

DHMH

WORK STUDY PROGRAM GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES



"PARTNERING WITH YOU TO BUILD A BETTER WORKPLACE"

TRAINING SERVICES DIVISION, OHR
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE
ROOM 106
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201



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WORK STUDY GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of these guidelines and procedures is to provide information and instruction regarding the Work Study Program application and participation process.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH/Department) supports and encourages employees to continue their learning and educational experience throughout their careers. To assist qualified employees to reach and succeed in their professional or personal development goals, the Department's Work Study Program provides employees with the opportunity to attend class during their **regular work day** for coursework that will benefit DHMH.

1. ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

In order to participate in the program, prospective participants must meet all of the following criteria.

- a. DHMH permanent full-time and part-time (working at least 50%) employees
- b. Must have been employed in current position for a minimum of one year.
- c. The employee must have a current **satisfactory** PEP rating at the time of application and must maintain this level throughout participation in the program.
- d. The employee must not be in any type of probationary period.
- e. **If the employee is receiving tuition reimbursement, they may not also participate in the Work Study program.**

2. SALARY - BENEFITS

While participating in an approved work study program, the employee is entitled to full salary and membership in the Retirement System and Employees Health Insurance Program.

- a. You will continue to accumulate sick leave and annual leave while you're participating in an approved work study program.
- b. You must report any training time lost due to sick leave or accident leave to your supervisor/appointing authority.
- c. Your supervisor will approve your use of sick leave or accident leave on your timesheet.
- d. Holidays, including floating holidays, are administered as if you were not on work study.
- e. You must report for duty during all school recesses, or request time off following normal procedures.

3. COSTS

The employee pays all expenses while participating in an approved Work Study program. This includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, travel, and any additional costs.

4. PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Participation in the Work Study Program does not guarantee a promotion but provides an educational experience and the opportunity for employees to enhance or strive for new and exciting careers within DHMH.

5. ACCEPTABLE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

These include credit and non-credit courses leading to a certificate or degree. **All colleges/universities must be accredited by the U.S. Department of Education.** Courses may be taken on-site or online but **only online courses with specific start/end times qualify for the program.** Asynchronous online courses do not qualify for the program because they can be taken any time (meaning - while not during normal work hours).

6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

a. EMPLOYEE:

1. New applicants and existing participants who have never completed the online course are required to complete the Work Study online course in the HUB prior to participating/continuing in the program.
2. Once approved for the program, the employee must adhere to all program guidelines. This includes: timely submission of required forms, meeting deadlines, **not exceeding approved release time, meeting the grade requirement, continued satisfactory work performance and obligated service repayment.**
3. Submit a Career Development Plan (CDP). This serves as an understanding between an employee, the supervisor and the respective appointing authority and contains the employee's personal and/or professional development short or long term goals.
4. Submit the application and all of the required documentation within 30 days of the course start date.
5. If you are seeking a degree or certification to be recognized by a Board or Commission, it is your responsibility to verify that the college/university is recognized by the appropriate Board or Commission.
6. Ensure that the application/schedule has been approved by your supervisor, designated appointing authority, and TSD prior to starting coursework.
7. Use only the time that has been approved.
8. Inform supervisor and TSD if a course is dropped within five days of action taken.
9. Inform supervisor and TSD if moving to another DHMH office or if resigning prior to respective action is taken.
10. Retain all documentation for reference and auditing purposes.
11. Notify TSD if you resign from DHMH.
12. Indicate if any course involves clinical/internship activity
13. **Submit approved timesheets by the 10th of each month.**
14. **If a timesheet is incorrect, it must be corrected and re-submitted within 5 business days after notification. The corrections must be made and approved in the Workday timekeeping system.**
15. Repeated failure to comply with these guidelines may result in **YOUR PERMANENT DISMISSAL** from the work study program.
16. At the end of each semester, you must submit the Academic Progress Form and a copy of your grade report/clinical/internship verification from the institution.
17. When a degree or certificate program has been completed, submit a copy of the diploma or certificate from the institution.

b. SUPERVISOR:

1. Before approving an employee's application request, consider the staffing and financial implications to your unit.
2. Complete the Work Study online course in the HUB prior to an employee's participation.
3. Attend a Work Study Program training webinar prior to an employee's participation.
4. Review and approve the employee's Career Development Plan.
5. Ensure that the employee has been employed with the department for one year.
6. Ensure that the employee is not under any type of probation.
7. If the PEP date is not current, provide information regarding the employee's current work performance status on Agency letterhead.
8. Review and approve the initial and subsequent Work Study Program Application/Schedules.
9. Ensure that the employee adheres to all program guidelines.
10. Monitor academic progress and employee work performance during the employee's

participation.

11. Approve timesheets, always checking for accuracy regarding the use of work study.
12. Inform all necessary personnel regarding the employee's participation in the program including the appointing authority, human resources personnel, and payroll/timekeeping staff.
13. Notify TSD immediately upon learning that the employee is leaving DHMH for whatever reason.
14. **Submit the Repayment Tracking Form by the 10th of each month ONLY after the employee has completed their degree or certificate program.**

c. APPOINTING AUTHORITY:

1. Attend a Work Study Program training webinar.
2. Review initial and subsequent application/schedules and all related materials to approve or deny program participation.

d. REGISTRATION COORDINATOR/HUMAN RESOURCE PERSONNEL:

1. Attend a Work study training webinar.
2. If required by the facility or administration, serve as a liaison for the employee and Training Services Division.
3. Submit any relevant documentation to the Training Services Division.
4. Work to resolve issues related to the application.

e. TRAINING SERVICES DIVISION:

1. Responsible for reviewing, approving, and managing all aspects of an employee's application and participation.
2. Work with the **OHR Payroll Division to discuss questionable timesheet entries.**
3. Determine obligated service hours ensuring the correct usage of work study time.
4. Track obligated service hour repayment.
5. Inform the Accounting office of any cash repayment plans.

7. OBLIGATED SERVICE: Employees are required to enter into an obligated service agreement with the Department in order to participate in the program.

- a. The agreement states that the salary received while participating in a Work Study program is a loaned salary paid by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. If you resign from the DHMH before completing your obligated service, you will have to pay the State the "unpaid" balance of your "loan."
- b. The agreement is a legally binding document upon which the employee agrees to repay the Department in obligated service hours at the rate that applies.
- c. The total (from the start through the end of an employee's work study program) amount of obligated service hours that are to be repaid is the sum of approved hours used for work study multiplied by the timekeeping conversion chart rate. This calculation is done on a weekly basis.
- d. If cash payment is required, Training Services will determine the required cash repayment based on the the employee's salary as of the beginning of the work study program. Training Services will also generate a contract regarding the payment arrangements. The DHMH Accounting Department will be responsible for generating the actual invoice.
- e. Repayment hours begins when: a specific work study program has been completed, a degree or certificate has been earned, when still employed by DHMH, or when terminated from the Work Study Program.
- f. All obligated service must be repaid prior to applying to participate in a new degree or certificate program. The supervisor or appointing authority must notify Training Services Division immediately and prior to an employee's departure, if the employee plans to leave DHMH service or is terminated. If an employee moves to another DHMH administration prior to completing their obligated service repayment, he/she will continue to repay service hours until there is a \$0 balance. The supervisor will be responsible for notifying TSD of the move and for providing the

employee's new administration and the supervisor's contact information.

- g. If an employee resigns, retires or is terminated before completing their obligated service repayment, he/she will pay the "unpaid" balance of the "loan" in cash until there is a \$0 balance. (See the conversion chart on p.10.)
- h. Unused sick leave remaining at the time of your departure may not be used as a form of obligated service repayment.
- i. Special Cases:
 - i. If a position is abolished or if an employee leaves at no fault of their own, the obligated service is considered to be satisfied.
 - ii. If the Secretary decides that your separation from DHMH service is the result of adverse, unforeseen, or extenuating circumstances that impose undue personal hardship, he may release you from the obligated service agreement. In order for this consideration, you must submit a letter regarding your hardship to the Secretary and the Training Services Division. You and your former supervisor will receive a letter detailing approval or denial of your request.
 - iii. If an employee leaves the DHMH service before repayment is complete but returns within three (3) years, the cash repayment will cease and the service hour repayment will begin until there is a 0 balance owed to the Department. **It will be the employee's responsibility to inform the facility/unit regarding their remaining cash obligated service repayment and he/she will only receive credit after the proper forms have been completed and submitted to the Training Services Division.** Training Services will work with Payroll Services to determine the amount of obligated service hours that will be required. No prior cash payments will be returned to the employee in exchange for future service. **This option is not available to those employees who have been permanently removed from the program.**
 - iv. If it is discovered that an employee has engaged in abuse/misuse of work study time, he/she will be permanently dismissed from the Program, and will have to immediately start repayment of accumulated work study hours in the form of service hours.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Working directly with the supervisor and/or training coordinator, the employee must provide the items listed below. Only one original hard copy of all work study forms is required and must be **mailed, not emailed**. Carbon copies of college documents are eligible for submission. Please ensure that all documentation is complete and contains all of the required signatures in blue ink; documentation includes:

1. Work Study Checklist is used as a guide to ensure that all documentation is included in the application. This form must be completed and be submitted with each application packet.
2. Career Development Plan (4774) - only required once for an initial Work Study Program unless the career focus changes.
 - a. Provide a copy of the college/facility catalog listing the required courses necessary to earn a degree or certificate (listing should be sequential if available).
 - b. List start date when entering the Work Study program and the estimated date that the degree/certificate will be earned.
3. Work Study Program Application/Schedule (DHMH 4772).
 - a. Only a hard copy is an acceptable form of submission. Please do not submit by e-mail.
 - b. Provide a photocopy of the official catalogue course description(s) that includes course dates and times for all course(s) listed.
 - c. Provide a copy of the college catalog course schedule for a specific semester. The dates and times listed on the application/schedule must be reflected on the course schedule.
- d. Do not list estimated course start dates.
4. Obligated Service Agreement (DHMH 4576) – ensure that the semester start and end dates are listed.
5. Provide a signed letter of support from the supervisor and designated appointed authority on official letterhead **for each session/semester**.
6. Provide a signed acceptance letter from the educational institution or facility for specific course/semester on their official letterhead.

7. Provide hard copy documentation showing that the facility is accredited by the Maryland Department of Higher Learning or the U.S. Department of Education.
8. If appropriate, provide a signed letter from facility/institution where clinical or internship will be performed. The **specific days and hours** must be listed in the letter.
9. Provide a signed letter from facility/institution indicating why full-time attendance is required. Please be reminded that work study does not include study time.
10. If a specific class is taught by different teachers on different dates/times, submit a signed letter of explanation from the college on their official letterhead.

SUBSEQUENT APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE:

1. All of the required forms and documents listed above.
2. The Academic Progress Form.
3. **NOTE:** Do not delay submission of application/schedules while awaiting grades. Complete a temporary Academic Progress form and submit a grade report showing your current grade status.
4. You must also submit a revised Academic Progress form once the final grade has been received.
5. A copy of the official grade report.
6. The clinical/internship report of completion from the institution.
7. All required timesheets.
8. **NOTE:** the Career Development Plan is not required for subsequent applications.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Application packets must be submitted to the Training Services Division **30 DAYS** prior to the beginning/start of the coursework session.

1. If late acceptance or admission into a program is required by an educational facility, documentation from the facility on their letterhead must be provided.
2. **An employee must not enter work study coding on their timesheets prior to obtaining approval from TSD.**
3. An employee must not submit an application for a session that has already begun.
4. If for any reason, the educational facility requires an employee to register for a different course(s) other than what was approved for a specific Work Study Program, **the employee must notify their supervisor and designated appointed authority in writing and must submit a new Work study application packet to their supervisor and the designated appointed authority for approval and submission to the Training Services Division for review and final approval.** This should be done at least one (1) week prior to the start of the new course(s).
5. If there is a rare occasion where an employee requires extended coursework beyond an approved work study program, the employee must provide a written letter with supporting documentation from the educational institution explaining why an extension is required (only if the employee will continue using work study time). **A new application packet may be required.**
6. The employee must apply for initial entry into the Work Study Program. He/She must submit subsequent applications if they continue to participate in the program until they complete or withdraw from the program.

APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Requests to participate in the Work Study Program must be approved by the designated appointed authority and the employee's supervisor. Participation in the program will only occur for the courses applied for and approved in advance by the Training Services Division.

1. Applicant submits signed copies of all forms and supporting required documentation.
2. Supervisor reviews the application packet to ensure that all of the information listed is correct and that all of the required forms and documentation are included, signs all of the application forms as required and provides additional documentation if necessary.
3. The appointing authority reviews and signs all of the work study application forms if he/she approves.
4. A hard copy with original (**blue ink**) signatures of the complete application packet will be submitted to the Training Services Division for review and final approval 30 days prior to the course start date. Please do not e-mail the application packet.

5. If discrepancies are found, the Training Services Division will work with the employee, supervisor and/or appointing authority to rectify them.
6. If no discrepancies are found, the Training Services Division will sign the application forms and will return them by electronically along with an application acceptance or denial letter for the employee's personal and personnel records.
7. **Participation in the Work Study program only becomes effective once the employee receives approval documentation from the Training Services Division.**
8. **It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that their application has been approved prior to the start of their work study program session.**
9. The supervisor will ensure that all relative personnel are aware of the applicant's participation in the program, i.e., human resources, training coordinator, and timekeeping.

DENIAL: If an applicant's supervisor, designated appointed authority, or Training Services Division does not approve the application, the applicant will be **provided with a letter of denial within 10 days** of the denial decision.

DISAPPROVAL PROCEDURES

There may be occasions when program participation is denied by the supervisor, designated appointed authority, or the Training Services Division. Such occasions may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Candidate has not been employed with DHMH for one year.
2. Staffing needs in the department does not allow for participation.
3. Unsatisfactory pep rating and inability to maintain a satisfactory work performance level.
4. Probationary period not completed.
5. Class is not related to DHMH functions.
6. Candidate fails to maintain a C grade level for each semester.
7. The employee's job performance has significantly deteriorated to an unsatisfactory level.
8. Course history routinely shows a pattern of incomplete courses and course changes.
9. Students with a history of dropping classes will be considered "at risk", and may not be approved for work study in the future.
10. Late submission (submitted past deadline and/or **after the class has started**).
11. Failed to submit a complete application packet with all required signatures and dates prior to the start of the class.
12. Candidate has abused or misused the use of work study time and/or repeatedly submitting incorrect timesheets.

PERMANENT FORCED DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

An employee may be subject to automatic dismissal from the program if they do not adhere to all program guidelines. If a participant is dismissed from the program he/she is still bound to repay loaned work study hours via service time and must begin repayment immediately. If the employee leaves DHMH service, they must repay in cash and is **not eligible for the three year return option**.

Infractions that would result in temporary or permanent dismissal include but are not limited to:

1. Dropped courses without a valid reason and without proper notification. The employee must advise their supervisor, the designated appointed authority and the Training Services Division in writing within five (5) days if a course is dropped or if he/she withdraws from the program. A copy of the letter must be placed in the employee's personnel file.
2. **Falsifying** course and/or clinical dates and times.
3. **Falsifying** timesheets.
4. **Falsifying** course cancellation dates.
5. Using work study hours that were not approved.

TIMEKEEPING PROCEDURES

An employee will continue to accumulate sick leave and annual leave during participation in the program. It is the responsibility of the employee and the supervisor (who signs off on the application documentation) to ensure that these guidelines are followed.

1. Work Study hours must be utilized during your normal regular work day.
2. You must only use the amount of time you have been approved for work study. The work study time used must be recorded on timesheets on the specific dates and times that were approved.
3. You must submit your timesheets showing approved time to TSD by the 10th of each month.
4. **If unapproved work study time is used, this will be considered as program abuse which will lead to dismissal from the program.**
5. Release time does not include study time. For example, if only 1-4 hours of work study are required, you must return to work for the remainder of the day or use the appropriate leave.
6. Sick time used during work study should be reported with the appropriate leave code. Holidays, including floating holidays are administered normally; work study codes may not be used.
7. You must not use Worktag work study codes during a state release, state holiday, or liberal leave day. The same applies if you are on annual, personal or sick leave.
8. **Travel time must be accounted for on your time sheet using your own accumulated annual, personal, or comp time.** It must not be listed with the
9. **If you do not attend a class due to a cancellation, you must show written/signed documentation from the institution.**
10. **The supervisor/designated appointing authority should not schedule overtime or comp time for a participant to compensate for the work study hours used.** If this is necessary, perhaps approval for work study should not be given.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORTING PROCEDURES

The **Work Study Academic Progress form** is utilized by the employee's supervisor to monitor his/her educational progress and work study usage. If an employee experiences any serious problems on the job that would warrant discontinuing the Work Study program; this **must be reported in writing to the TSD immediately.**

1. Email is an acceptable form of transmission.
2. The form is required in order to participate in a subsequent work study sessions.
3. The form must be completed and submitted to the Training Services Division after each course, semester, or internship completion along with the appropriate supporting documentation.
4. An official copy/transcript of grade reports, clinical round completions, and credits that were completed must be included for review and recording purposes by the Department.
5. For internship and clinical rounds completed at a different facility, documentation showing completion must be submitted on the facility's official letterhead.
6. Once a specified Work Study program has been completed and a degree, certificate or internship has been earned, a Final Work Study Academic Progress form must be completed and submitted to the Training Services Division along with any outstanding timesheet reports and all required documentation.

OBLIGATED SERVICE REPAYMENT PROCEDURES

The **Obligated Service Agreement Repayment Tracking Form** is used to record an employee's obligated service repayment, the employee's transfer to another program, and/or an employee's resignation. The form must be completed and submitted by the **employee's supervisor** after the employee has earned a degree or certificate and has returned to full-time work status.

1. Email is an acceptable form of transmission.

2. A copy (with the signature in blue ink) must be submitted to the Training Services Division by the 10th of the month until the obligation has been satisfied.
3. **ONLY REGULAR WORK HOURS CAN BE COUNTED TOWARDS REPAYMENT.**
4. Timesheet reports must be submitted for the repayment dates listed. Only submit timesheet reports that show **approved** time.
5. If the employee leaves DHMH for whatever reason:
 - a. **Remaining sick leave** is an ineligible form of CASH repayment for obligated service.
 - b. **If you plan to leave DHMH, you must inform your supervisor, Human Resource representative and the Training Services Division of your intent.** The Department will then use any unused annual/comp/personal time towards the repayment of your obligated service repayment thereby reducing the amount of cash repayment . This option is only available if done prior to your departure.
6. The calculation, which is done on a weekly basis by TSD, is based on the following timekeeping conversion formula:
 - a. Release time up to 10 hours per week = hour per hour payback
 - b. Release time 11 hours through 20 hours per week = 1.5 times per hour payback
 - c. Release time 21 hours through 40 hours per week = 3 times per hour payback

FILE RETENTION PROCEDURES

All Work Study program applications and related documentation must be placed in the employee's personnel file for reference and auditing purposes.

1. If the employee moves to another position within DHMH, copies of the documentation must be forwarded to the new supervisor/appointing authority.
2. All work study program documentation must be retained in the respective office of employment until the service or cash obligation has been completed.
3. The respective office and the Training Services Division must retain the documentation for an additional two years after the service or cash obligation has been completed.
4. At the end of the two year period, the documentation must be sent to the State off-site storage facility to be retained for an additional five years.