

STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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*This handbook was last updated in May of 2024. If you have any questions or concerns related to the information in this handbook, please reach out.

INTRODUCTION

A student employee is a part-time employee who is enrolled and regularly attending classes at Grand Valley State University. Their primary purpose for being at Grand Valley State University is to further their education. Such employment, therefore, is interim or temporary and incidental to the pursuit of an education.

Student Employment works with all University departments, and the community, to create part-time and summer employment opportunities for students. As a part of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, the Student Employment Office administers the Federal Work-Study Program university wide. The purpose of Student Employment is to aid students in obtaining employment that will help finance their education and develop work skills for their future careers.

I-9 DOCUMENTS AND OTHER FORMS

Federal Form I-9

The Federal Form I-9 is a federally required document that verifies your eligibility to work in the United States. You cannot legally work on campus without completing the Form I-9, so it is incredibly important that you complete your employment paperwork and do not begin clocking hours without this documentation on file. If you've worked on campus before, you or your supervisor may call Student Employment to verify that you have a valid Form I-9 on file. A Form I-9 expires after one year of no employment on campus. The Form I-9 can be re-activated if new employment is found, and the Form I-9 was completed within the past three years.

You will be prompted to complete the Form I-9 in Workday once your hire has been submitted by your supervisor. You must then visit the Student Employment Office within your first three days of employment to present your original identifying documentation and complete Section 2 of the Form I-9. Identifying document options can be found on Page 2 of [Federal Form I-9](#). Please keep in mind that these documents must be originals. **Photos, copies, emails, and faxes will not be accepted.**

Income Tax Withholding Forms (W-4)

Student Employees at GVSU are required to pay taxes on their earnings. To specify how you would like your taxes to be taken out, you will need to fill out the Federal W-4, State W-4, and City tax forms (when applicable) in Workday. If you are a new employee, you will be prompted to complete these forms in Workday.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Recording Hours

If you are an hourly employee, you will be recording your hours in Workday. Depending on where you work, you will input your hours into Workday using a check-in kiosk or you will manually enter your hours on a desktop computer.

Do not enter time you have not worked in Workday and do not work during class time unless that class has been cancelled and you have written proof from your professor or class instructor. GVSU and the Student Employment Office will investigate time fraud and appropriate consequences will follow if you are found to be entering false time on your record.

Further questions related to hour regulations and time tracking should be brought to the Payroll Office at payroll@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-2237.

Establishing a Work Schedule

Make sure that you and your supervisor are on the same page when it comes to the hours you will be working. Provide them with your class schedule and any other commitments that will prevent you from working. Be honest about the hours you can work and update your supervisor if anything changes.

Employer/Employee Relations

Keep your supervisor informed about your work progress and any other issues that may arise at work. Also, make sure you understand your supervisor's expectations by asking questions when things are not clear.

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

Federal Work-Study

Federal Work-study is a form of Financial Aid provided at GVSU. 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 after 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 through employment and will never pay toward the student's tuition bill.

Students awarded Federal Work-Study must accept their financial aid award before they begin their on-campus employment. Students awarded Federal Work-Study are not assigned to employment, but are asked to search for jobs online in Workday. Each employer will have application instructions posted with their job description that the student should follow.

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

Students earning Federal Work-Study 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. Therefore, it is likely the award will be used quickly.

Students may be able to request additional Federal Work-Study funding if they completely deplete their award. To request this funding, students must have space room in their financial aid budget and must reach out to the Student Employment Office.

Traditional Employment (Non-Work-Study)

Traditional student employees are paid 100% of their paycheck 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.

All student employees, regardless of Federal Work-Study status, must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits during the academic year. They are limited to a 25-hour work week for all student positions combined. Students are allowed to work up to 40 hours per week when school is not in session (i.e. Spring Break, Winter Break, and during the Spring/Summer semester).

International Students

International students are limited to a maximum of 20 hours per week of student employment during the academic year but are allowed to work up to 40 hours when classes are not in session. These times include the Spring/Summer semester, Winter Break and Spring Break.

Summer Employment

A limited number of jobs are available on-campus during the Spring/Summer semester. Students must be officially admitted and registered for classes at Grand Valley in order to work on-campus. The student does not need to be enrolled in courses over the Spring/Summer semester 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 Spring/Summer semester, 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.

NOTE: Federal Work-Study cannot be used during the Spring/Summer semester.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are similar to traditional employment but they typically are related to a student's major and include other benefits. More information on graduate assistantships can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Credit Enrollment

According to the definition of a "Student Employee," a student must be registered for a minimum of 6 credits to be eligible to be a student worker. Enrollment is checked each pay period and upon falling below the minimum credits required, a student's position will be terminated. Students who are below the credit limit and wish to continue working as a student employee on campus will need to request a [Student Employee Exception Form](#). This form allows students to explain their reasoning behind their low credit enrollment. These reasons are often based on extenuating circumstances (e.g. last semester and only need one class to finish degree, program requires less than half-time enrollment, waiting to register for specific program, dual enrollment, etc.). To qualify for this exception, students must be currently enrolled in at least 1 course and pursuing a degree at Grand Valley State University.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students with an F-1 or J-1 Visa are permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year and up to 40 hours a week during the Spring/Summer semester, Winter Break and Spring Break. This follows U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations.

International students must complete a Federal Form I-9 before they can begin working on campus. To complete the Form I-9, international students will need to bring in three identifying documents that will be recorded in "List A" of the form. These documents include their Passport, I-20 Form (or DS-2019) and their I-94 Form. These documents will be presented, in person, to the Student Employment Office after the student has completed Section 1 of the Form I-9 in Workday.

International students must also have received an official Social Security Number (SSN) before they begin working on campus. Exceptions to this rule can be made so long as the student has applied for their SSN and are awaiting its arrival. In these cases, students must notify the Student Employment Office of their expected SSN arrival date and come to the Student Employment Office to update their record as soon as their SSN is received.

International students are required to be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits during Fall and Winter semester to be eligible to work on campus.

Questions regarding employment of F-1 and J-1 international students may be addressed to the Barbara H. Padnos International Center (616-331-3898) or Student Employment (616-331-3238).

PAYCHECKS

Student employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis. A chart with pay periods and pay dates can be found on the Student Employment website. This chart is updated every academic year. Students who have signed up for direct deposit will be paid on the paid date, not before. Students who have not signed up for direct deposit will receive a paper check one to three days after the payment date.

Direct deposit is strongly recommended for all student employees. Direct deposit sign up is available online through the student's Workday onboarding process. If a student did not previously sign up for direct deposit but would like to sign up later, they can enter "Payment Elections" into their Workday search bar and enter their bank account details.

If a student does not elect to use direct deposit, their paycheck will be mailed to their permanent address.

BENEFITS

Work Breaks

Student employees must be allowed a paid 15-minute break for every four hours of continuous work. Students are not required to take these breaks if they do not wish, but it must be offered to them. 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. If a student is scheduled to work a continuous eight-hour block of time, we recommend a 30-minute, paid lunch break whenever possible.

Holidays

In general, student employees are not required to work on a legal holiday nor are they paid holiday pay. However, certain offices/departments 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.

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 employment corrective action. Students are not eligible to receive paid sick leave.

Vacation

Vacation benefits are not extended to student employees. Students may plan with their supervisor for time off without pay. If agreed upon by everyone, students can work extra hours in the weeks leading up to or following their vacation to make up the time. However, they would still be limited to 25 hours per week (20 hours for international students) during the academic year and 40 hours during the Spring/Summer semester.

Overtime

Student employees should never work more than their allowed hours each week. Students who do work over 40 hours per week during the Spring/Summer or 25 hours during the academic year receive an emailed notice of hour violation. If the student continues to work over their hour limit, their employment will be terminated by the Student Employment Office.

University Breaks

GVSU offices may still be open during some breaks and student employees are able, and encouraged, to continue working. Campuses and offices are open during Spring Break, MLK Day as well as the beginning and end sections of Winter Break. GVSU students are not required to work during breaks in which GVSU campuses and offices are closed. These breaks usually include Labor Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving weekend (Thursday-Sunday) and the section of Winter Break that spans between Christmas Eve and New Years Day.

Some offices continue to function even when GVSU campuses are closed. Please make sure to communicate with your supervisor at the start of your hire if and when you are expected to work any breaks.

DISMISSAL

Employment may be terminated at any time by the hiring department. However, the supervisor should make their expectations clear and give the student ample opportunity to improve their performance. The termination should be communicated both verbally and in writing along with the reasons for dismissal. The student employee may appeal a dismissal if they choose.

CAUSE FOR DISMISSAL MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. A student fails to enroll for the required number of credits at GVSU.
2. Unacceptable job performance (based on employee expectations provided by the supervisor or hiring department).
3. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness. Can include “no call, no show” instances.
4. Malicious or harmful behavior intended to hurt another person - this is cause for immediate termination.
 - Physical or verbal violence or aggression
 - Ex. Hitting, punching, slapping, grabbing, kicking, spitting, yelling, shouting, swearing, etc.
 - Threat of violence or aggression (either in person or virtual)
 - Ex. Threatening text or calls, stalking, in person threat, etc.
 - Sexual harassment (in person or virtual)
 - Ex. Inappropriate jokes or questions referring to sexual acts or sexual orientation, nonconsensual touching, unwanted sexual advances, unwanted suggestive texts, etc.
 - For more information on sexual harassment, please contact the Title IX Office at 616-331-9530 or www.gvsu.edu/titleix/.
5. A student is convicted of a criminal offense.
6. Lack of departmental funding.
7. Loss of Federal Work-Study funding.
8. Theft – including stealing university property or time clock theft where incorrect hours are intentionally entered to increase paycheck amount.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Sometimes conflicts are inevitable. A student employee with a grievance shall first discuss the matter with their supervisor no later than five business days from the date of the occurrence. Business days are considered as taking place from Monday through Friday regardless of if the student employee works on the weekends. If the student employee is not satisfied with the supervisor's response, they may file a formal grievance as follows:

Step 1

Speak directly with your supervisor either in person or via email. Remember, respect goes both ways and should be shown during each conversation or encounter. Be clear about your concerns and the desired outcome you would like to have. Describe the incident in as much detail as possible. If possible, include date(s) of the event(s).

- How did you feel about what happened?
- What was not acceptable to you about that specific interaction or situation?
- What outcome would you like to have?
- What are you willing to do to create an outcome that would work for you and your supervisor?
- If related to pay, what wage do you believe you should be earning based on your job responsibilities?

Step 2

If the grievance is not resolved in Step 1, the employee has five business days in which to appeal in writing to the Associate Director of Student Employment. The Associate Director has 10 business days in which to schedule and hold a meeting with the employee, the supervisor (or hiring department representative) and a member of Student Ombuds. The purpose of the meeting will be to determine if proper procedure was followed and to provide the student with an opportunity to explain the situation and formally request their intended outcome. After the meeting is held, the supervisor (or hiring department representative) will notify the Associate Director of Student Employment of their final decision. The Associate Director will forward that decision to the student.

NOTE: Student Employment and its staff do not hold the authority to override hiring decisions made by a department on campus. Our purpose is to advocate for student employees when an issue arises and to offer a space for students and their supervisors to formally discuss the situation and potential outcomes.

Step 3

If the student does not believe the situation has been resolved in Step 2, they have five business days in which to appeal, in writing, to the Associate Vice President for Financial Aid. The Associate Vice President for Financial Aid will speak with the Associate Director of Student Employment and student supervisor (or hiring department representative) to determine if proper procedure was followed. The decision of the Vice President 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.

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.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

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 a problem or have issues completing the project, you must make arrangements for its completion with your supervisors. Most projects have deadlines that are set and need to be strictly followed.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 additional tasks that need to be addressed.

Challenge

Each student employee has a responsibility to continue to improve Grand Valley State University and your department. Please make suggestions and address concerns as they appear. If you have a new idea, speak up in a respectful manner.

Continuing Employment

Employment for the following academic year is NOT guaranteed. Students will be rehired based on their performance from the previous year. Students interested in continuing employment for the following academic year should ask their supervisor what procedure they should follow to apply for their current position for the following year.

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 and work expectations with your supervisor. Remember, you CANNOT clock hours during the same time that your classes are in session unless you have written proof from a professor that class has been cancelled.

BEST PRACTICES

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 use 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.

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.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

All employees of the university (including student employees) are protected by the provisions of the Worker's Compensation Act. This law provides for expenses for medical care, as well as certain benefits for loss of pay because of any injuries and subsequent disability received during the regular performance of university duties.

The following procedures should be observed in cases of accidental injury while in the performance of duty:

1. Seek medical attention. This could include, but is not limited to, a trip to the emergency room, urgent care, the GVSU Health Center or a primary physician.
2. Notify Supervisor.
3. A Grand Valley Workers Compensation Injury Report form should be completed. These are available in the Human Resources Office (1090 Zumberge Hall). The form must be returned to Human Resources after completion.

Any subsequent bills resulting from the injury should be sent to the Human Resources Office at hro@gvsu.edu.]

More information can be found on the Human Resources website at <https://www.gvsu.edu/hro/workers-compensation-28.htm>.

WAGES

Student employee wages are set by the hiring department. When determining student wages, supervisors should consider their department budget and the job responsibilities their student employees will be given. Wage classifications can be found on the Student Employment [Website](#) to help determine the minimum wage their students should be earning based on their job responsibilities. Departments are always welcome (and encouraged) to pay students more than the classification minimum if their budget allows for that.

Students who believe they should be earning a higher pay rate based on their job responsibilities should reach out to their supervisor to request that increase. We encourage students to provide their supervisor with specific reasoning regarding their request by viewing the job classification chart and corresponding wage chart.

FERPA & CONFIDENTIALITY

All student employee data at GVSU is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As a student employee, you may have access to confidential information regarding current or previous students. As a student employee, you cannot reveal any information you view to any person other than staff or faculty member of GVSU who have a need to know that information. This includes parents, family members or friends of the student unless the student has given express permission for that person to know their personal data through the [FERPA Permission to Release Non-Public Information](#) Form.

Example #1: A parent calls and would like to know whether their student has registered for classes. You may not release this information to the parent unless the student has given you direct permission by filling out the FERPA Permission to Release Non-Public Information Form.

Example #2: You are locating student information to help complete a task for your supervisor. You come across records of a friend of yours. You may not tell your friend that you viewed their record and you may not share the information you viewed with anyone other than your supervisor, who has a need to know. Alternatively, ask a colleague, who does not know your friend, to view the information for you.

All student employees who have access to confidential information should review and sign the Student Employee Confidentiality Agreement available on the Student Employment website. This form can be held within the hiring department.

More information can be found within the Registrar's Office or at the link below.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/registrar/student-ferpa-faqs-19.htm>.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Location

104a Arend and Nancy Lubbers Student Services Center
Allendale, MI 49401

Phone Number

616-331-3238

Fax Number

616-331-3180

Email Address

studentjobs@gvsu.edu

Web Address

www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs