Helpful Hints for Departments with Student Employees

Student I-9s (excludes graduate fellows paid by the GRAD PA as fellowships are not considered employment)
All newly hired students paid by Rice University for employment must complete the Eligibility Verification Form (or Form I-9) with the Payroll Office prior to the start of work or training. (This is a requirement of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and not of Rice University.) Students must present to Payroll staff original, unexpired document(s) to establish identity and employment authorization. Noncompliance may result in fines to employers per incident by the USCIS. Therefore, a $1,100 fine will be passed to the departments with violations.

NOTE: Students who have satisfied the I-9 requirement for previous student employment at Rice should not have to complete a new I-9 for each job unless either (1) work authorization for foreign national students expires or (2) student returns to Rice from inactive student status or former staff employment.

Student Pay (all Undergraduates and any Graduates with Secondary Jobs Outside of the Graduate Program Stipend)
Students in this category are Nonexempt employees (paid by the hour) based on criteria determined by the U.S. Department of Labor. Students will be paid based on an hourly rate and submit electronic timesheets for the hours worked. Departments requesting exception to this policy must have the exception reviewed/approved by the Payroll Office prior to work performed.

Hiring Forms/Web Time Entry
Hiring forms are accessible by the department (EPAF or Grad PA) after the student completes the I-9 requirement. Undergraduate students and any graduates with secondary positions outside of the graduate program stipend will be able to access their time entry immediately after the Student Job Assignment EPAF completes the EPAF routing queue.

NOTE: Students should only start employment after the department originator submits the EPAF successfully to the department approval queue. This will ensure I-9 compliance and reduce the risk for fines. In addition, the query date (or the start date of the EPAF) can only be a current or future date. This date has an impact on the electronic timesheet since the student will only be able to enter hours on/after this date.

W-4 (Federal Tax Withholding)
Students submit their W-4 information electronically through ESTHER at Employee > Tax Forms > W4 Tax Exemptions or Allowances similar to faculty and staff.

NOTE: Foreign nationals should delay the completion of the W-4, as they may need to provide additional visa/immigration information to determine eligibility for completing the W-4.

Direct Deposit
Students submit their direct deposit information electronically through ESTHER at Employee > Payroll Information > Direct Deposit Allocation similar to faculty and staff. Students need to provide this information through ESTHER within 5 days of hire or 2 business days prior to the first pay date, whichever is earlier. Otherwise, students will be enrolled in Rice’s payroll card (or prepaid debit card) program.