

Frequently Asked Questions

1. [What is Federal Work-Study \(FWS\)?](#)

The FWS Program provides jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to your course of study.

2. Am I eligible for FWS?

You must first apply by completing the [FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#). Mark "yes" to the question, "In addition to grants, are you interested in work-study (which you earn through work)?" The sooner you notify us that you are interested in FWS, the more likely you will be awarded (if eligible). Work-Study is a need-based program.

3. How much can I make?

Your pay will be at least the current federal minimum hourly wage, but it may be higher, depending on the type of work you do and the skills required. Your total FWS award depends on your financial need, the amount of other aid you receive, and the availability of funds at the time of your award. Keep copies of your signed time sheets so you can track your gross earnings. You and your supervisor are responsible for monitoring your earnings so you do not exceed the total FWS award amount.

4. How will I be paid?

You will be paid on an hourly basis. No FWS student may be paid by commission or fee. The Federal Work-Study Coordinator will determine the rate of pay. Paychecks are disbursed on the 15th of each month. You are responsible for making payments toward any outstanding balance you may have with the University. Payroll options such as [direct deposit](#) is available. If you choose to receive a paper paycheck, it can be picked up at the Payroll Coordinator's Office in the Administration building or mailed to you. Work-Study checks will be disbursed according to the Payroll Schedule as shown on the Work-Study time sheet.

5. Are Federal Work-Study Jobs on or off campus?

Both. If you work on campus you'll work for the Southern University at Shreveport. If you work off campus in a community service position, your employer will usually be a private nonprofit organization or a public agency, and the work performed must be in the public interest. FWS jobs are often related to your course of study and/or provide a service to the community.

6. Can I work as much as I want?

You and your employer will decide how many hours you will be able to work per week. The maximum is 20 hours per week through Work-Study. (A week is counted as Sunday through the following Saturday.) Remember, the amount you earn cannot exceed your total FWS award. When you come close to earning your total FWS award, you may contact our office and the FWS coordinator will determine if your FWS award can be increased.

7. How can I find my FWS award balance?

Always keep a copy of the time sheets you sign and submit to your supervisor. By keeping track of your total monthly gross earnings, both you and your supervisor can accurately monitor your remaining FWS award balance. The Financial Aid Office is available to provide current award balances.

8. If I don't earn my entire FWS award can I earn it in the summer or during the next school year?

You may work only for the period of time your award covers and as long as you are enrolled at least half-time. The remaining fall amount can be carried forward to the following spring term. Unearned amounts cannot be carried over to the next academic year due to federal funding regulations.

9. When must I stop working?

The last day of the academic term is usually the last day Work-Study can be utilized. In some instances, students may be able to work during semester breaks. Check with your supervisor and the Financial Aid Office for more information.

10. What if I earn all of my FWS before the year is over and need more?

Contact the Financial Aid Office and indicate how much more you expect to earn. If you have unmet need and funding is available, we may be able to increase your award. If your FWS is revised, take the new award letter to your employer to show the increase in the maximum amount of FWS you may earn.

11. Can I reject my Work-Study without affecting the other financial aid programs on my award offer?

Yes. There may be several reasons you choose not to work part-time during the academic year. Notify the Financial Aid Office and if employed notify your employer as soon as you decide not to utilize your FWS award. This allows other eligible students to be awarded Work-Study. Your other aid will not be affected. This decision will not affect future opportunities with the Work-Study program.

12. Can my paycheck be electronically deposited?

Students may elect to participate in electronic direct deposit. If you'd like your paycheck electronically deposited into a specific bank account, enrollment forms are available on [SUSLA's website](#).

13. Is FWS taxable income?

If a student earns enough income to file a tax return, it must be included as taxable income for federal and state purposes.

14. Do FWS earnings count against the student to get aid for next year? Does work study affect financial aid?

FWS earnings do not count against the student for the following year's federal financial aid. Even though students report FWS as part of their total income on the FAFSA, there is another place on the FAFSA where FWS earnings are reported separately and the FAFSA formula does not count that against the student.

15. If I don't use all the award money this year, can I use the Federal Work-Study funds I got this year to work next year? If I have FWS this year, will I have it next year?

Federal Work-Study is a form of financial aid and, like other forms of financial aid, may be used only in the year for which it was awarded. You must reapply for this, as well as all other types of aid, each year by filing the FAFSA beginning October 1st at studentaid.ed.gov/. There is no guarantee that you will receive FWS each year, as it is part of your total financial aid package and will be influenced by other types of aid you receive (including loans), family income and your non-Federal Work-Study income during the previous year. All of these items are variable and can impact your eligibility.

16. Can I return to the same FWS job each year?

If you are eligible for Federal Work-Study and want to return to the same department, you may return, assuming that the department wants you back. You must apply for financial aid each year and you must get the appropriate paperwork from the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. You will need Authorization form before you start working each semester/ each year.

17. Do I have to work?

You do not have to work, but working is the only way you have access to the FWS money.