



**MONTANA**  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
**BILLINGS**

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MSU-BILLINGS OFFICE OF  
FINANCIAL AID AND  
SCHOLARSHIPS

WORKSTUDY MANUAL FOR  
STUDENTS AND  
SUPERVISORS

Revised 12/2008

## **The Purpose of the Federal and State Workstudy Programs**

The purpose of the Workstudy Program is to stimulate and promote part-time employment opportunities for eligible students who are in need of funds to pursue a course of study at MSU-Billings. Students may work for the institution and/or work in the public interest for a public non-profit organization.

There is nothing in the university workstudy regulations that guarantees a student a right to any particular job, only that the student may work as part of their financial aid package in any reasonable job assignment.

The federal and state workstudy programs are administered in accordance with the laws, regulations and other instructions that may be issued by or on behalf of the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Montana University board of Regents of Higher Education, respectively.

## **Student Eligibility Criteria**

Students may be eligible for employment under the federal and state workstudy programs if they meet all of the requirements listed below. Students must:

- a. Have a financial need as determined by the financial aid officer
- b. Maintain satisfactory academic progress according to the institution's policies.
- c. Be enrolled for at least half time in either an undergraduate or graduate program.
- d. Be a citizen of the United States, or an eligible non-citizen.

## **Summer Workstudy**

To be eligible for workstudy employment during the summer, students must be enrolled for at least six credits and attending summer sessions. Student workers are limited to eight hours of work per day or work twenty hours per week. During school breaks or holidays, students may not work over twenty hours per week.

## **Student Qualifications**

Before students can be employed under the workstudy program, they must complete the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Each application is reviewed using the eligibility criteria listed above to determine if the student qualifies for participation in this program. When the students' financial aid funding is approved, they will receive an award offer advising them of their eligibility. Students must accept the terms, responsibilities and award amounts listed under workstudy.

Students are responsible to search for workstudy jobs on line and arrange their job interviews. The listing of workstudy positions can be accessed on the Financial Aid and Scholarships website at [www.msubillings.edu](http://www.msubillings.edu)

## **Student Employees From Other Institutions**

Students from other campuses such as Montana State University-Bozeman may be eligible for workstudy opportunities. It should be noted that other campuses have their own policies, wage guidelines, time sheets and procedure that may be different from MSU-Billings. Departments who employ such students will be required to pay out of their own budgets the required match of students' wages, required employer's share of FICA, IAB, UCC expenses. For more information, contact the Payroll office.

## **Students' Responsibilities**

1. Students must complete the FAFSA application and understand how the program works.
2. Review the workstudy job listings online and arrange for interviews with prospective employers.
3. Obtain a Workstudy Authorization Form from the Financial Aid and Scholarships office.
4. Present the Authorization to the perspective employer at the time of the interview.
5. Make sure the Workstudy Authorization is complete and returned to the Financial Aid office prior to starting work as well as having completed the proper payroll forms in the Human Resources Office.  
**NO PAYCHECKS WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL THE AUTHORIZATION FORM AND THE PAYROLL FORMS ARE COMPLETED!**
6. Students must make sure their timesheet is complete, accurate, and turned in to the supervisor for signature. Timesheets are to be turned in before 5 p.m. the first business day after the end of the pay period (usually Mondays) every two weeks. Payroll Department will not accept faxed /copied timesheets. They must be originals.
7. Timesheets are to be signed by the employee, their supervisor and the fund controller. They may be turned in to the Financial Aid office or Payroll Department.
8. Students must conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for their job. They are expected to maintain regular work schedules, be punctual and responsible. Habitual unexcused absence is cause for dismissal.
9. Students are responsible for keeping track of earnings and allocation remaining.
10. When students are unable to work at their scheduled time, they must notify their employer. This is the same consideration students would be expected to show any employer.

## **Employer Participation Requirements**

Employers must meet the following requirements before they are eligible to participate in the Workstudy Programs:

1. Civil Rights Compliance – Discrimination prohibited – “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”
2. Displacement of Regular Workers Prohibited – Employment under the Workstudy Program must not result in the displacement of employed workers or impair existing contracts for services. It is the intent of the program to create new and expanding job opportunities.
3. Non-Profit Status - In order to be considered non-profit, an organization must be incorporated as such under state law. The Internal Revenue Service determines an organization's non-profit classification.
4. Work Performed is in the Public Interest – The services provided by employers must be of broad benefit to the population at large in order to be considered in public interest. Examples of work **not** to be considered in the public interest are:
  - a) Work for which the political support or affiliation of the student is a prerequisite or consideration for employment
  - b) Work to be performed is for an elected official other than as part of the regular administration of Federal, State, or local government, or
  - c) Work is primarily for the benefit of the members of a limited membership organization (such as a credit union, fraternal order, or a cooperative) rather than the public.
5. Religious Involvement Prohibited – Workstudy positions must not involve the construction, operation, or maintenance of any facility used or to be used for religious worship. The

- particular position to which the student is assigned must not involve in any way the sectarian instruction or the religious activities of an organization.
6. Political Involvement Prohibited – Work provided under the Workstudy Program must not involve any partisan or non-partisan political activity.
  7. Dues and Fees Prohibited – No employer, whether public, or private, may ask any student to pay fees, dues, compensation, a commission, a gift or gratuity of any kind as a condition or prerequisite for the student's employment. For example, a student is required to belong to a union and pay dues as a condition of employment. The employer rather than the student must pay for dues while the student is employed under the program.
  8. Employment with a School's Contractor – Work for the school itself also includes certain services the school may contract for cleaning, maintenance, or food services.

## **Employer Responsibilities**

1. Before students begin working, the Workstudy Authorization must be signed by the student's supervisor and fund controller and returned to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships prior to the student starting work.
2. Off campus community service employers are required to sign a contract between the Career Services department and the organization hiring the student. These are available at <http://www.msubillings.edu/careers/communityservice>.
3. The employer must establish a clearly defined work schedule that is compatible to the time requirements of both students and the employer. It is strongly advised that the workload be spread over the entire length of the award period.
4. The department must maintain adequate supervision of the employees with regard to regularity, kind, quality, and quantity of work.
5. Accurate records must be kept by the employer of the time the student works. A time log for checking in and out is beneficial.
6. The remaining amount of the student's allocation must also be monitored. When a student's allocation is earned, it is the employer's responsibility to terminate the employee.
7. The employer is responsible for terminating a workstudy student if it is deemed necessary.

## **Request for Workstudy Employees**

When a department needs a workstudy employee, they must submit a request via email to the Workstudy Coordinator in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. The request is to include name of department, contact person, phone number, wages per hour, number of hours to work per week, and a brief description of the duties. The information will then be listed on the MSU-Billings website under Financial Aid and Scholarships. When a position is filled, the department contacts the Workstudy Coordinator to have the job inactivated and removed from the website.

Community Service jobs are added to the website via the Career Services Department. The non-profit company is required to sign a contract with the Career Services Department every year prior to students working.

## **Management Rights of Employers**

As stated in Montana Code Annotated 39-31-303, MANAGEMENT RIGHTS OF PUBLIC EMPLOYERS: "Public employers and their representatives shall recognize the prerogatives of public employers to operate and manage their affairs in such areas as, but not limited to:

1. direct employees;
2. hire, promote, transfer, assign, and retain employees;

3. relieve employees from duties because of lack of work or funds or under conditions where continuation of such work would be inefficient and non productive;
4. maintain the efficiency of government operations;
5. determine the methods, means, job classifications, and personnel by which government operations are to be conducted;
6. take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out the mission of the agency in situations of emergency;
7. establish methods and processes by which work is performed."
8. employer will pay 30% (State workstudy) OR 25% (Federal workstudy) of the employees wages.

### **Procedure for Terminating Workstudy Employees**

A department should follow the same guidelines for discontinuing employment of a workstudy employee as for non-workstudy temporary personnel. Departments who wish to dismiss a workstudy employee should give a reason to the employee for the dismissal and give the employee a five (5) day notice before the termination is in effect. If the department feels the employee will disrupt the normal activities of the department, the department may give less than five (5) days notice. The department must notify the Workstudy Coordinator in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships of the dismissal. Workstudy employees, who feel the dismissal is not justified, may appeal the grievance to the Director of Financial Aid. In such cases, the Director of Financial Aid will ask the department for a written account of the dismissal and will resolve the grievance.

### **Garnishment of Wages**

Students' workstudy wages may be garnished only to pay any costs of attendance that the student owes the university or that will become due and payable during the period of the award. Schools may oppose any garnishment order they receive for any other type of debt; paying workstudy funds in such cases would mean that funds would not be used "solely for educational purposes" – a requirement for financial aid funds.

### **Establishing Wage Rates**

All student employment under the workstudy program must fall into one of the categories listed on the Wage Range Categories information sheet. The difference between each category is defined by the complexity and responsibility needed to do each job, and level of experience required. These pay rates are established to allow employers flexibility without sacrificing equity in pay. Once the appropriate category is determined for a particular job, the employer is free to choose between the minimum and the maximum rates within the category. Please refer to these guidelines when preparing email job listing to advertise for student employees. Employers may not pay less than the rate of pay listed on the job listing.

Students must be paid at least the current Federal minimum wage. In determining an appropriate rate, consider the following:

- ✓ the skills needed to perform the job
- ✓ how much employees with those skills are paid in the local area for the same type of job
- ✓ applicable Federal, State or local laws that require a specific wage rate
- ✓ wages the school would pay similar non-workstudy employees

The department will be responsible for wages covering the required match of state and federal workstudy funds. Workstudy employment does not include fringe benefits such as sick leave, vacation pay, holiday pay, or retirement.

## **Wage Increase Request**

When considering a raise for a student employee, please compare the student's duties with the "Wage Categories" information sheet. Increased skills and a higher level of duties, and/or the addition of supervisory responsibility are considered valid reasons for a pay raise. Questions about the appropriate category and/or wage rate should be directed to the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid office reserves the right to make the final determination for any job in question.

When an employer wishes to change a student's rate of pay, an email is sent to the Workstudy Coordinator explaining specific reasons for the wage change, including a new job description and/or responsibilities. When the wage increase is approved, it will go into effect for the time period for which it is submitted. If the increase is submitted after 5:00pm on the Monday the timesheets are due, the increase will not go into effect until the following pay period.

## **Calculating the Hours Students May Work**

It is recommended that a student only work a maximum of twenty hours per week while classes are in session. Work performed during any week when classes are not in session shall not exceed eight hours per day and /or 20 hours per week. Also, a student may be employed for up to forty hours per week during summer session or other similar period when not enrolled as a full time student. The best way to maximize the workstudy funding is to divide the hourly wage into the funds awarded per semester. That will be the hours available per semester.

## **Completing the Workstudy Authorization Form**

1. Except for the student's email address and telephone number, the Financial Aid office will fill in the Student Information section.
2. Academic year is the aid year, i.e., 08/09
3. The student may not begin work before the first day of classes for the Fall Semester.
4. The last day of Spring Semester is the last day to earn workstudy funds.
5. A student that is awarded summer workstudy must complete a new authorization unless they are continuing the same job with the same index code as the preceding semester.
6. The Supervisor Information is to be read and understood by the person who will be directly supervising the workstudy student.
7. The information to be filled in by the employer includes:
  - Department or Business – The name of the university department or the company that is hiring the student.
  - Hourly wage
  - Est. hours per week – Number of hours the student anticipates working.
  - Date student to start: This is the date the student will start work. **This is not the date you fill out the authorization.** The student may not start working until the paperwork has been turned in to the Human Resource Office and the Financial Aid Office.
  - Description of duties: A detailed description of the student's duties and responsibilities.
  - Fund Controller's Signature: The person responsible for the department budget must sign the authorization. If the student is a Community Service workstudy, the supervisor and fund controller must have a signed copy of the work contract on file in the Career Services office at MSU-Billings prior to the student working. A copy of the contract can be

downloaded at [www.msubillings.edu/careers](http://www.msubillings.edu/careers). A supervisor may not sign for the fund controller unless they are also the fund controller.

- Supervisor's Signature/ phone number – The person responsible for supervising the workstudy student and verifying the accuracy of the timesheet must sign the authorization form.
- Supervisor's email – If it is necessary to contact the student's immediate supervisor.
- Department / Index - To be completed when the student is employed on campus. If the student works community service then the index number is 602002.

## **Completing Timesheets**

Students are to complete their timesheets electronically using the program on the MSU-Billings website. The acceptable standard to complete a timesheet is:

- Go to MSU-Billings website and click on Faculty/Staff
- Click on FORMS on the tool bar at the top and then Workstudy Timesheets
- Date the pay period ends will always be midnight Sunday. A list of pay periods is on line.
- Students must fill in their student ID. NOT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
- Student types in their name (last, first, middle), department where they are working, and index code. If the place of employment is community service the index code is 602002. Otherwise the index code can be obtained from the department where you are working
- Fill in the appropriate hours worked on the form according to the dates listed. List partial hours as decimals, i.e., 30 min = 0.5 or 15min = 0.25. After the hours and the hourly pay rate are filled in, the total amount will be figured and automatically filled in. A workstudy student may not exceed eight hours a day or 20 hours per week.
- After having the timesheet signed by the fund controller or supervisor, please take it to the Financial Aid office or the Payroll Office.
- **NOTE:** No student may be paid from federal or state workstudy funds unless they have been found eligible for workstudy funds. Any person who knowingly makes a false statement or a misrepresentation on this form shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$10,000 or to imprisonment for not more than five years, or both under provision of the United States Criminal Codes.
- **Time sheets turned in later than 5:00pm on the Monday after a payday will be held over until the next pay period.**
- Incorrect or incomplete timesheets will be returned to the student via their supervisor and not processed for the pay period. We urge that both the student and the supervisor review each timesheet for accuracy. Incorrect or incomplete time sheets cause unnecessary paperwork and delays for departments and students.
- A timesheet must be turned in for the appropriate pay period. If a student continually turns in untimely timesheets, they suffer the chance of having their workstudy cancelled.

## **WAGE CATEGORIES FOR STUDENT EMPLOYEES**

### **Entry Level and Minimal Skilled Work**

**Wage Range:            \$7.25 - \$7.50**

Jobs in this category require:            No special skills - little or no previous experience

This category may be considered as the beginning step that will lead to higher rates of pay but only as skills and responsibility are what justify pay raises - - not longevity.

This category includes, but is not limited to the following jobs: general office assistance, groundskeeper, filing, data entry, shelving, cataloguing, checking supplies, such as athletic equipment, etc.

### **Moderately Skilled Work**

**Wage Range:           \$7.75 - \$8.00**

Jobs in this category require:    At least one year prior training, job related education, and/or work experience

This category includes, but is not limited to the following jobs: establishing and maintaining data records, collecting and depositing money, supervising a facility (i.e., computer lab, math, or English lab), grading papers, coaching, life guarding, tutoring, and performing advanced clerical work.

### **Advanced Skilled Work**

**Wage Range:           \$8.00 and \$10.00**

Jobs in this category require one or more of the following:

- Three or more years of experience in the specific job area
- High degree of responsibility with minimal supervision
- Responsibility in researching and project completion, with analysis and interpretation of data
- Knowledge and application of specialized rules, regulations, and/or procedures.

This category includes, but is not limited to tutoring, lab assistant, and jobs requiring special knowledge in a specific discipline, i.e., computers

### **Community Services**

**Wage Range: Maximum \$10.00**

**Jobs in this category must meet the definitions of Federal Community Service workstudy. (Contact the Job Locator in Career Services for definitions and requirements.)**

**Financial Aid Office reserves the right to make the final determination on wage rates.**