



# Student Work-Study Guide

An employment guide for Widener Student Employees



Widener University

## **Introduction**

Widener University values the contributions of its approximately 1,500 student employees. Our student employees help with many diverse teaching, research, community service and administrative functions. Students are an important part of many offices on campus and make our workplace vibrant and interesting.

In the Financial Aid Services office, the work-study coordinator and an assistant manage the overall administration of the student employment program at Widener. These staff members are available as a resource for student employees. The Financial Aid Services office is located in Enrollment Services in Lipka Hall. Payroll and timecard processing is managed by the payroll office located in Old Main.

Most student employment issues can be handled by consulting this handbook or your immediate supervisor. If you still need assistance, please contact the work-study coordinator in the Financial Aid Services office.

## **Student Employment: Two Distinct Options for Students**

### **I. Federal Work Study Program (FWS)**

Widener's on-campus and off-campus FWS programs provide employment in University departments to qualified students, based on need, to help defray some of the student's educational expenses. The programs allow students to develop academically, professionally and socially through their work experience. To work in a FWS position, the student must apply for financial aid and be awarded FWS funds. The FWS program encourages community service activities whenever feasible.

Under the guidance of Federal regulations, the University is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program. This operation includes eligibility determination, job evaluation, placement management, overall program supervision, record keeping, student payroll and reporting.

Students are paid with a combination of Federal and University funds.

### **II. Widener Student Employment (full pay non work-study)**

Under this program, students who do not qualify for FWS funds, or have used their entire FWS award, may still be eligible to work in selected University positions.

Students are paid solely with University funds. All of the student's earnings are charged to the department's budget.

## **Student Eligibility**

To participate in the student employment program, students must meet the following criteria:

Students must be determined to be eligible to work in the United States according to guidelines and regulations of the Department of Homeland Security.

Students must have all applicable local, Federal and state taxes deducted as required by law, but no FICA taxes are deducted on work-study employees during the academic year.

International students must have employment approval on record each year from the International Students Services office before seeking employment at the University.

Once an employment position is secured, international students must have a Social Security number or a copy of an application for a Social Security number on file with Lipka Hall prior to working. If a student does not currently have a Social Security number, they must apply through the Social Security Office. Once a Social Security card is received, it is the responsibility of the student to bring the original documentation to Lipka Hall so that a copy can be kept on file.

Students must be matriculated and enrolled for each semester working, except in the summer, when they must be registered for the upcoming fall semester.

Students must maintain adequate work performance as judged by a supervisor.

Criteria specific to Federal Work-Study (FWS) student-employees:

Students must have completed the financial aid application process (FAFSA) and been awarded FWS eligibility by the Financial Aid Services office.

Students who have estimated financial aid packages because their financial aid verification is incomplete must complete verification within 60 days from the beginning of their term of employment or within 60 days of the start of the academic year, whichever occurs first.

Students must be enrolled at least half-time per semester. Students who choose to work during the summer do not have to be enrolled for summer classes, but they must register for at least six credits for the upcoming fall semester.

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the University's policies and those set forth in the Widener Financial Aid Handbook.

Students may not displace regular employees.

**Employment Paperwork**

Students must have a completed Student Employment Agreement on file in the Enrollment Services office for each position before beginning work.

Students must complete an IRS Form W-4 and a DHS Form I-9. The I-9 form requires either one or two forms of original identification be provided in person at Lipka Hall. The most common forms of identification submitted by our students include an original passport, or a picture ID along with an original Social Security card or birth certificate.

Students must provide all requested documentation in person to the Enrollment Services office located at Lipka Hall.

## **Finding a Job**

Widener University considers the student employment process to be part of a student's overall education at the University. Accordingly, jobs are not assigned to students. A job listing of open positions is available through the Handshake portal managed by the Office of Career Design and Development. Handshake can be accessed at <https://widener.joinhandshake.com/login>

**Eligible students can contact employers directly through Handshake to express interest. If hired, the employer will complete the employer section of the Employment Agreement and it is the responsibility of the student to return it to the Enrollment Services office.**

Widener University does not guarantee student employment. The earlier a student seeks a job in the semester, the more successful he/she is likely to be in finding an appropriate placement. If you are unable to find suitable employment, contact the Work-Study Coordinator in the Financial Aid Services office for assistance.

## **Interviewing Tips**

Jobs on campus are highly competitive; therefore, in an interview be prepared to answer questions such as these:

What interests you most about this job?

Do you have any previous related job experience?

Could you tell me a little about yourself?

What features of your previous jobs have you liked the most? What features have you liked the least?

Do you work better with others or alone?

How would your current/previous co-workers describe you?

Are you interviewing/working anywhere else on campus?

What are some of your strengths? What are some of your weaknesses?

Is there anything special about you that make you uniquely qualified for this position?

What kind of commitment can you give to this job considering your other obligations?

Are you planning to study away next semester/year?

\* Remember, interviewing is a "two way street!" If you are unsure about any aspect of the job for which you are interviewing, feel free to ask questions. Some questions that students might have for possible employers include:

What is the dress code for this position?

Who will be my immediate supervisor?

Is it possible to "change" my weekly work schedule if something important comes up (e.g. family emergency, athletic commitment)?

What is the rate of pay for this position?

Is there any opportunity for a raise?

\* Always be calm and positive in an interview. Employers simply want to find out about your personality, work experience, and interests. Also, please remember to send a thank you note, either paper or email to the interviewer within three days after your interview.

### **Scheduling and Attendance**

Students may work up to 15 hours per week during weeks when class is in session or exams are held. This total includes all of Widener employment, even if you work in multiple jobs.

Over periods of non-attendance (Fall Break, Thanksgiving, between fall and spring semesters, Mid-Term Break, Spring Break and summer) students may work up to 25 hours per week if the break is five days or longer. This total includes all your Widener employment if you work in multiple jobs. In the case of breaks shorter than five days, a student may work up to eight hours per day, but no more than 25 hours in a week. It is University policy that students should not work more than 8 hours per day regardless of whether class is in session.

You may begin working 25 hours per week for summer break, if not enrolled in courses, as long as you are registered for at least six (6) credits in the upcoming fall semester, as soon as the spring semester has officially ended according to the academic calendar.

Student employees at Widener average 9 hours per week in their student employment positions.

Most departments offer flexible scheduling for students who need to take time off for schoolwork and exams. You should always let your supervisor know if your schoolwork or a personal situation will take you away from your job. Repeated unexcused absences can and will be grounds for termination.

### **Payrates**

**Pay rates have been changed for the 2021-2022 academic year**

#### **Tier 1**

The starting wage rate in the student employment program for first-time, entry-level student workers will be \$7.25 per hour unless supervisors can show justification for a higher rate. Examples of positions in this wage class are: lab or hall monitors, general office worker, etc. These jobs require little responsibility, independent judgment or training and should be paid at the lowest wage rate.

## **Tier 2**

Positions that require additional responsibility and training may be paid at a higher rate. For example, students employed in positions that require previous training, significant interaction with the public and some independent judgment will start at \$7.50 per hour. Examples include money handlers, student tutors and assistants with specialized training and responsibilities.

## **Tier 3**

Students with special skills or extensive experience and training qualify for the third starting wage rate of \$8.00 per hour. Examples of these kinds of skills would be computer programming, life-saving ability, or ability to work on independent projects.

## **Tier 4**

Widener Reads/Counts Program is for work-study eligible students only that are interested in going off campus to tutor children in reading and math. This special program is compensated at the rate of \$12.00 per hour. Students meeting the requirements are to contact the Widener Reads/Counts Program Office.

## **Tier 5**

Graduate students whose job responsibilities require a bachelor's degree qualify for \$13.85 per hour. Students must be performing work that requires the degree to qualify for this wage. If a student has a bachelor's degree but performs tasks similar to a Tier 1, 2, or 3 position, the student must be paid according to the lower tier wage rate.

## **Merit/Seniority Increases**

Students may not receive pay increases during the year unless they change positions to a job in another tier. A change such as this requires the completion of a new Student Employment Agreement.

Departments are responsible to report the tier level for each job they want to fill on the Job Description Announcement. The job title, tier level and wage rate for each student must be reported on the Student Employment Agreement. Any Student Employment Agreement that is submitted without a wage rate will be automatically processed for **the Tier One rate of \$7.25 an hour.**

The Financial Aid Services office will review all wage rates submitted and approve them based on campus employment practices and Federal regulations.

The wage rate policy will be reviewed by the University on an annual basis.

## **Community Service**

Some positions on campus qualify for "community service" status according to Federal Work-Study regulations. Widener has become involved in many **off campus** community service work

sites. We are committed to working within the local community in many diverse ways. A list of off campus positions is available online through the Handshake portal.

### **Cultivating a Positive Work Experience**

Dependability is crucial.

Rule of thumb concerning confidentiality: any information you have access to on the job that you would not have access to any other way should be considered confidential.

Be sure to call in when you're sick. (It's a matter of courtesy.)

You deserve to be treated with respect and dignity - as do your co-workers.

Respect for others extends to your dress and hygiene. Be neat and clean when you report to work.

Take your job seriously - the department depends on you to perform the tasks you were hired to do.

Your supervisor would rather hear that you would like to leave early for personal reasons, than have you call in "sick" and then find out the truth later.

At the first indication of trouble, discuss it with your supervisor.

When you finalize your travel plans for breaks, be sure to let your supervisor know when you're leaving and when you'll be back.

Take the initiative - offer assistance.

In many departments, you represent the University. In fact, you may be the first, even the only, person from Widener with whom an individual will ever have contact. In these "service positions" you are asked to behave professionally, both in person and on the telephone. Some departments have standards of neatness and manner that are a part of the job.

Your job is a privilege, not a right. There are a lot of students looking for campus employment.

There are students who handle money, or who work with little or no supervision. In these situations, you are expected to be especially responsible.

In general, work time is not social time - plan to call/visit friends on your own time.

Be sure you understand what is expected of you. Continue to ask about your responsibilities as long as necessary.

### **Timecards**

The University processes student payroll on a bi-weekly basis. Supervisors are required to submit approved hours online via Web Time Entry to the payroll office no later than 10 a.m. on the Monday preceding a payday. The payroll office is located on the Second Floor of Old Main.

A schedule of timecard due dates/paydays is available from the payroll office. The payroll office makes this schedule and guidelines for timecards completion available to students and employers each fiscal year.

It is the student's responsibility to properly submit their time via Web Time Entry and submit them to their supervisor for review and approval. The **supervisor** must submit them to the payroll office by the deadline.

Timecards must be turned in every two weeks for any active student worker, even if they have not worked at all in those two weeks.

Failure to properly complete a timecard may result in a delayed paycheck for students.

Students must have a completed Student Employment Agreement on file in the Enrollment Services office by noon on the Friday before their first pay date. No student may begin work until this Agreement has been turned in to the Enrollment Services office.

**Students must sign up for direct deposit online. It is required that each student worker have their paycheck deposited directly into their bank account.**

### **Dress Code**

Students are generally expected to dress in a neat and clean manner. Your department supervisor can issue general guidelines for dress.

Some departments require student employees to dress in a professional manner. This is the case primarily in service-oriented positions, in which students have frequent contact with individuals outside the campus community.

Several departments on campus have dress requirements for safety reasons. Before beginning work, please check with your supervisor to find out if there are any specific dress requirements for your position.

### **Confidentiality**

Student employees may have access to information that must be treated as confidential. This information may include but is not limited to student information (particularly academic, disciplinary, counseling and/or financial information), computer records, University activities, matters relating to University employees, and/or other matters.

Because of the importance of maintaining confidentiality, any breach, either deliberate or through carelessness, will be grounds for dismissal.

Breaches of confidentiality will be reported for appropriate disciplinary action.

### **On the Job Injuries**

Any injury, regardless of how minor it may appear, must be reported to the student's supervisor immediately. If medical treatment is needed the student should go to the Student Health

Center if the injury is very minor, otherwise to the Crozer-Chester Medical Center (CCMC) occupational health center at CCMC or Taylor Hospital.

The Widener University Workers' Compensation carrier will pay all medical bills incurred through on the job injuries. To be covered by this insurance, the student may not see his/her own physician until he/she has gone through the prescribed procedure.

Supervisors must report any incident to George Hassel in the Compliance & Risk Mgmt office, located in Old Main, as soon as possible. If the injury is severe enough to warrant an ambulance call, Mr. Hassel and Campus Safety must be notified immediately.

### **Evaluations**

Evaluations provide a forum in which to discuss progress and to set goals. They are a good way get feedback on areas that students have achieved well and areas in which improvement is needed. We recommend that evaluations be conducted at least once each semester and at the termination of employment.

### **Resignation**

Students may resign from a position at any time. It is customary to give a supervisor adequate time to find a replacement before leaving the job.

Students who are having difficulties with a supervisor should approach that person and ask to meet to discuss any issues related to the student-supervisor relationship. The student may be given written job expectations at this time.

If the issues continue, you should contact the Work-Study Coordinator for mediation.

### **Termination**

Once a student is hired, the student's continued employment is contingent on satisfactory job performance. Satisfactory performance includes, but is not limited to: reporting to work on time, promptly and accurately completing all work assignments, maintaining appropriate office behavior, as well as meeting the expectations detailed during the initial interview and training period.

Unsatisfactory job performance should be handled within the employing department. Prior to termination for cause, the supervisor will provide verbal warnings indicating the nature of the problem and suggestions for improvement. Additional infractions should prompt written warning notices with a copy sent to the Financial Aid Services office. Continued unsatisfactory performance will ultimately result in termination.

Student forgery or fraud relating to completion of a timecard is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Student Employment Program. Any violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct while students are at work or that in any way pertains to their employment by the University may be grounds for dismissal from the Student Employment Program. Cases of this nature should be referred to the Dean of Student Life for adjudication.

Students who feel that they have been unfairly terminated should contact the Work-study coordinator in the Enrollment Services office.

## **Regulations specific to the FWS Program**

Once a student has earned his or her maximum FWS award, he or she **must** stop working in the program. If it is mutually acceptable, and the department has funding for non-work study student payroll, the student may continue in the same job as a non-work study student employee.

Unused FWS eligibility cannot be carried from one award year to the next.

## **Important Program Contacts**

**\*New general email for worker and employer questions: [workstudymc@widener.edu](mailto:workstudymc@widener.edu)**

Those who answer this email, processes all initial paperwork and student employment agreements. They are available for specific and/or detailed questions relating to the program.

**Wendy Kern ext. 4167 [wqkern@widener.edu](mailto:wqkern@widener.edu)**

Wendy approves all position announcements. She is also available for specific and/or detailed questions relating to the program.

**Lori Carney, Payroll ext. 4597 [lscarney@widener.edu](mailto:lscarney@widener.edu)**

Payroll processes Student Employment agreements and student timecards. They prepare student payroll checks for all students submitting timecards who have a current, completed Student Employment Agreement on file. The Payroll department can answer questions about a student's specific paycheck or timecard.

*It is the policy of Widener University not to discriminate on the basis of sex, handicap, disability, race, age, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or sexual or affectional preference in its educational programs, admissions policies, employment practices, financial aid, or other school-administered programs. This policy is enforced by federal law under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. Further, in compliance with state and federal laws, Widener University will provide the following information upon request: a) copies of documents pertinent to the University's accreditations, approvals or licensing by external associations, agencies or governmental bodies; b) reports on crime statistics and information on safety policies, procedures and preventative programs; c) information regarding gender equity among the University's men's and women's intercollegiate athletic programs. Requests for any of the above information and questions or comments regarding these policies should be directed to the Assistant to the President for University Relations, Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013-5792, (610) 499-4123.*