

Federal Work-Study Experiment at UW-Milwaukee

**FEDERAL WORK-STUDY EXPERIMENT
EMPLOYER ORIENTATION OUTLINE &
GUIDE**

Purpose and Background of the Federal Work-Study Experiment

The US Department of Education has created this experiment to test how changes to the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program will increase partnerships between institutions and industry, improve student retention and completion, reduce student debt levels, and yield strong post-graduation employment outcomes.

Through the Federal Work-Study Experiment (FWSE), the Department of Education wishes to determine whether changes in the FWS program's requirements would do the following:

- incentivize institutions and employers to work together to expand opportunities made available to FWS students and to see if those changes increase student earnings;
- increase the likelihood that low-income students would accept their work-study award;
- improve student outcomes such as retention, graduation, and job placement opportunities.

To meet these goals UWM will work with employers to develop relevant and educative job descriptions that will be framed as internships for federal work-study students. These students will not only engage in work experiences as part of the FWSE, they will also be required to participate in either (1) an academic course related to their internship experience or (2) co-curricular reflection activities that support their professional development while participating in the experiment.

All agencies and positions must be reviewed by the Center for Student Experience and Talent (SET) to ensure that their organization meets the guidelines outlined by the Department of Education's rules for Federal Work-Study (FWS).

The contents below outline the appropriate procedures that need to be followed for a successful placement in the Federal Work-Study Community Service employment opportunity for a Non-Profit Agency. **All employers who are eligible to participate will be responsible for paying some portion of the students' earnings. This portion depends on the type and size of the organization. Nonprofit organizations and small for-profit businesses are responsible for 25% of the student earnings. Large for-profit business are responsible for 50% of student wages.**

FWSE Employer Onboarding Checklist

1. Attend a FWSE information session OR review the UWM FWSE home page for detailed information regarding the program and employer eligibility.
2. Submit a Federal Work-Study Experiment Off-campus Non-UWM Agency Contact Information Form
3. Meet with a UWM FWSE program representative
4. Develop and submit at least one FWSE job description with a rate of pay identified
5. Complete Federal Work-Study billing contract

FWSE Sample Program Timeline

Although employers can join the program at any time, the standard timeline for hiring students through the program in the fall semester below.

1. Spring and early summer – complete employer onboarding checklist items
2. Summer – UWM recruitment period begins
3. Late August and early September – UWM recruitment push
4. Third week of September – FWSE job fair
5. Late September to October- Employer specific recruitment including; resume reviews and interviewing

6. Late September to October - Make job offers and student hiring
7. October – Students begin in positions and complete organization specific on boarding and training
8. January – Initial student performance appraisals due.
9. March & April – UWM FSWE staff complete site visits
10. May – Final student performance appraisals due

Meeting and Contact Information Form

Contracts will be approved after the agency meets with a representative from the Center for Student Experience and Talent, and that representative deems the agency a good fit for the FWSE. After this meeting the following form must be completed.

Contract

- If a new agency is seeking to become a part of the FWSE, that agency is required to complete a work-study contract.
- All approved contracts are valid until terminated by UWM or the agency.

Contract Approval

- After the contract has been reviewed and deemed eligible, UWM will send an approval letter and signed contract copy to the employer.
- The Center for Student Experience and Talent will have the agency assigned a contract number through the Graduate School (Office of Sponsored Programs), to be used for payroll and billing.

Earnings of Student Awards

A student who earns FWS can only earn the monetary amount they are awarded. The typical FWS award for a student is \$2,500.00 per year.

In Excess

- If a student continues to work after exhausting their work-study award, the agency will be charged 100% or be asked to pay the student directly for any earnings earned in excess of the student's FWS award.
- Agencies (and student employees) are responsible for keeping track of how much money the student has earned against their award.

Unearned

Work-Study awards are semester specific (student maximum earnings are awarded on a semester basis).

- Fall balance carryover requests are based on program fund availability
- Spring funds cannot be carried over into the summer
- Summer funds cannot be carried over into the fall

Employer Billing

- The student will be paid through the university's payroll system on a bi-weekly pay period schedule. Agencies are then billed each semester by the Center for Student Experience and Talent based on their determined commitment to a student's gross earnings and any fringe benefits assessed on that amount until the student exhausts their FWS earnings, then the invoice is at 100% including fringes.
- Employers are expected to sign all FWS student's bi-weekly timecard so they can get paid on time.
- If there are billing/invoice problems the agency should contact Ben Trager at the Center for Student Experience and Talent.

Agency Role as Co-Educator

- As a participating partner in FWSE the agency will act as a co-educator for any FWSE students they employ. This will require the agency to participate in the following events and activities.
 - Initial meeting and discussion of program and site needs.
 - Completion of contract by non-profit with UWM, along with completed funding data form.
 - Provide FWSE position descriptions for each of their work-study opportunities.
 - Communicate available times for students to work at sites.
 - Attend the any sign up or recruiting meetings.
 - Onboard and fill positions by end of October.
 - Re-evaluate site positions needs in January and market further positions.
 - Site visits by FSWE program manager in March/April.
 - Conduct FWSE student performance reviews (UWM will provide review materials)
 - Create a working environment that addresses the designated learning outcomes