



GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY®  
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

# Student Employee Handbook

Revised – March 2019

**STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

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## **STUDENT EMPLOYEE DEFINITION**

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A student employee is a part-time employee who is enrolled and regularly attending classes at Grand Valley State University and whose primary purpose for being at Grand Valley State University is to further his/her education. Such employment, therefore, is interim or temporary and incidental to the pursuit of an education. Student employees shall not work more than twenty-five (25) hours per week. A student must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits fall and winter semester.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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1. **Complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9)** The I-9 Form is a federally required document that verifies your eligibility to work in the U.S. IT MUST BE COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE YOUR FIRST DAY OF EMPLOYMENT. If you have worked on campus before, your supervisor may call Student Employment to verify that you have a valid I-9 Form on file. An I-9 Form expires after one year of no employment on campus. Your employer will need to see and verify original identification documents. [There is a list of acceptable documents included with the I-9 Form PDF on our website.](#)
2. **Complete Income Tax Withholding forms (W-4)** Federal, State, and City (where applicable). W-4 forms must be turned into the Payroll Office in Zumberge Hall. They can also be completed at Student Employment and will be sent to the Payroll Office.  
**PLEASE NOTE:** The address you give Payroll will be the address to which your W-2 income tax forms will be mailed. If you change your address, you must notify the Payroll Office. The W-2 forms are mailed out to each employee by January 31 of the year following the end of the tax year. Your W-2 can also be made available electronically. You will need to initially give permission. To get instructions on this you will want to go to the GVSU Payroll website [www.gvsu.edu/payroll](http://www.gvsu.edu/payroll). On the Payroll homepage you will find instructions on receiving W-2's electronically.
3. You will be recording your hours using the electronic method of time keep through UltraTime. Depending on where you work you will either be issued a 'swipe card' or a 'badge number.'
  - a. You will receive a badge number or swipe card from your supervisor to log into UltraTime or swipe a time clock.
  - b. If you are given a badge number, you should enter your hours daily into UltraTime. Do not enter time before you have worked. Access UltraTime through Grand Valley's home page under "Quick Links" -- click on [UltraTime](#)
4. Establish a work schedule with your supervisor.

## EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Keep your supervisor informed about your work progress along with any other issues that may arise during your work experience. In addition, make sure you understand your supervisor's expectations by asking questions when things do not seem clear so that you can determine if both you and your supervisor are in agreement.

## TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

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### **Federal Work Study (a form of financial aid)**

**ELIGIBILITY:** In order to be eligible for Federal Work Study, a student must demonstrate financial need, be enrolled at least half-time (at least 6 credit hours during the academic year), be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and meet other Federal/State eligibility requirements. A student must apply for financial aid through filing the [FAFSA](#). If a student demonstrates financial need as a result of filing the FAFSA, Federal Work Study may be awarded. Money awarded under the Federal Work Study program is earned over the course of the academic year and will never pay toward the student's tuition bill.

Students awarded Federal Work Study must accept their financial aid award before they can work.

Students awarded Federal Work Study are not assigned to employment, but are asked to search for jobs online through our [Handshake](#) electronic job board. Each employer will have application instructions posted with their job description that the student should follow.

Federal Work Study must be applied for each year by completing the FAFSA.

**EARNINGS:** Federal Work Study students are limited to maximum earnings equal to the amount of their Federal Work Study award.

If the student earns over their Federal Work Study award, the on campus department will be responsible for 100% of those earnings. In some cases, a student may be terminated from their position because the department cannot afford to keep them working and pay 100% of their hourly wage. Discuss this possibility with your supervisor.

**NOTE:** Students may work at more than one job; however, the TOTAL combined hours worked per week must not exceed the maximum (25) allowed. If the student is a Federal Work Study student, the earnings from both jobs are deducted from their Federal Work Study award.

## **NON WORK-STUDY EMPLOYMENT**

These student employees are paid 100% from the employing unit's budget. Regular employees may be receiving financial aid, but were not awarded Federal Work Study as part of their award package.

Students in non-Federal Work Study positions must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits during the academic year and are limited to a 25-hour work week. Students are allowed to work up to 40 hours per week when school is not in session (i.e. spring break, between semesters, spring/summer semester).

**International Students** are limited to a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year, but allowed to work up to 40 hours when classes are not in session.

## **SUMMER EMPLOYMENT**

A limited number of jobs are available on-campus during the spring/summer semester. Students must be officially admitted to attend Grand Valley. The student does not need to be enrolled in courses over the summer but must be enrolled in at least 6 credits for the following fall semester. A student employee can work up to 40 hours per week during summer, however, the student must cut back to 25 hours or less per week during the academic year. FICA Tax (7.65%) will be charged to the student and the department's account if the student is enrolled for less than six credits.

## **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP**

Information on Graduate Assistantships can be found on the Graduate Studies website <https://www.gvsu.edu/gsl/>.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

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### **F-1 VISA:**

Enrolled international students with an immigration status of F-1 are permitted to work part-time on campus for a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week. During holiday or vacation periods (spring break, summer, etc.) they are permitted to work up to 40 hours per week.

1. W-4 forms should be completed in the Payroll Office, 1035 Zumberge Hall or at Student Employment, 100 Student Services Center.

2. Federal I-9 forms should be completed in the Padnos International Center, 130 Lake Ontario Hall or Student Employment, 100 Student Services Center.

Questions regarding employment of F-1 international students may be addressed to the Barbara H. Padnos International Center (331-3898) or the Student Employment Office (331-3238).

### **J-1 VISA:**

Enrolled international students with a J-1 visa may be employed on the campus of the school in which they are enrolled to a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week with prior written authorization from the Barbara H. Padnos International Center, 130 Lake Ontario Hall.

1. W-4 forms should be completed in the Payroll Office, 1035 Zumberge Hall or Student Employment, 100 Student Services Center.
2. Federal I-9 forms should be completed in the International Center, 130 Lake Ontario Hall or Student Employment, 100 Student Services Center.

## **PAYCHECKS**

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Direct deposit is strongly recommended. Direct deposit is a free service, which allows student's paychecks to be submitted directly to their bank accounts; generally this means that funds are available earlier, since the student no longer needs to pick up and deposit a check (see below for more information). Direct deposit forms are available on our website at [www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs/forms](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs/forms).

If a student does not elect to use direct deposit:

1. Those who work on the Allendale Campus will have their checks sent to the Student Transaction Center windows in the Student Services Center for pick up.
2. Those who work at the Grand Rapids Pew Campus will have their checks delivered to the Student Transaction Center windows in the DeVos Building for pick up.

A chart with pay periods and pay dates can be found at [www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs).

## BENEFITS

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1. **WORK BREAKS:** If possible, student employees should be allowed a paid fifteen-minute break for each four hours of continuous work. If the work period is less than four hours, breaks are not required. Break periods may not be accumulated and are not reason to arrive at work fifteen minutes late or leave work fifteen minutes early. Students must discuss with their supervisor the appropriate times and condition of break periods.
2. **HOLIDAYS:** In general, student employees are not required to work on a legal holiday nor are they paid holiday pay. However, offices of the university may be required to maintain services on certain holidays and students may be scheduled to work. All wages will be paid at straight time rates. Any student has the option of declining work on a legal holiday, but only if their employment was not contingent on working holiday hours.
3. **SICK LEAVE:** See the [State of Michigan Paid Medical Leave Act \(PMLA\) policy](#). In the event of illness, the student employee must notify his/her supervisor as early as possible on each day of absence. Failure to give notification shall be cause for dismissal or other appropriate action.
4. **VACATION:** Vacation benefits are not extended to student employees. Students may make arrangements with their supervisor for time off without pay.
5. **OVERTIME:** Student employees should never work over 40 hours in a week.

## DISMISSAL

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The university may terminate a student's employment at any time. Causes for dismissal may be, but are not limited to the following:

1. A student fails to enroll for the required number of credits at GVSU during any term of employment.
2. Unacceptable job performance.
3. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
4. Malicious behavior (this is cause for immediate dismissal and termination).
5. A student is convicted of a criminal offense.
6. Lack of funding.



## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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Sometimes conflicts are inevitable.

An employee with a grievance shall first discuss the matter with his/her supervisor no later than five (5) working days from the date of the occurrence. (If the grievance involves a termination of employment, the employee will go directly to Step 2 below.) As used herein, working days are Monday through Friday irrespective of an individual's actual schedule. If the employee is not satisfied with the supervisor's response, he/she may file a formal grievance as follows:

In the event a student employee feels unjustly treated with regard to pay, termination, or other employment related circumstances, that student should:

**Step 1:** Seek recourse directly with your supervisor. Be clear about your concerns and the desired outcome you would like to have.

- Describe the incident in as much detail as possible; include date(s) of the event(s).
- How did you feel about what happened at the time and presently?
- What was not acceptable to you about that interaction or situation?
- What outcome would you like to have?
- What are you willing to do to create an outcome that you would prefer?

Student Employment can assist you, if you wish, by reviewing your preparation and ensuring you understand how to proceed in the meeting with your supervisor, and also making sure that you understand the options available to you.

**Step 2:** If the grievance is not resolved in Step 1, the employee has five (5) working days in which to appeal in writing to Student Employment. Student Employment has ten (10) working days in which to schedule and hold a meeting with the employee and the supervisor. After the meeting is held, Student Employment will communicate its answer in writing to the employee and the supervisor within five (5) working days.

**Step 3:** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the employee has five (5) working days in which to appeal, in writing, to the Vice President for Enrollment Development. The Vice President for Enrollment Development will communicate his/her decision in writing to the employee, supervisor, and Student Employment within five (5) working days. The decision of the Vice President for Enrollment Development shall be final.

All grievances shall be considered permanently settled if the employee does not file the next step in accordance with the prescribed time limits or upon termination of student status. Time limits may be extended only by mutual consent.

**Confidentiality:** As with all negotiations that rise to the level of intervention, it is appropriate to keep the situation confidential. This includes not discussing or complaining about the situation to others outside of the situation and not having external discussions of the meetings or conversations while a mutually agreeable solution is being reached. This applies to all parties concerned.

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

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1. **TASK COMPLETION:** If you are assigned a project or specific responsibility to complete make sure you regularly communicate the status of that project to the appropriate person; if you encounter problems or have to leave you must make arrangements for its completion. Most projects have deadlines that are set and need to be strictly followed.
2. **COMMUNICATION:** If you are given a task and you are unsure of what needs to be done, it is YOUR responsibility to ask questions and ensure you have a clear understanding of the task and corresponding deadlines.
3. **POLICIES:** Know your department's policies. Is there a dress code? What is the policy on cell phone use while at work? How do short breaks or lunch breaks work in your department? If you are unsure about any of these policies, please ask your supervisor.
4. **MISTAKES:** Your student position is a great opportunity for personal growth. Don't be discouraged if you make a mistake. Admit it, learn from it, and ask what you can do to help resolve the resulting situation.
5. **STAY INFORMED:** It is important that you know what is going on around campus so that you can act as a resource and an ambassador for your department.
6. **KEEP BUSY:** If you feel you do not have anything to do, ask if something needs to be done. You can always clean and straighten up your work area. Look for someone to help or tasks that need to be addressed.
7. **CHALLENGE:** Each student employee has a responsibility to continue to improve Grand Valley and your department. Please make suggestions and address concerns as they appear. If you have an idea or a new approach, speak up in a respectful manner.
8. **HELP OTHERS:** Go out of your way to help others. Personal service and problem solving for visitors to campus can be critical. When you see someone who looks like they may need assistance, offer your help.
9. **CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT:** Employment for the next academic year is NOT automatic. Students will be rehired based on their performance from the previous year. Students interested in continuing employment for the next year should ask their supervisor what procedure they should follow to apply for work.
10. **ACADEMICS:** Your first priority is to be a student and it is important that you pursue high academic achievement. You must balance your student job and your academic work so that you can be successful in both. Plan ahead so that you can meet commitments within your department. Review specific needs with your supervisor.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

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**BE ON TIME:** Your agreed upon start time means you should be actively working at that time. If you work on Mondays at 9:00am, you should arrive 10 minutes or so before 9:00am to settle in and get ready so you can be working at 9:00am. Promptly notify your supervisor if you are running late, and state your anticipated arrival time.

**MAINTAIN DETAILED RECORDS:** Write down your tasks and describe how to complete them as a reminder for yourself and a guide for future student employees in your position. Take notes during communications with your supervisor so you can recall what was said at a later date.

**USE PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE:** In person, on the phone, and in email messages make sure to communicate clearly and with professional language. Do not chat speak or slang, and consider your audience in regards to formality; emails to your supervisor will likely be more formal than emails to your peers. Dress professionally; ask your supervisor about the dress code. Observe how your coworkers and supervisors dress and emulate their level of professional attire. Some office on campus may have higher professional attire standards in comparison to others.

**UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE:** It is important to have a working knowledge of the purpose of your office and its main goals to ensure that you are continually contributing to its overall mission. Even though the task you are assigned may seem trivial, it is important to the overall function and purpose of the office.

**CONSIDER THE DETAILS:** Managing large tasks and assignments in your work is important; however, it is also important to make sure that those tasks are completed with care and attention to detail. The consistency, accuracy, precision, and reliability of a completed task as just as important as the purpose of the task itself.

**DELEGATE:** If you supervise other students or workers as a part of a team it can be important to delegate some tasks to specific individuals in order to make the most effective use of your time. However, it is also important to maintain a balance and to not overburden the individuals you are supervising.

**PRIORITIZE:** If you are assigned a project or specific responsibility to complete make sure you regularly check in with your supervisor to ensure that each task you are in charge of is completed in a timely manner; some tasks may be more urgently required in comparison to others.

**TEAMWORK:** If you are a member of a team, make sure you are doing your part to contribute to the team's overall mission, function, and purpose. When someone else is working on a project you should offer assistance or offer to review the completed work.