, “on-campus” or “off campus”, and “Harvard Graduate School of Education” as the “school of attendance”.
2- SEO confirms student’s FWS eligibility with employer.

The SEO reviews the FWSP Referral Form and responds with an e-mail within 3-4 business days. If there is any question about eligibility, the SEO will contact both the student and employer.

The SEO confirms the student’s FWS eligibility for this job through e-mail. The SEO’s e-mail lists the student’s FWS ceiling for the job. This is the maximum amount the student may earn in this position. This e-mail is sent to the student, the supervisor, and the payroll administrator listed on the referral.

3- Submit standard payroll & hiring documents to your payroll office before starting work!

Students must obtain and complete the following pre-employment forms from the SEO website:

1) I-9 Form- Eligibility to work in the U.S.
2) W-4 Form- Federal Tax Withholding
3) M-4 Form- Massachusetts Tax Withholding

HGSE’s Student Hire Form (only for jobs at HGSE): students working at HGSE must also submit this form to the HGSE Finance Office, located in Nichols House.

Other Harvard employers, like HGSE, may have their own hiring forms. The site supervisor or site’s payroll office can confirm if one is required.

NOTE: Off-Campus positions – additional documentation & next steps

Visit the SEO website for details about additional documentation required, such as a copy of the employer’s 501 (c) 3 and the Off-campus Agency Agreement. Once the SEO has received and approved all hiring forms and documentation of the employer’s FWS eligibility, the SEO will e-mail the student instructions for time entry.

Billing for off-campus jobs: the SEO pays full compensation to the student directly, based on weekly time entry. After the employment period, the SEO will bill the employer for their share, typically 30% plus FICA.

4- Weekly Time Entry / Weekly Pay – through PeopleSoft at hr.harvard.edu.

Each week students enter their time on-line through the PeopleSoft system. FWSP regulations require students to submit time on a weekly basis to ensure they are paid on time for each week that they work. If a student encounters difficulty in submitting time entry for a week, she/he should contact their employer or payroll office immediately.