STUDENT WORKER
EMPLOYMENT HANDBOOK

Rev. November 2017
Contents

Purpose of this Handbook ........................................................................................................ 3
Introduction ............................................................................................................................ 3
What is a Student Worker? .................................................................................................... 3
New Hires .............................................................................................................................. 3
Rehires ................................................................................................................................. 3
How do I find a job? ............................................................................................................... 3
What Paperwork am I required to provide? ....................................................................... 4
  Employment Eligibility Verification Information (Form I-9) ........................................... 4
  W-4 ................................................................................................................................... 4
  IT-2104/IT-2104-E ........................................................................................................... 4
  International Students ...................................................................................................... 4
Student Employment Services ............................................................................................ 4
Types of Employment Available to Students .................................................................... 5
Federal Work-Study ............................................................................................................. 5
Non FWS or Other On-Campus Employment .................................................................. 5
Graduate Student ................................................................................................................ 5
International Student ......................................................................................................... 6
Terms of Student Employment ............................................................................................ 6
Rights and Responsibilities ................................................................................................. 6
Work Schedule .................................................................................................................... 6
Breaks .................................................................................................................................. 6
  Rest Breaks ....................................................................................................................... 6
  Meal Periods ..................................................................................................................... 7
Environment ......................................................................................................................... 7
Training ................................................................................................................................. 7
Compensation ...................................................................................................................... 7
  How to Get Paid ................................................................................................................ 8
Pay Periods Schedule ......................................................................................................... 8
Overtime ............................................................................................................................... 8
Web Time Entry through SIS .............................................................................................. 8
Paper timesheets and other time entry methods ............................................................... 8
Direct Deposit .................................................................................................................. 9
Paper Checks .................................................................................................................. 9
Workers’ Compensation ................................................................................................. 9
Short-term Disability ....................................................................................................... 9
Communication ................................................................................................................ 9
Performance .................................................................................................................... 9
Attendance ........................................................................................................................ 10
Confidentiality .................................................................................................................. 10
Discipline ........................................................................................................................... 10
Student Employment Policies .......................................................................................... 11
403(b) Universal Availability Notice .............................................................................. 11
  Eligibility .......................................................................................................................... 11
  To Enroll ........................................................................................................................... 11
  Approved Vendors .......................................................................................................... 11
Fidelity Investments ......................................................................................................... 12
TIAA .................................................................................................................................... 12
Contribution Limits ......................................................................................................... 12
More Information ............................................................................................................. 12
Purpose of this Handbook

This Handbook is designed to be the primary reference document for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute student workers. The Handbook will be updated periodically to reflect changes in Institute policy and/or changes in the law. However, no provisions in this Handbook are, or should be construed as, an implied or expressed contract or guarantee of employment or contractual obligation of the Institute.

This Handbook is not intended to cover all Institute or student policies but rather provide student workers with an overview on student employment. Please visit The Dean of Students Office web page for detailed information on the Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities: “http://doso.rpi.edu/”

Introduction

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute recognizes the benefits student workers bring to the Institute, as well as the benefits student workers receive from working. In addition to earning money to help cover educational costs, students can gain experience and skills from their work. Student workers have an opportunity to practice workplace skills, while lending their talents to the Institute.

What is a Student Worker?

Any candidate for a Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute degree who is registered for at least six credits at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute may be hired as a student worker. Degree candidates registered for fewer than six, but at least one credit may be allowed to continue as a student worker if they are enrolled in an on campus cooperative, or if they are enrolled to complete their thesis or dissertation. Continuing students employed during the summer must be eligible to and be planning to register for the next term. Students who have graduated may not be hired nor may they continue to be employed as student workers. Individuals who are not admitted as degree-seeking students at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute may not be hired as student workers.

New Hires

New hires, for the purposes of student employment, are defined as currently enrolled, matriculated Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute students who have not ever been employed by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as a student worker.

Rehires

Rehires, for the purposes of student employment, are defined as a Rensselaer student who stops attending the Institute and is re-admitted. Students that are granted an approved leave of absence are not considered rehires unless they do not return at the time their official leave ends.

How do I find a job?

All eligible students can learn about and apply for currently available on-campus employment via JobLink. JobLink is the Center for Career and Professional Development’s (CCPD) online recruiting and job posting system. All opportunities are posted in JobLink for summer, co-op, off-campus and on-campus employment.
Students who are eligible for and are receiving Federal Work Study (FWS) can view available positions through JobLink but must apply through the Office of Financial Aid. Research and Teaching Assistant positions are recommended by an individual faculty member and will most likely not be posted in JobLink.

**What Paperwork am I required to provide?**

**Employment Eligibility Verification Information (Form I-9)**

Students are required to complete a “Form I-9” on or before their first day of employment. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Rensselaer must verify a student's eligibility to work in the United States with an I-9 form. Students must present original, unexpired documents such as a U.S. Passport or a driver's license and social security card to a certified representative in the department the student will be working for and complete Section 1 of the form on or before their first day of work. Students are required to complete the Form I-9 after the student worker has received and accepted an offer of employment. Completion of this form is generally required only for your first job on campus.

**W-4**

Form W-4 needs to be completed so that Rensselaer can withhold the correct federal income tax from the students pay.

**IT-2104/IT-2104-E**

Form IT-2104 or Form IT-2104-E needs to be completed so that Rensselaer can withhold the correct New York State tax from the students pay.

**International Students**

International students should review the International Student Pre-Employment Checklist found on the Student Employment website. This document will provide step by step instructions for International Students.

**Student Employment Services**

Student workers have access to the following resources to help them find and get the most out of their employment experience:

- JobLink
- Federal Work-Study program (FWS) through Office of Financial Aid
- Coordinators in each department who initiate and approve your hiring and payroll documentation
- Departmental orientation, including training for how to:
  - sign up for direct deposit of your paycheck
  - complete your tax withholding elections
  - complete and view your timesheets
  - view your bi-weekly pay stubs
- Assistance from supervisor(s) troubleshooting and resolving hiring or payroll problems
Types of Employment Available to Students

There are a wide variety of positions available to student workers, including, but not limited to:

- Clerical
- Research-related
- Tutoring or Teaching-related
- Dining services
- Lab assistant
- Athletic Services
- Information technology
- Customer Service
- Ushers

Federal Work-Study

Federal Work Study (FWS) is provided as a form of financial aid, funded by the federal government, which helps students meet education-related expenses by paying hourly wages for part-time employment. The amount a student can earn in a given semester via their FWS award is defined in their financial aid package. Students who are eligible for FWS will have received their offer of this funding as part of their financial aid package. For more details on FWS requirements and eligibility, contact the Office of Financial Aid.

Non FWS or Other On-Campus Employment

For students not eligible for FWS, the institute provides a wide selection of additional on-campus employment opportunities. Each hiring department is responsible for funding the salaries of its student workers, whether internally or externally funded.

Graduate Student

Graduate Assistantships are awarded by academic departments on the basis of scholastic accomplishments, academic promise, and competence. These appointments are made on an annual basis and usually require a time commitment of 20 hours each week under the guidance of Rensselaer faculty. Students who are awarded an assistantship are not eligible to be employed on campus in any capacity.

Students who are not awarded an assistantship can apply for employment on campus. For these instances, the hiring department is required to obtain approval by the Office of Graduate Education before the student can begin work.
International Student

International students are restricted in how they may work in the United States. Before starting any employment, please consult the Rensselaer ISSS Office.

Terms of Student Employment

You are employed on an “at will” basis, which means that employment can be terminated by the student worker or by the employer, at any time, without notice or cause.

You are not eligible to be paid for leave time taken, such as sick, vacation, jury duty, holiday, or absence due to inclement weather.

Rights and Responsibilities

Once you are hired for a campus job, both you and your supervisor(s) have certain rights and responsibilities.

Work Schedule

To ensure that your campus job does not interfere with your academic class schedule or regularly-scheduled activities, you will be asked to meet with your supervisor(s) each semester to set up a schedule. You are not allowed to work during any time that you are scheduled to be in class or lab.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute does not anticipate that students will work more than 20 hours per week while school is in session or more than 40 hours per week at other times. Certain departments or programs have specific restrictions that may limit a student to fewer than 20 hours per week. Understanding the specific restrictions is the responsibility of the student worker.

Students who work for more than one department are expected to keep their supervisors informed of their schedules, including the possibility of overtime.

Breaks

Rest Breaks

Each department, at its own discretion, may choose to allow paid rest breaks within the following guidelines:

- A rest break should not exceed fifteen minutes
- To qualify for a rest break, a student must work a time block of at least four hours
- Rest breaks may not occur at the beginning or the end of the work day and may not be added to a meal break or other off duty time
- Rest break time may not be accumulated
Meal Periods
Under New York State law, the department must provide and the student worker must take a meal period if the student’s hours worked meet certain requirements. For additional information on specific guidelines, please refer to the Employment Policy for Student Workers.

Environment
All individuals within your work environment have the right to:
• Be treated respectfully
• Have a safe, professional work environment
You have the responsibility to:
• Treat colleagues, supervisors, and visitors/guests with respect
• Follow departmental rules regarding dress code, use of personal computer, use of personal cell phone, phone/email etiquette, etc.
• In the event of emergency, notify your direct supervisor as soon as possible
• Notify your supervisor if you are injured while on the job
• Follow workplace safety policies
• Act professionally

Training
Training is an integral part of a student’s work experience. Through training you will learn the specific tasks and skills necessary to perform your job and prepare you for future employment opportunities. You have the right to:
• Fully understand your duties, responsibilities, and job expectations
• Fully understand the safety policies of the department you are working in. You may be required to complete job specific safety training.
• Have a work-related question answered. If your supervisor cannot answer, your supervisor is responsible for finding the correct answer and reporting back to you.

Compensation
You have the right to:
• Be paid accurately and on-time
• Be paid for all hours worked
• Be paid commensurate with the type of work you are doing
You have the responsibility to:
• Accurately track hours worked and submit by the deadline for each pay period
Please see individual supervisors for instructions regarding time reporting. Supervisors are
responsible for showing students how to enter time and approve reported time to ensure students are paid consistently.

- If you are paid through FWS, monitor your wages to ensure you are not exceeding your maximum award amount.

**How to Get Paid**

Student workers are required to document the hours they worked using the hiring department’s approved reporting mechanism. For a student to be paid, the documentation must be complete, and approved by the supervisor or department staff member, according to the published payroll schedule. Please speak with your supervisor about how you will be tracking and reporting your hours for each pay period.

The supervisor who signs the worker’s time card must be a regular Institute employee, not a student supervisor, and must have personal knowledge of the student hours worked.

Deliberate falsification of a time card by a student worker is a ground for dismissal.

**Pay Periods Schedule**

The standard work week for student workers at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute begins Thursday at midnight and ends at 11:59 p.m. the following Wednesday. Students are paid on a biweekly basis with checks issued on alternative Fridays. The Student Payroll Schedule can be found on the Student Employment Website.

Direct any questions or concerns about hours reporting or getting paid to your supervisor immediately. They will assist you with any issues you may have regarding these matters.

**Overtime**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute will comply with Federal and State labor laws in the payment of overtime in the event that an hourly student worker works more than 40 hours in one week. If a student works in more than one department, weekly hours are combined from all departments. Students working more than 40 hours/week are paid overtime at a rate of one and a half times the regular rate of pay for hours in excess of 40 hours in a standard work week.

Student workers must obtain permission from their immediate supervisor prior to working more than 40 hours within a work week.

A student who works for more than one Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute department must obtain approval signatures from all department supervisors prior to working more than 40 hours within a work week.

**Web Time Entry through SIS**

If your portfolio uses the Rensselaer Student Information System (SIS), you will be required to submit your hours electronically. Your supervisor will train you on how to use this system.

**Paper timesheets and other time entry methods**

Your department may require completion of a paper timesheet each pay period. If this is the case, you must complete this timesheet by the established deadline in order to be paid for your worked hours as part of the upcoming pay periods.
Student Employment Handbook

Rights and Responsibilities

Some departments utilize custom or proprietary systems for entering and recording hours worked as an additional method of reporting. Please speak with your supervisor to receive training on how to use such a system.

Direct Deposit

Rensselaer offers a free direct deposit system to directly pay your wages into a bank account of your choosing. Please complete the direct deposit form found on the Student Employment Website and submit it to your supervisor in order to be enrolled in this service.

Paper Checks

As a default, Rensselaer will pay you by way of a paper check that can be picked up at the Bursar’s office, located in Academy Hall. You will need to bring your Rensselaer Student I.D. card when you pick up your check. In the event that a pay period is paid out while you are away from campus on a holiday break, you may, at any time, leave a self-addressed and stamped envelope with the Bursar’s office in order to have your check mailed to you.

Workers’ Compensation

Workers’ Compensation provides benefits to student workers for injuries or illnesses arising out of and in the course of employment. Contact the Division of Human Resources at (518) 276-6302 for additional information.

Short-term Disability

Short-term disability benefits may provide income continuation for student workers who are unable to work due to a non-work related illness or injury. Contact the Division of Human Resources at (518) 276-6302 for additional information.

Communication

- All student workers are required to provide an email address that they check on a daily basis. Important information will be distributed via email/listserv and it is your responsibility to know, understand, and follow any information that has been emailed to you. Check with your supervisor on the best way to communicate a lateness or absence.
- All students are required to give their supervisor sufficient notice if they plan to stop working in the department prior to the agreed upon end date of their job.
- All students working for more than one department at the same time have the responsibility of letting each department know about the other job and the number of hours they may have worked that week for the other department.

Performance

You have the responsibility to:

- Complete your work in a timely manner
- Work the schedule you and your supervisor agreed upon
- Consult with your supervisor for specific study policies
- Refrain from conducting personal business while at work unless your supervisor has approved in advance
• Complete job duties as assigned

**Attendance**
You have the responsibility to:
• Report on time, ready to work at the beginning of your scheduled shift
• Ask for permission from your supervisor in advance for planned absences
• Notify your supervisor if you are unexpectedly unable to report for your shift

**Confidentiality**
During your employment you may be exposed to confidential and/or sensitive information or materials that should not be discussed outside of the office/worksite. This includes personal information related to customers, students, staff, co-workers, or any individual with whom you have contact related to your position.

You may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement as a condition of your employment.

**Discipline**
Reasons you would receive disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:
• Unsatisfactory absence or lateness record
• Unsatisfactory or poor performance, behavior or conduct
• Wearing inappropriate attire for work
• Violations of protocols, regulations and procedures governing safety or compliance
• Missing a shift or leaving work without prior approval
• Abuse of privileges
• Insubordination
• Not following guidelines set forth in this manual
• Violating Institute policy

Rensselaer generally follows a progressive disciplinary process, although the Institute reserves the right to skip any and all steps of disciplinary notices in its sole discretion:

**First Offense:** Verbal warning and a note made in file

**Second Offense:** Written warning in file and follow-up with Supervisor

**Third Offense:** Meeting with staff supervisor to create an action plan for success. Action plans will be signed and a 3 week re-evaluation will be scheduled.

**Fourth Offense:** Termination
Student Employment Policies

Student policies apply to all student workers of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. We encourage student workers, as well as the portfolios and departments that employ them, to carefully read and familiarize themselves with the policies. Each portfolio may establish its own additional policies regarding student employment provided they are not inconsistent with the Employment Policy for Student Workers, polices found in the Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and all other Institute policies. Students are entitled to request and receive a copy of any written statement of additional employment policies that apply in the department they are working.

403(b) Universal Availability Notice

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute ("Rensselaer") offers eligible employees an opportunity to save money for retirement pursuant to a voluntary program called the Supplemental Retirement Program. Employees who elect to participate in the program defer receipt of a portion of their Rensselaer compensation, which Rensselaer then deposits with an investment vendor designated by the participating employee. Participants pay no income tax on these savings, or on any of the investment income the savings earn, until the savings and earnings are paid out by the investment vendor. The Supplemental Retirement Program is subject to the applicable requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b), but is not subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

Eligibility

Generally, all common law employees of Rensselaer who receive compensation reportable on an IRS Form W-2 and pay Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax are eligible to participate in the Supplemental Retirement Program.

To Enroll

Eligible employees may begin participating in the Supplemental Retirement Program at any time. To enroll, an employee must complete both (i) a Salary Reduction Agreement (SRA) to elect the contribution amount, and (ii) an approved vendor's enrollment process to open an account with the vendor. The SRA will apply only to compensation earned after enrolling in the Supplemental Retirement Program, and an employee's election under the SRA will continue until the SRA is modified or revoked by the employee. Once enrolled, an eligible employee may increase, decrease or stop their contributions to the program at any time. Employees may also change the approved vendor to which their contributions are remitted at any time. Access the Salary Reduction Agreement to make these changes.

Approved Vendors

The current approved vendors under the Supplemental Retirement Program are Fidelity Investments and TIAA. Employees should contact each vendor for information about the available investment options and services it offers.
Fidelity Investments
Fidelity offers a wide range of mutual funds as investment options. Go online to open a plan account with Fidelity under plan #57619. You can also call Fidelity at 800-343-0860.

TIAA
TIAA offers a wide range of fixed and variable annuities and mutual funds as investment options. Go online to open an account with TIAA under plan #104194. You can also call TIAA at 800-842-2776.

Contribution Limits
Annual contributions to the Supplemental Retirement Program are limited by law. Generally, the contribution limit for the 2017 calendar year is $18,000. A higher limit may apply if you are at least age 50 or have completed at least 15 years of service at Rensselaer. A lower limit may apply if you make or receive contributions to another retirement plan or your Rensselaer compensation is less than the dollar limit.

More Information
Contact the Division of Human Resources at hrmail@rpi.edu or 518-276-6302. You may also contact the approved vendors directly with questions or for help.

NO ENDORSEMENT OR OVERSIGHT: Rensselaer does not sponsor or endorse the Supplement Retirement Program. Rensselaer’s sole involvement is to collect salary reduction contributions and remit those contributions to the vendor(s) designated by participating employees. Rensselaer does not select or monitor the performance of investment products that vendors may make available to participating employees. Rensselaer reserves the right to discontinue the Supplemental Retirement Program at any time.