



# What Is Work-Study?



**Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a federally subsidized financial aid program that provides part-time jobs for students, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses.**

- When you fill out the FAFSA, select the box on the application that indicates you want to be considered for work-study.

Are you interested in being considered for work-study?

You should fill out the FAFSA as soon as possible because some aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Selecting this option doesn't guarantee that a work-study option will be included in your financial aid award, and you don't have to accept the work-study if it's offered.

- Within a few weeks or months of filling out the FAFSA, you'll get a financial aid award listing the amounts you're eligible for from grants, work-study and loans. The availability of work-study funds is based on student financial need.

Although your aid financial aid award letter may list a certain amount allocated for work-study, it doesn't mean you automatically receive that money. You have to find a work-study-eligible job and then work enough hours to earn that amount. In order to receive those funds, you need to earn them.

- After you're offered a work-study opportunity, you have to find a job that qualifies for the program. Students are typically responsible for securing their own work-study jobs. Just because your financial aid award says you qualify for work-study doesn't mean you're guaranteed a job. Unlike other financial aid awards, students receive their work-study award as a paycheck from their employer. This means work-study funds cannot be used to pay upfront costs such as tuition, fees, dorm charges or books.
- Around 3,400 colleges and universities have a Federal Work-Study Program, according to the U.S. Department of Education, but not all schools do. Check with the financial aid offices at the schools you're interested in to see if they offer work-study. Schools that do participate have a limited amount of funds they can award to students who are eligible. This is why it is so important for you to fill out the FAFSA as early as possible, as some schools award work-study funds on a first come, first served basis.
- Many work-study jobs are on-campus and can include research assistantships, administrative duties in a campus office or working in the library. Schools often have online portals with work-study job listings, and students are encouraged to apply for jobs that are related to their field of study. Work-study jobs offer flexible hours so you can more easily balance work and school.

**If you haven't already, fill out the FAFSA. The application for the 2019-20 school year became available Oct. 1, 2019. If you've already been approved for the work-study program, check with your college for job listings.**