Federal Work-Study (FWS) Updates – Spring 2020 Quarter

We write to share pertinent information about the FWS program and hope this information is helpful to you and to your student-employees.

Please know that other than the source of the wages, Federal Work-Study is no different from other part-time employment opportunities. Hourly and non-exempt employees are paid only for hours that are worked.

On March 5, the federal government did relax guidance for schools on a semester system because those students were in the middle of employment for their academic term. Unfortunately, there is no new flexibility for schools on the quarter system where employment for the term had not yet begun.

There is some good news. It is permissible to pay student-employees who are working remotely and we encourage you to take advantage of this flexibility, if possible. Please note, our office will not notify students of this possibility because we feel it is up to supervisors to make the determination.

As is standard practice, all hours must be verified by you through the standard payroll process. Payroll records are audited each year and, as you know, you are accountable for those records.

Some more good news. If student-employees cannot work and have an emergency circumstance, it is highly likely that an interest-free loan is available through the Financial Aid Office. Please make referrals (https://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/help/contact.html) to those students who need a replacement for their paycheck for basic necessities. These loans are available, generally, at any time to our students and up through the end of spring quarter.

These are unique times, to say the least, we are all doing our best to help students and provide as many resources as possible. Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you have questions, and take good care of yourselves.

Sincerely,

Angela Yang, Director of Operations – Financial Aid Office

Anne Horne, Federal Work-study Coordinator – Financial Aid Office