Students Working at Rice

Undergraduate students and graduate students with secondary positions beyond their role as fellow, teaching or research assistant, may be employed at Rice University on an hourly basis just as any other part-time employee. In order to do so, they are required to go through the same hiring process, complete an I-9 and submit a weekly timesheet. There are two funding sources at the university for hiring student employees –

- Federal Work Study – students in this program are using the position as part of their financial aid package; the Office of Financial Aid pays a percentage of their wages and the hiring department pays the balance. Student employment in this program operates through the Office of Financial Aid.

- Rice Work – students in this program are not required to demonstrate financial need or to complete the financial aid process. Student employment in this program goes through the hiring department.

Federal Work Study

Federal Work Study is a part-time employment program for undergraduate students who have demonstrated financial need according to eligibility criteria set forth by the U.S. federal government. Students are limited to earning the dollar amount shown on their financial aid award letter. Each year, the student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), demonstrate financial need, and maintain satisfactory academic progress for the Office of Financial Aid to consider students for a Federal Work Study award.

Federal Work Study students may work multiple jobs on campus; however, only one job can be a Federal Work Study position. Departments hiring students under a Federal Work Study position will be responsible for the balance of the wages and fringe benefit charge not paid by the Office of Financial Aid. Students are responsible to communicate to hiring departments whether or not they are recipients of Federal Work Study. Students can reference the financial aid award page in ESTHER to confirm or contact the Office of Financial Aid.

America Reads (Federal Work Study award required)

The America Reads Challenge Program is a federally funded national literacy initiative. Rice’s Center for Civic Leadership oversees the Rice chapter of America Reads.

Rice undergraduate students in this program work with community organizations and schools in Houston by helping children complete their schoolwork, jumpstart on curriculum, and engage with the learning process. Tutors receive training and off-campus placements arranged through the Rice Center for Civic Leadership.

Rice students interested in tutoring through America Reads must have Federal Work Study funds in their financial aid award letter. For more information or submit an application, visit the America Reads website.

Rice Work

Students are not required to demonstrate financial need or to complete the financial aid process; departmental funds pay 100% of the student’s wages. Student employment goes through the hiring department and follows all hiring and paperwork processes through the Payroll Office.
Requirements and Eligibility

In order to qualify, students must be currently enrolled at Rice with at least six credit hours (undergraduate) or five credit hours (graduate). In order to qualify for summer employment, students must be active students or incoming matriculates who have enrolled for the minimum hours for the upcoming fall semester.

All international students should consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars to ensure they are eligible for employment and the specific type of work.

Students who do not meet these enrollment requirements are eligible for employment; however, the hiring department will need to follow the “new hire” process for staff through Human Resources.

Applying for Jobs

Departments may post student job openings on Office of Financial Aid’s Online Job Board or the Center for Career Development’s Handshake.

Employment and Payroll Process

All students (including graduate students paid a Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant stipend) must complete their I-9 paperwork with the Payroll Office prior to starting employment and continue to follow payroll procedures to ensure timely and accurate payment.

The student employment and payroll process operates as a function under the Controller’s Office.

Form I-9

All newly hired undergraduate and graduate students must complete the Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) with the Payroll Office prior to the start of work. Students need to visit the Payroll Office with their original acceptable document(s) to complete Form I-9. Departments hiring a larger number of students can contact the Payroll Office to request an I-9 session.

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 a foreign national student expires, or (2) student returns to Rice from inactive student status or former staff employment.

Refer to the following:

- Form I-9 Requirement - reference for students
- List of Acceptable Documents - for I-9 requirement

In the event employers do not comply with the I-9 requirements, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may fine employers per violation. Since these are federal requirements and failure to comply with the requirements places Rice at risk for significant fines, departments that do not comply with the I-9 requirements and guidelines will incur a $1,100 fine per occurrence.
Workweek

Rice’s workweek is 12:00 a.m. Sunday to 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

Hours Worked

Generally, worked time is all time during which an employee is required to be at a work place or performing work-related activities. Refer to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Fact Sheet for Hours Worked for more information.

It is highly recommended by the Office of Financial Aid that students not work more than 20 hours per week while classes are in session. However, the 20 hours per week maximum during the academic year is a requirement for students with F-1 or J-1 student status. More information is available at the Office of International Students and Scholars website.

Compensation

All undergraduate students and graduate students with secondary positions are generally nonexempt employees. This determination results from applying the U.S. Department of Labor’s Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which is the federal law that provides employers with regulations on the following:

- Criteria for a job to be exempt (salary) or nonexempt (hourly)
- Federal minimum wage required for all nonexempt jobs
- Overtime required for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one work week
- Employment of minors

Students normally do not meet the criteria for exemption from the FLSA; therefore, students receive pay by the hour.

Hourly Rate

Students’ hourly rate of pay must be at least the federal minimum wage and not exceed $20.00 per hour or the market rate for the services performed. Market rates that exceed $20.00 per hour must include documentation with the hiring form from the hiring department indicating the market rate and sources of such rate.

Students hired as a performer for a campus event, a photographer for a campus publication or event, or hired to complete a special project outside the regular scope of work normally done by student employees must be paid at least the federal minimum wage and not exceed $50.00 per hour or the market rate for the services performed. These assignments are limited to a one-week period. Market rates that exceed $50.00 per hour must include documentation with the hiring form from the hiring department indicating the market rate and sources of such rate.

Overtime

Overtime pay is one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek. For students with multiple jobs, the overtime pay calculation uses a weighted average of the
student’s pay rates (one and one-half times the weighted average pay rate) for all hours worked in excess of 40 in any workweek. The primary job receives the overtime.

**Timesheets**

Students (all undergraduates and graduates with secondary positions) report their hours electronically through ESTHER at Employee > Web Time Sheet (for Non-Exempt Employees).

- Report all hours worked on the actual date worked.
- Round hours to the nearest quarter hour.
- Employees must submit timesheets by 11 a.m. on the Monday following the 2-week pay period.
- Approvers must approve timesheets by 5 p.m. on the Monday following the 2-week pay period.

**Reporting Time (for Nonexempt Employees)**

**Approving Timesheets (for Department Approvers)**

If the Crisis Management Team closes the University, Human Resources and Payroll will provide guidance for reporting hours prior to the submission deadline date.

**Changes to Previously Reported Time**

Student employees who have changes to an already submitted Web Time Entry (WTE) timesheet must follow these steps:

- Print the appropriate WTE timesheet.
- Make the necessary adjustments.
- Date/initial the WTE timesheet with changes (both the employee and approver).
- Department submits the revised timesheet to payroll@rice.edu with a TIMESHEET REVISION subject line.
- All revised WTE timesheets will be paid on the next pay cycle after Payroll receives the timesheet(s).

**Missed Time Reporting**

Student employees who did not report time for a pay period(s) must follow these steps:

- Complete a paper timesheet(s) and report hours for each applicable 2-week pay period.
- Timesheet(s) will require supervisor and/or department administrator approval.
- Department submits the paper timesheet(s) to payroll@rice.edu with a TIMESHEET subject line.
- All paper timesheets will be paid on the next pay cycle after Payroll receives the timesheet(s).

**Student Timesheet**
Pay Schedule

All undergraduate students and graduate students with supplemental nonexempt jobs receive pay on the bi-weekly (B2) payroll every other Friday following the end of the 2-week pay period. If the normal pay date falls on a holiday, the pay date will be the last business day prior to the weekend or holiday. There are typically 26 bi-weekly pays in a calendar year.

Electronic Pay Options

Students receive their pay by one of the following options:

Direct Deposit

Student employees can deposit their pay into a U.S. bank account(s) of their choice. Direct deposit enrollment is completed by the employee in ESTHER through Employee > Pay Information > Direct Deposit Allocation. More information is available at the Direct Deposit main menu in ESTHER. **Students need to provide this information through ESTHER within five days of hire or two business days prior to the first pay date, whichever is later.**

Payroll (Pre-Paid Debit) Card

Student employees who do not sign up for a direct deposit account will have their pay deposited onto a payroll card. For more information about Rice’s payroll card program, please contact Payroll at payroll@rice.edu or (713) 348-3410. Payroll staff enroll student employees in the payroll card program.

**NOTE:** Individuals who do not submit bank information through ESTHER before the first pay will be enrolled automatically into Rice’s payroll card program; however, an individual may enroll in direct deposit at any time.

Tax Withholding

Students are generally exempt from social security and Medicare taxes during the academic year.

Students submit their federal W-4 information electronically through ESTHER at Employee > Tax Forms > W4 Tax Exemptions or Allowances.

**NOTE:** Foreign nationals should delay completion of the W-4, as they may need to provide immigration information and travel history to determine eligibility for completing the W-4.

Foreign Nationals

Foreign nationals will receive an email from payroll@rice.edu with login credentials so individuals can provide immigration information and travel history through the Foreign National Information System (FNIS). This information enables the Payroll Office to determine tax status and comply with U.S. withholding and reporting requirements.

**FNIS User Guide**
Terminations

Student job assignments automatically remain active through the current employment period (academic year and summer are two different employment periods).

- If the hiring department needs an earlier end date, the hiring department may provide the Payroll Office with a termination date before the end of the applicable employment period.
- Students working beyond the current employment period require a new job assignment (completed by the hiring departments) for the upcoming employment period.

Student Employee Resources

- **Job Search Resources** - The Center for Career Development (CCD) has compiled resources to guide students through the job search process. Refer to the [CCD website](#) for more information on resume writing, interviews, workplace etiquette.

- **Applying for Jobs** – Student employees can apply for jobs using the Center for Career Development’s [Handshake](#) and Financial Aid’s [Job Board](#).

- **Helpful Hints for Students** (after accepting a job)

- **SSN Application Process** – All student employees must have a social security number ("SSN"). If they do not already have one, students with current employment must apply for a Social Security Number with the Social Security Administration. The Office of International Students and Scholars has resources available for the [SSN application process for foreign students](#) and [SSN Employer verification letters](#).

- **Student Employee Statement of Rights and Responsibilities**

- **Student Employment FAQs**

Hiring Department Resources

- **Helpful Hints for Hiring Departments**

- **EPAF Hiring Form (completed by department)** - Departments submit the hiring form through ESTHER at Employee > Electronic Personnel Action Form (EPAF). Refer to the [EPAF guidelines](#) and the EPAF main menu and screens in ESTHER for more information.
  - Students will be able to access their electronic timesheets immediately after the hiring form completes the EPAF queue (unless the job effective date is in the future).
  - **Students should only start employment after the hiring department submits the Student Job Assignment EPAF to the routing queue.** Departments that allow a student to start work without completing an I-9 will receive an I-9 compliance fine (refer to the I-9 section in Hiring and Paying Student Employees).

- **EPAF Originator and Approver Access** – Individuals need Originator and/or Department Approver access given to them by Payroll. The department directs all EPAF access requests to payroll@rice.edu. Payroll
verifies that individuals have the required Banner HR security to ensure that EPAF access will work properly. Refer to EPAF access requirements for more information.

- **EPAF and Hiring Process Training** – There is training available for individuals with EPAF access. Email payroll@rice.edu to register for training.

- **WTE Approver, FYI, and Proxy Access** – Individuals need Approver, FYI, or Proxy access to review and/or approve timesheets. Payroll grants Approver and FYI access, the primary approver grants proxy access in ESTHER. Refer to WTE access requirements for more information.

- **Student Researchers (Rice and Non-Rice students)** - Please refer to the following for an overview of the guidelines for processing these payments:
  - **Student Research Employees (SRE)** – Employees are required to satisfy the Form I-9 requirement prior to the start of employment. SREs will report their hours worked through Web Time Entry in Esther and receive pay on the B2 (bi-weekly) payroll. Payments will be reportable on Form W-2 or Form 1042-S.
  - **Student Research Trainees (SRT)** – Trainees will need to complete Form W-9 or Form W-8BEN and upload the form through the Vendor Portal. They will receive their payments from Payables through a check request(s). Payments will be reportable on Form 1099 or Form 1042-S, which may result in tax liability when SRTs file their tax returns.
  - **Employee or Trainee Matrix** (guidance regarding whether a student researcher is classified as an employee or trainee)
  - **Student Research Trainee Guidance** (guidance for departments to preserve non-employee status of the Student Research Trainee Program)
  - **Student Research Employee Process** (visual representation of the workflow process for hiring a Student Research Employee)
  - **Student Research Trainee Process** (visual representation of the workflow process for paying a Student Research Trainee)
  - **Visiting International Undergraduate Researcher** (visual representation of the workflow process for bringing a visiting international undergraduate researcher to campus)