

Employer Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if a student gets hurt on the job?

The procedures followed when students are injured while working are the same as for staff:

1. The supervisor should contact Human Resources at 412-268-4747 to report the incident.
2. The supervisor should complete an accident report and determine the next steps.
3. Both the supervisor and the student should sign the accident report.

Campus police can provide transportation/escort to area hospitals if necessary. Students, by law, are covered by Workers' Compensation laws and therefore would be eligible for benefits if injured on the job. Workers' Compensation forms are available on the [Human Resources website](#).

What are the guidelines for handling disciplinary matters?

Each department should have its own guidelines on student work requirements and expectations. These should be consistent and both students and staff should be aware of them.

In general, the discipline process should follow this progression:

1. Constructive feedback
2. Verbal warning
3. Written warning
4. Termination, if necessary

Supervisors should follow the disciplinary process steps and document each step because a supervisor can be liable to claims of discrimination or unjust cause for dismissal. Following these procedures lessens this exposure. The Progressive Discipline Process provides tools to protect the rights of employees and also provides a legally defensible process.

If you need assistance dealing with a problem situation, please contact [Pati Kravetz](#), Associate Director of Experiential Learning and Student Employment.

Is there an obligation to re-hire a student for the following academic year?

No, there is not an obligation. Student appointments are not continuing appointments; they are hired on a temporary basis for either an academic year or summer work period.

Are students considered university employees?

Students are employees, but because they are not staff employees. Child labor laws apply to students under the age of eighteen. In addition, because student jobs are not staff positions, student jobs are not posted through Human Resources. Students can have more than one job on campus and can move from one hiring department to another.

What kinds of tasks is it appropriate for student employees to perform, given confidentiality considerations?

Although there is no university-wide policy addressing this issue, departments are advised to carefully consider the kinds of information that may or may not be appropriate for students to have access to. For more information on privacy and confidentiality, please see the policies section.

How should supervisors respond to a request for a reference for former employees?

Please contact your HR representative for policies and guidelines about references and letters of recommendation.

What is a staff member's liability when transporting students during work hours?

Staff who transport students in their personal vehicle during work hours are covered under the university's liability insurance as long as they are on university business.

Why are undergraduate students paid bi-weekly (hourly) and not given a salary (monthly)?

Carnegie Mellon is required to follow the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA governs such things as the minimum wage, overtime pay, and other employment-related laws. Under the FLSA, employers are required to pay employees who are non-exempt at least the minimum wage. In addition, employers are required to pay overtime, at time and a half of the hourly rate, to any employees working in excess of 40 hours in a work week.

Non-exempt employees cannot waive their right to either the minimum wage or the overtime provisions of the FLSA. In other words, even if nonexempt employees volunteer to work for less than minimum wage or to give up their right to overtime pay, the employer must pay the non-exempt employee according to the law. In addition, undergraduate positions are paid on an hourly basis rather than on a salary basis. The FLSA is a complex set of government regulations. For more information about the FLSA, consult with the HR representative in your area. Please call 412-268-4747 and you will be directed to the appropriate representative.

How can students find out whether they have a Work-Study award, or find out how much their Work-Study award is for?

All student jobs are categorized as either Work-Study eligible or Non-Work Study. Questions about Work-Study awards or eligibility can be answered by the staff at the HUB. Call 412-268-8186 or stop at the HUB office located in Warner Hall.

What is Work-Study?

If students apply for financial aid, they are automatically considered for a form of aid called Federal Work-Study. If eligible, a dollar amount will appear on the financial aid letter. Work-Study provides an opportunity to work and earn up to the amount of the award. If students have a Work-Study award, they can apply for any job that they are qualified for. The Work-Study award will be used toward any job they have on campus, including federal community service positions, in which the job itself must also meet certain requirements. (For more information about federal community service jobs, visit the [Student Employment Website](#).)

If students will be paid through a Work-Study award, they may be limited to earning no more than the amount of the award. Once their earnings reach the Work-Study award limit, the employer has the option of continuing employment. Due to budget restrictions, the department may have to end the appointment. The student may then seek employment in an on-campus Non-Work-Study position.

What if students do not have Work-Study?

If students are not eligible, or did not apply for financial aid, they can still work on campus. If they have the qualifications listed in the job description and the posting says, “Qualified Student” or “Prefer Work-Study” any interested student may apply.