



Financial Aid Office

Work-Study Handbook

FY25

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
MISSION STATEMENT	2
VISION STATEMENT	2
INTRODUCTION	3
WHAT IS WORK-STUDY?	4
WORK-STUDY EMPLOYMENT PROCESS.....	5
Eligibility	5
Hiring Process.....	6
Transferring to Another Position	8
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	9
Students	9
TSC Policies and Procedures Dress Code.	10
Supervisor.....	11
WORK-STUDY AWARDS.....	13
PAY RATE AND AWARDS	13
TIMECLOCK PLUS AND PAYROLL	14
ATTENDANCE POLICIES	15
GENERAL ATTENDANCE.....	15
EVALUATIONS AND TERMINATIONS	16
Evaluations.....	16
Terminations	16
REQUESTING A WORK-STUDY	18
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	18

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 prepare for the job market after graduation.

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

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide exceptional customer services to students and their families by embracing emerging technologies and eliminating financial barriers to higher education by providing federal, state, institutional, and other sources of financial aid.

Introduction

The work-study program is another type of financial aid for undergraduate college students, which provides part-time employment to assist with educational costs. Unlike other employment, employers understand that the student's education comes first. They ensure that their job duties and class schedule do 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 bi-weekly at the federal hourly minimum wage. All students considered for employment under the college work-study program are given an equal opportunity without discrimination based on 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 the 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 is 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 the 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. All active student CWS employees and their supervisors will be notified when such changes occur.

What is Work-Study?

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

All students considered for employment under either Work-Study Program are given an equal opportunity without discrimination based on 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 employment department benefit from the program. The student will get paid every two weeks based on an hourly pay rate.

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 who are residents or non-residents of the State of Texas. However, it will depend on the funding source.

Texas Work-Study

The purpose of the Program is to provide eligible students with jobs, funded in part by the state of Texas, to enable those students to attend eligible institutions of higher education in Texas.



Work-Study Employment Process

Eligibility

A student at Texas Southmost College is eligible to receive part-time employment under the Federal and State Work-Study Program for an award year if the student:

- 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.
- Be 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 the fall and spring semesters, and
 - 1 Credit Hour each summer session
Effective 5/1/22, A student may be employed in an FWS job during a period of nonattendance, such as a summer term, before the student begins attendance in a program for the first time. Such students must be enrolled during the next enrollment period, have a FAFSA completed, and have a 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 (subject to change).
- 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. Work-study awards may be reduced or canceled at any time for some students to adjust unmet need against other types of financial aid, such as scholarships, state grants, student loans, and/or sponsorships.

Hiring Process

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

1. Students should explore available work-study positions and CWS Applications on the [Financial Aid Website](#) under the Work-Study Tab.
2. Complete and submit the CWS Application
 - Students must add at least three references. Failure to submit references may result in an incomplete application
 - Students must upload a Resume. The resume should be in PDF or a Word Document. Pictures are not acceptable.
3. Financial Aid will process the Work-study application and verify eligibility. *If the student is not eligible, they will receive an email from Adobe with a denial comment.*
4. Applications will be added to the pool of applications for supervisors to review.
5. The hiring department schedules interviews with selected candidates, following the "College Work-Study Procedure—TSC Employment Process."
6. The 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.
7. The hiring department submits a 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)
 - Criminal Background Check Authorization Form

8. The Financial Aid Office will award the student in Colleague and create the "College Work-Study Referral Form." This form specifies the number of hours and maximum pay the student is eligible for each semester.
9. Financial Aid forwards the complete package to the Office of Human Resources.
10. The Office of Human Resources conducts a Criminal Background Check (CBC). Once the CBC has cleared, the Office of Human Resources signs the "CWS Referral Form" and returns it to the Financial Aid Office.
11. Human Resources will notify the student that he/she has been selected for the Work-Study position and will set up an appointment with the student to complete additional employment forms.
 - The student should bring the following documents:
 - i. Driver's License, State ID, US Passport, or Permanent Resident Card
 - ii. Official Social Security Card
 - iii. Voided Check from the student's bank for direct deposit
12. The Office of Human Resources will onboard the student and provide the "Authority to Report to Work" form. The student must submit this form to their hiring department on the first day of employment.
13. The supervisor will receive an email from Adobe with the CWS Referral and additional forms to review with the students. Supervisor must:
 - **Review all the forms first with the student before signing.**
 - Agree to terms in the contract.
 - Supervisors electronically sign all forms received via email. Once they approve the forms, they will be emailed to the student.
 - The student must sign all forms from both emails. After signing, Adobe will send the finalized forms directly to all relevant parties.
 - Verify the student electronically signs all the forms.

Transferring to Another Position

Work-study student employees may transfer to another work-study position, but they will have to start the entire process again. *Please refer to the [Hiring Process section](#).*

Students may transfer from one work-study position to another or any TSC part-time position. They must:

- Transfer at the end of a payroll period. Payroll calendar is available at [2024-2025 TSC Bi-Weekly Payroll Calendar.xlsx](#)
- The supervisor must submit a CWS Termination Form to the Financial Aid Office before the student gets transferred.



Students can hold one position at TSC at a time, including non-work-study positions.

Rights and Responsibilities

Students

As employees of Texas Southmost College, Federal and State Work-Study Students are expected to behave responsibly and professionally. They should follow all applicable employment laws and encourage proper communication with supervisors regarding all matters.

- Work-Study employees are expected to maintain confidentiality with personal and other protected information at all times.
- Work-Studies should be getting a clear description of the assignments and the supervisor's expectations.
- Work-Studies must clock in and out using TimeClock Plus on a computer in your designated work area. **Clocking in/out from a different device may result in a corrective action.**
- Work-Studies must approve hours in TimeClock Plus daily.
- Under no circumstances should the student work more than the approved hours on the "College Work-Study Job Referral Form".
- Work-study students should not work more than six consecutive hours without taking a minimum 30-minute break or lunch. Break times, including lunch, should not be reported as hours worked on the timesheet, and students must clock out.
- Do not abuse rest and coffee breaks. This privilege is up to the discretion of your supervisor and HR policies.
- Work hours should not be scheduled during a student's classes, and every allowance should be made for non-scheduled academic requirements.
- A student employee should never work without supervision; one work-study student cannot supervise another.
- Do not work extra hours voluntarily.
- Work-study students should put school before their job.
- Punctuality – All students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for work.
- Perform assigned tasks in an efficient and timely manner.


- Notify your supervisor immediately when illness or other circumstances prevent you from coming to work. Ask your supervisor ahead of time how best to notify them.
- Work-studies should not share usernames, passwords, or security questions with anyone.
- Use of cell phones during working hours is not allowed.
- Headphones or air pods are not allowed 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.
- Students must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester to qualify for the work-study program. Dropping below this requirement will result in program termination.
- Follow all ethical and privacy rules from the institution and hiring department. Students may not request or share confidential information without supervisor approval. If unsure, ask your supervisor for clarification.
- Students must follow **TSC Policies and Procedures for Dress Code**.

A productive work environment is essential for students enrolled in the Work-Study Program. Participants in this program should be aware that they do not receive grants or gift aid; rather, they are required to work to earn their work-study awards. It is important to emphasize that if students do not fulfill their work obligations, they will not receive the funds that have been allocated to them.

TSC Policies and Procedures Dress Code.

“An employee’s appearance and hygiene is a reflection of TSC’s character. Employees are expected to dress appropriately for their work responsibilities and positions. 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 the “Requesting a Work-Study student employee” section of the handbook.
- Define and 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 all work-study students electronically sign the CWS Referral and hiring forms during their first week of employment.
- During the first week, provide training to the student employee on all assigned duties and responsibilities and how to use TimeClock Plus.
- Each work-study student should receive a work schedule, as they are not allowed to create their own schedules.
-  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 canceled or the instructor excuses the student from attending for a particular day. **Any such exceptions must be documented.**
- Monitor and maintain a record of the student employee’s hours throughout each pay period.
- Verify and approve the student employee’s recorded hours daily through TimeClock Plus.
- Follow Payroll Calendar(Part-Time Employees) available at [2024-2025 TSC Bi-Weekly Payroll Calendar.xlsx](#)
- Keep separate files for each student employee’s records, such as Referrals, class schedules, warnings, and any documentation submitted by the student.

- Ensure that the student employee complies with all rules and regulations in the “College Work-Study Program Handbook.”
- Provide regular feedback regarding job performance and evaluate the student employee at the end of each semester. See “Evaluations”.

Guide our Work-Study students! Supervisors act as teachers who train, motivate, communicate, guide, and evaluate student employees.



Failure to comply with the CWS Supervisor’s Responsibilities may result in the closure of all work-study positions in your office.

Work-Study Awards

For the Work-Study program, there are no specific award limits for the FWS earnings other than the requirement that the amount of the FWS award not exceed the student's financial need. The award will be determined by the student's financial need, budget, and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) information. Financial need is defined as the difference between the total cost of attendance and the student aid index (SAI), determined by the FAFSA and other current financial aid awards.

Pay Rate and Awards

The Work-Study pay rate is \$11.00 per hour, and students may not work more than the hours approved per week. The hours approved will be provided on their College Work-Study Referral Form.

Once a student is selected for a position and the CWS Referral form is created, they will be awarded in Colleague. The student will receive an email notification to review their CWS Award in self-service, and no further action is required on their part.

There are several reasons why a student's work-study award may decrease. This could be due to an increase in financial aid from another source, changes in enrollment during the award period, or specific circumstances. It's important to note that the total amount of financial aid awarded to students cannot exceed their financial need. Therefore, students cannot receive more financial aid than they are eligible for.

Work-Study earnings are not disbursed to the student's account and will not reduce the student's tuition. Instead, wages earned through the work-study program will be issued as a paycheck after employment begins and following TSC's payroll calendar.

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 are required to clock in and out using Time Clock Plus from a computer in their designated work area. Clocking in or out from a different device may lead to corrective action.
2. Students must approve their hours for each day worked during the payment cycle.
3. The supervisor will review the hours worked, ensuring they align with the student's work schedule.
4. Both the student and the supervisor must approve the hours worked on a daily basis.
5. All work studies will be paid as follows:
 - a. The first check is a paper check. Checks will be available at the Cashier's Office in the Oliveira Student Services Center.
 - b. Students will be getting paid direct deposit after the second pay period if the student provided bank information and completed the "Direct Deposit Authorization Form" in Human Resources.
 - c. If the student doesn't have a direct deposit, a paper check will continue to be processed and sent to the Cashier's Office.

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 TimeClock Plus is unavailable or the supervisor does not have access to his/her work-study file, the supervisor should send an email to payroll. Payroll will guide and provide instructions.

The payroll schedule can be found at [2024-2025 TSC Bi-Weekly Payroll Calendar.xlsx](#)



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 worked is entered.

Attendance Policies

General Attendance

TSC maintains normal working hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hours may vary depending on work location and job responsibilities. Supervisors will provide employees with their work schedules. 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 that hinder punctuality; regardless, excessive tardiness is prohibited and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Breaks

Work-study students should not work more than 6 consecutive hours without taking a minimum 30-minute meal break or lunch. Meal Break times, including lunch, should not be reported as hours worked on the timesheet, and students must clock out.

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 the normal course of employment as well as the scheduled return from vacation or leaves of absence.

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" Form.
2. Evaluate the student employee's performance.
3. Modifies the student employee's duties, if needed.
4. Share the evaluation with the student employee, providing:
 - Areas of improvement
 - Praise for successes
5. Evaluation Form is located in teams and must be electronically signed by student and supervisor.
6. Submit the form by the end of 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 the counseling process for student-employees with job performance problems before terminating them:

1. Verbal Warning—Privately explain to the students how they are not meeting expectations and help them develop an improvement plan. Allow a reasonable amount of time for the students to improve and provide them with verbal direction during this time.
2. First and Second Written Notification- Inform the student in writing how they fail 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 it to HR for approval. Include the date the verbal warning was given and a copy of the written warning and termination notice.
4. If HR approves the Termination Notice, you may proceed with the following steps:
 - Meet with the student-employee and an impartial witness to notify him/her of termination.
 - Outline in detail how they have not met expectations.
 - Avoid arguments; 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 Termination” form 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 will email the financial aid office at financialaid@tsc.edu requesting work-studies
2. Financial Aid will email the "Work-Study Job Request Form
3. The department completes the forms and follows the instructions provided on the form.
4. Financial Aid will determine the number of positions granted to each requesting department after the College Work-Study budget has been approved.
5. The Financial Aid Office will advertise vacancies
6. All work-study applications will be available for supervisors to review.

Contact Information

For any questions regarding the Work-Study Program, you may contact our Financial Aid office at:

Telephone: 956-295-3600
Fax: 956-295-3621
Email: financialaid@tsc.edu
Webpage: [Financial Aid - Texas Southmost College](#)