PA State Work-Study Program for Prospective Employers

This presentation is being recorded and may be made available online.
March 2022
PA State Work-Study Program

• Administered by the PA Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) since inception
• Made possible through PA General Assembly funding
  – About $3 million is allocated each year
  – Nearly 1,500 students enrolled in 2019-20
• Relies on the cooperation of PA postsecondary institutions and employers
• Provides students with:
  – Opportunities to gain career-related work experience
  – Chance to earn while they learn and reduce reliance on student loans
• Managed separately from PHEAA Federal Work-Study Programs
Employers are reimbursed for a portion of wages paid.

Students receive payment for work performed.

Eligible students apply for and are hired for positions.

Jobs are posted on PHEAA.org.

Employer applies and is approved for participation.
Employer Eligibility

• Eligible PA Employers can be:
  – Federal, State, or local government agencies
  – Nonprofit organizations
  – For profit businesses
  – Postsecondary institutions

• Employers must:
  – Complete an application by the term deadline
  – Provide authorization for electronic disbursement of funds
  – Be granted access to PHEAA systems for student record reporting and maintenance
  – Complete an Employer Agreement
  – Follow established guidelines for hiring, compensation, and reporting

Most jobs that are offered to PA students will qualify under the PA State Work-Study Program guidelines!
Employer Application Process

• First-time applicants:
  – Application is available at PHEAA.org/employer
  – Submit by the appropriate deadlines
    • Summer term: June 30
      – May 1, 2022 – August 13, 2022
    • Academic Year or Fall term only: November 1
      – August 8, 2022 – May 14, 2023
    • Spring term only: March 1
      – December 5, 2022 – May 14, 2023
  • Renewal applications are generated and made available to employers in the spring

Employers complete an Employer Agreement related to their participation when the first student is submitted. Changes such as organization, business type, etc. should be reported promptly.
Application Process

1. Employer submits application with:
   - Demographic information
   - Primary program contact
   - Program coordinators
   - Information on the organization structure (e.g., headquarters, make-up, etc.)
   - Available student job titles (full list at PHEAA.org/jobcodes)

2. Employer submits banking information for reimbursements
   - All disbursements sent via Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)
   - Changes to Automated Clearing House (ACH) Authorizations must be reported to PHEAA as soon as possible
     - PHEAA will halt subsequent disbursements if EFT bounces

3. Employer requests access to PHEAA systems
   - Identify an Authoritative Source (AS) to control and monitor the organization’s profile
   - Business Partners Access Management System (BPAMS) is used to maintain users and access levels
   - AS changes must be reported to PHEAA in a timely manner
Online Access Resources

- **PageCenter**
  - Secure report repository that houses reports, rosters, and listings for the PHEAA-administered programs
  - All SWSP Employers will be assigned a mailbox if one does not exist

- **Document Library**
  - Online repository that maintains program materials (e.g., program guidelines, applications, memos, etc.)

- **My File Gateway (MFG)**
  - PHEAA’s secure web method for organizations to return data back to PHEAA

- **OC/WebConnect**
  - An interface used to access the PHEAA mainframe via the Web

User guides and resources for these systems are available at PHEAA.org/training
Student Eligibility

• Be a Pennsylvania resident
• Apply by the appropriate deadline
• Be enrolled on at least a half-time basis at a PA State Grant-approved school
  – Undergraduate students must be eligible for a PA State Grant award
  – Graduate students must have unmet need as confirmed by their school
  – Summer eligibility can be based on enrollment during the academic year either preceding or following the applicable summer term
• Be able to benefit from a career-related work experience
• Not be in default or pending default on an education loan or owe a PA State Grant refund
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility Criteria</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be a high school graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend a postsecondary school approved by PHEAA for PA State Grant purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be unconditionally admitted and enrolled in an approved program of study of at least 2 academic years in length</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have made satisfactory Academic Progress (as defined by PHEAA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not have already earned a bachelor's degree or its equivalent</td>
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<td>Be of satisfactory character (i.e., not be incarcerated)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not have received the maximum number of PA State Grant awards permitted</td>
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• PHEAA will advise employers of student applicants' eligibility via status listing in PageCenter

• Eligibility for enrolled students lasts until the employment end date on the application or the term end date

• Eligibility ends when enrollment ends
  – Students who are no longer enrolled are not eligible for continued SWSP participation
  – Employers must notify PHEAA if they become aware of the change in enrollment
  – Employers can no longer report student hours for reimbursement
Student Job Search Options

- Many schools have lists of approved SWSP employers and available jobs in the local area.
- Students can work at any participating postsecondary school.
- PHEAA.org/SWSPStudent allows a search of listings by location and by industry.
- Employer is not yet approved for SWSP, but is willing and eligible to participate.

Contact their school's Financial Aid or Career Services Offices

Contact another school’s Financial Aid Office

Search for an approved employer online

Find an employer on their own
Student Hiring Process

1. Student applies for and is hired by an approved SWSP employer
2. Student and employer complete the SWSP Student Application / Placement form
3. PHEAA processes eligibility overnight upon receipt of application
Hiring Eligibility

- PHEAA will continue to review student’s eligibility throughout the term if initially denied
  - Students may be approved at any point during the term for employment if there are changes that would remove the reason for denial
  - Students who are approved for SWSP remain eligible for the length of the term as long as they are still enrolled

Examples:

- An employer submits an employment application for Student A in May for the summer term. The application is originally denied because the student is not approved for a PA State Grant for the prior academic year. In June, Student A becomes PA State Grant eligible for the following academic year, and now becomes SWSP eligible for the length of the term

- The same employer applies for Student B in September. Student B is approved to work for the length of the academic year term. In October, Student B undergoes a PA State Grant review and is no longer eligible for the PA State Grant. Because Student B was previously approved for SWSP, they can continue their employment through the remainder of the term
Eligibility Scenario

• Jay is the Human Resources Director of PHEAA Consulting in Erie, PA which has been approved to participate in the SWSP
  – Billie lives in NY and is attending a PA State Grant approved institution in Erie, PA. The Career Services Center on campus referred Billie to Jay’s organization for career-related experience
  – Lukas has worked as an SWSP student for 6 months, when they tell Jay that they had to withdraw from some classes due to other obligations
  – Sam runs a plumbing company across town and asks Jay how to get reimbursed for SWSP employees’ wages

Questions:

• If Billie was hired, would Jay be reimbursed through the SWSP for any portion of the wages paid to Billie?
• Can Jay still be reimbursed for wages, even though Lukas’ enrollment has dropped to part time?
• Can Sam, who runs a for-profit business, be approved as an SWSP employer?
Answers:

• **No**, Jay could not be reimbursed through the PA State Work-Study Program for wages paid to Billie. Since Billie is not a PA resident, the student is not eligible for the PA State Work-Study Program.

• **Yes**, Jay can still be reimbursed for the wages paid. Lukas was approved at the beginning of the term, so SWSP eligibility will not end until the term ends or until Lukas ceases enrollment completely.

• **Yes**, Sam could certainly be an approved SWSP employer! Sam can apply, and as long as there are no issues regarding his application or access requests, he could start employing students and get reimbursed for 40% of the wages he pays them.
  
  – Jay can refer Sam to [PHEAA.org/employers](http://PHEAA.org/employers) to find information and application materials.
SWSP jobs may not involve construction or maintenance of any part of a building used for religious worship or sectarian instruction or involve any partisan political activity such as lobbying.

Employer Expectations

• Confirm that work conditions comply with all federal, state, and local laws
• Maintain established payroll procedures
  – Add the approved SWSP student to payroll
  – Pay 100% of the student’s earnings for hours worked minus all required deductions
  – Pay student in full, even if they go over the maximum weekly hours for the program
• Do not displace regular employees with the placement of a SWSP student
• Enact and maintain non-discrimination practices for SWSP students
Employer Responsibilities

• Provide job descriptions to students for each SWSP position outlining job duties and responsibilities

• Ensure each student employee is advised of:
  – Hourly rate of pay
  – Employment start and end dates
  – Scheduled hours the student is expected to work
  – Pay dates
  – Safety rules

The student’s supervisor must be a non-SWSP employee of the organization and must ensure that all assignments, tasks, and projects align with the student’s job description. A family member must not be assigned to supervise a related SWSP student.
Employment Start & End Dates

- Employment start dates may be backdated to the start of the term by employer request
- Wages may not be reimbursed for hours worked prior to the student’s participation approval
- If a student is terminated prior to the original expected end date, contact PHEAA and provide a work end date
  – Discontinue reporting work hours for the student

Example: Tyler begins working at an approved SWSP employer on September 9. Tyler’s application for SWSP was submitted to PHEAA on October 9. When processed by PHEAA, Tyler’s employment begin date is entered as the date the application was received. The employer can contact PHEAA to request Tyler’s start date be back dated to the start of the term.
Student Earnings & Reimbursement Process

- SWSP employers are required to pay students 100 percent of any earnings
- SWSP award amounts are determined by the following application data:
  - Work start and end dates
  - Approved hourly pay rate up to $25.00 per hour
  - Maximum number of weekly hours the student may work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Maximum Weekly Hours</th>
<th>Weeks in Employment Term</th>
<th>Pay Rate</th>
<th>PA State Work-Study Award</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Earnings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
<td>$2,340</td>
<td>$2,340</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$7.25</td>
<td>$3,045</td>
<td>$3,045</td>
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<td>Student C</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$8,400</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Employers must submit student hours worked to PHEAA

- Three submission options available
  - My File Gateway – Pre-formatted spreadsheet reporting option with data being uploaded to PHEAA
  - OC/Webconnect – Enables employer to enter hours into PHEAA system directly
  - SWSP Time Report – Manual reporting via template that is faxed or emailed back to PHEAA for additional manual processing

- Hours must be reported weekly, after they have been worked
  - Late reporting (over 60 days) may not be reimbursed
Disbursement of Reimbursement Funds

- SWSP Disbursement Roster is provided with each disbursement – Disbursements are sent as close to the 15th of each month as possible
- Reconciliation process occurs at the end of each term when money is owed to an employer or to PHEAA
- Future disbursements may be withheld until the employer returns the certified rosters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PA State Work-Study Award</th>
<th>Maximum Nonprofit Reimbursement (50%)</th>
<th>Maximum For-profit Reimbursement (40%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>$2,340</td>
<td>$1,170</td>
<td>$936</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>$3,045</td>
<td>$1,522.50</td>
<td>$1,218</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For-profit, Public or Private Businesses and Postsecondary Institutions are reimbursed for 40\% of wages paid, while Nonprofit, Public or Private Organizations, Postsecondary Institutions, Government Agencies, and School Districts receive 50\% of every dollar earned up to the student’s award amount.
Retention of Records & Program Reviews

- PHEAA performs Program Reviews for all organizations participating in SWSP
- Employers must keep copies of records for 5 years
  - Must retain all signed student applications and SWSP-related payroll records
- To maintain compliance and participation in the program:
  - Ensure the AS completes the annual access review
  - Submit applications and work-hours in a timely manner
  - Remit rosters and refunds in a timely manner
- Non-compliance may result in disbursement holds, denied reimbursements, or removal from the program

For additional details on the PA State Grant and Special Programs Program Review process, please visit PHEAA.org/ProgramReview.
Reminders

• A variety of job titles are available and are adaptable to your business needs

• Brochures and information for all of PHEAA’s financial aid offerings are available to help you support your student employees
  – Check out PHEAA.org/Order-Online for our free materials
  – Learn more about financial aid at PHEAA.org/ResourcesCounselors

• Keep in mind the application due dates relevant to your expected hiring activity
  – Applications can take up to 21 business days to process

• Employers can appeal decisions by PHEAA concerning student eligibility or reimbursement
Join Us Next Time

PA Institutional Assistance Grants Program
Program Overview
Thursday, April 21, 2022

Be sure to routinely check out our upcoming offerings at PHEAA.org/SGSPtraining!

Have a specific session that you would like to see featured? Send us an email via the program mailbox with the subject line: Training Topic.
Resources

Web
• PHEAA.org
• Alec

SGSP Staff
• swsp@pheaa.org
• 1-800-443-0646

Events
• Webinar Series
• Conferences
• Workshops

Print Materials
• Brochures
• Calendars
• FAQs

Connect with PHEAA socially!
Thank You!