

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

The Federal Work-study Program provides funds for part-time employment to help needy students to finance the costs of post-secondary education. Students are awarded an amount of money, usually \$3000 at Cuesta, which is used to pay their hourly wages at a work-study position.

The institution itself, a federal, state, or local public agency; a private nonprofit organization, or a private for-profit organization may employ students. Wages may never be below the federal minimum wage, and, ideally, the job should be related to the student's career interests or academic field.

How to Get Federal Work Study

- Submit FAFSA Application (www.fafsa.gov) and indicate interest in Federal Work Study (FWS) on application.
- Confirm your eligibility for FWS, you must:
 - Be enrolled in at least 6 units
 - Have “unmet need” (Your “need” is produced by the FAFSA Application) To check your “unmet need”, log in to your myCuesta>Student tab>Banner Self-Service>Financial Aid>Award>Award for Aid Year>**Select the correct year then push “Submit”**>Award Overview tab>*see amount of “unmet need” under Need Calculation called “Need”.*
 - Be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards. To check your “SAP Status”, log in to your myCuesta>Student tab>Banner Self-Service>Financial Aid>Financial Aid Status>*You should see a statement saying “Based on your academic transcript, the status of your academic progress is **Satisfactory, Warning, Unsatisfactory or Disqualified** Progress as of ...”*
- Use Cuesta Jobs Links (<https://cuesta-csm.symphlicity.com/students/>) to search and apply for a “Federal Work-Study” position.
- When hired, the employer fills out *paperwork (FWS Referral Form, Job Description Form, Student Employment Confirmation & Student completes the Short-Term/Temporary Employment Application)* and signs the Supervisor sections of each document found in the “Federal Work Study Information for Employers”, then sends it to Financial Aid where the Director of Financial Aid will sign. For Off-Campus FWS positions, your employer would contact the Employment Services Coordinator in Career Connections, who would fill out the paperwork and submit it to Financial Aid where the Director of Financial Aid will sign.
- Financial Aid Office receives the paperwork and has the Director sign it, then processes as normal and sends it to HR.
- Financial Aid Office checks Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). If current status is...

- “Satisfactory” or “Warning” or “SAP Probation Plan”, the student’s paperwork will be processed.
- “Financial Aid Suspension”, the student will need to submit a SAP Appeal Form and if approved, the student’s paperwork will be processed.
- Financial Aid Office awards the student up to \$3000, which is intended to cover the entire academic year.
- Financial Aid Office sends paperwork to Human Resources.
- Financial Aid Office contacts the student to have them complete the Federal Work Study Orientation steps.
- Human Resources contacts the student to arrange TB Testing, Fingerprinting, and New Employee Orientation.
- HR clears student for work, and notifies the student and the Supervisor that the student can begin working.
- HR notifies the FWS Coordinator, usually once per week, of the FWS student’s status and whether they have been cleared to work or not.

Note: A student CANNOT begin working prior to Human Resources clearance!

Reassignment of Award:

- If you drop below 6 units, your award will be reassigned to others.
- If your “unmet need” decreases, then part or all of your award may be reassigned to others.
- If your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) changes to “Financial Aid Suspension” or “Review” then your FWS award may be put on hold or reassigned to others.

Finding a Position

Having a FWS award does NOT guarantee you a position. It is your responsibility to find an open FWS position. Your award may be removed or awarded to another student after days of inactivity, so please be proactive!

To search for work study jobs, register for the [Cuesta online job database](#). Once you find an employer that is willing to hire you for a FWS position, make sure that employer submits a completed FWS Referral Form, Job Description Form, Student Employment Confirmation & Student completed Short-Term/Temporary Employment Application to the Financial Aid Office (all forms can be found at [Federal Work Study Information For Employers](#)).

HR Process

In addition to finding a job, you will need to work with the Cuesta College Human Resources Department to do the following:

- Check your MyCuesta email often as HR will contact you for the various requirements (Tuberculosis Testing, Fingerprinting, New Hire Paperwork and Orientation).
- HR will advise you where and when to complete the TB test and Fingerprinting.
- Note that fingerprinting results may take up to thirty (30) days to arrive; therefore, plan accordingly as you cannot start working until HR clears you and all of your paperwork.
- Upon completion of fingerprinting, TB testing and New Employee Paperwork Packet, HR will schedule you for your New Hire Orientation and advise you of your start date.

Salary / Hours

If you qualify for FWS aid, your salary may start at the federal minimum wage or it may be higher, depending on the type of work and required skills. The total award amount depends on the application date, the level of your need, and how much FWS money the school has to award, but is usually \$3000 for the full academic year.

Undergraduate students are paid by the hour. Unlike a loan program, money is not paid before you earn it. No FWS student may be paid by commission or fee. Students must be paid by the school directly at least once a month.

The amount you earn cannot exceed your total FWS award. Any overage or overtime must be paid by the employers, out of their own funds. When assigning work hours, the employer or financial aid administrator takes your class schedule and academic progress into consideration. When classes are in session, students cannot work more than 20 hours in a given week or 8 hours a day.