COLUMBUS STATE
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Becoming a Community Work Study Partner FAQ



Thank you for your interest! Learn more about partnering with Columbus State's Community Work Study Program.

Office of Career Services
Student Employment
Nestor Hall 108
614-287-2782
studentemployment@cscc.edu
cscc.edu/services/careers/

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Program Purpose

Community Work Study is a part of the Federal Student Aid program that provides part-time jobs for students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education and living expenses. It encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study.

Community Work Study allows eligible students the opportunity to gain unique work experience while providing valuable service to the local community through federal, state, or local public agencies or private nonprofit organizations.

The Community Work Study program supports the overall mission of the college and our partnering agencies by working towards these key goals:

1) To be a resource for students seeking student employment and community involvement by providing opportunity, guidance, and support.
2) To support our local community through partnerships dedicated to improving the quality of life for the residents of central Ohio, particularly those residents considered most in need.
3) To develop employment opportunities with partnering agencies that expand the professional, personal growth and development of our students.

Benefits

For Organizations:

- Gain support from a student employee **at no cost to your organization**
    - Columbus State currently provides **100% of participating students' wages** through Federal Work Study funding, at a pay rate of **$15.00 / hour***.
- Provide students with valuable work experience and career-ready skills
- Create a potential pipeline of future employees or volunteers
- Strengthen your connection with Columbus State and the community

**Current as of Autumn 2026*

For Students:

- Earn wages to assist with education and living expenses while going to school.
- Gain valuable work experience and skills while also serving the local community.
- Connect with professionals and build a strong network for their future career.

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Eligibility to Participate and Key Federal Guidelines

Organization Eligibility
Local nonprofit, government, and community-based organizations can qualify as community service employers if the work performed meets the definition of community services in the regulations. Private, for-profit organizations do not qualify as employers for community service under the FWS Program.

The college also takes into consideration the service provided by the organization, our reasonable ability to assist the agency, the diversity of community services we already partner with, and the organization's administrative capacity to oversee student employees.

Community Services
Community services are defined as services that are identified by an institution of higher education through formal or informal consultation with local nonprofit, government, and community-based organizations, as designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low-income individuals, or to solve problems related to their needs. These services include:

- fields such as healthcare, childcare, literacy training, education (including tutorial services), welfare, social services, transportation, housing and neighborhood improvement, public safety, crime prevention and control, recreation, rural development, community improvement, and emergency preparedness and response;
- work in service opportunities or youth corps under AmeriCorps, and service in the agencies, institutions;
- support services for students with disabilities (including students with disabilities who are enrolled at the institution of higher education, which is the only exception to the requirement that community service be open and accessible to the community); and
- activities in which an FWS student serves as a mentor for such purposes as tutoring (*see* "Employing FWS Students as Tutors" later in this chapter), supporting educational and recreational activities, and counseling, including career counseling.

To be considered employed in a community service job for FWS purposes, an FWS student does not have to provide a "direct" service. However, the student must provide services that are designed to improve the quality of life for community residents or to solve problems related to those residents' needs.

Public Interest and Political Involvement
FWS work performed off-campus **must be in the public interest**. Work in the public interest is defined as work performed for the welfare of the nation or community rather than work performed to benefit a particular interest or group. Work is not "in the public interest" if it:

- primarily benefits the members of an organization that has membership limits, such as a credit union, a fraternal or religious order, or a cooperative;
- involves any political activity or is associated with a faction in an election for public or party office;
- is for an elected official unless the official is responsible for the **regular** administration of the routine operation of federal, state, or local government;

- is work as a political aide for any elected official;
- takes into account a student's political support or party affiliation in hiring him or her; or
- involves lobbying on the federal, state, or local level.

Political activity, whether partisan or nonpartisan, does not qualify as work in the public interest.

Displacement of Workers
FWS employment must not displace employees (including those on strike) or impair existing service contracts. Replacement is interpreted as displacement. Replacing a full-time employee whose position was eliminated (for any reason) with a student employee paid with FWS funds is prohibited. Positions developed through the Community Work Study program should be new positions that serve to enhance the agency's ability to reach the community, not fill essential staffing needs.

Religious Involvement
FWS positions must not involve constructing, operating, or maintaining any part of a building used for religious worship or sectarian instruction.

Federal Student Aid Handbook 2026-27

Steps to Becoming a Community Work Study Partner

1. **Submit Interest**
    a. Organizations can express their interest in partnering with Columbus State by contacting studentemployment@cscc.edu or by submitting the Community Work Study Partner Interest Form.
2. **Organization Review and Introductory Meeting**
    a. Career Services will review the initial information and extend to schedule an introductory meeting to discuss the program.
3. **Required Documentation**
    a. **Partnership Agreement**
        i. The organization and Columbus State sign a Federal Work Study (FWS) Program Community Service Work Agreement for the applicable academic year.
        ii. This agreement outlines program and regulatory requirements, along with responsibilities of each party.
    b. **Job Description**
        i. Career Services will provide a Community Work Study Position Request template form for the organization to complete and return.
    c. **501(c)(3) documentation**
    d. **Contact information** for a primary supervisor and secondary/back-up contact.

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Posting and Hiring

How do I post a position?
Community Work Study hiring is handled through Career Services. Postings are requested using the *Community Work Study Position Request* form, as provided by Career Services. Positions are posted internally to students in Workday at cscc.edu/workday.

What is the pay rate?
Community Work Study-classified positions are paid **$15.00/hour**.

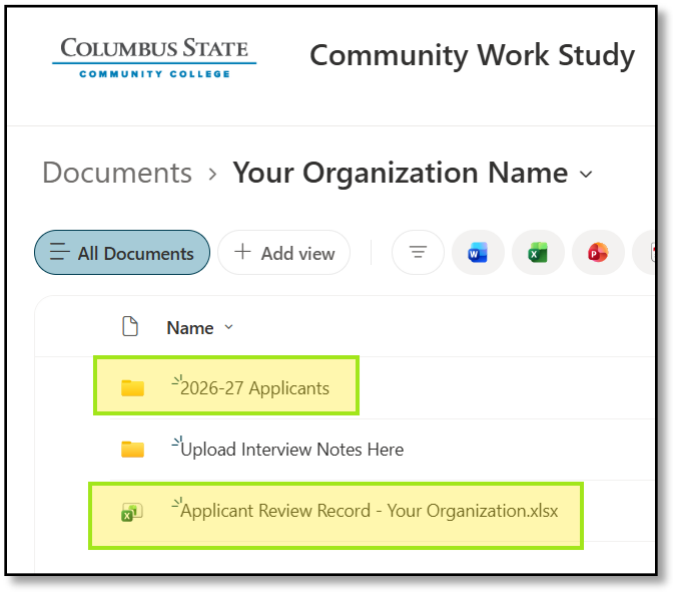
What is the applicant review and hiring process?
Career Services Review
Career Services reviews incoming applicants to ensure they meet the general eligibility requirements. We do not pre-screen (other than FWS requirements), filter, or interview students prior to their application.

Application materials for eligible applicants will be placed in a shared **SharePoint folder**, with your organization's name. Access to this folder will be granted to the main organization contact, and position-level functional supervisors, if identified. Materials will include an Application Questionnaire, and if submitted, a resume.

The SharePoint folder will also include an **Applicant Review Record**, in which Career Services adds the applicant information, and you document your review decisions.

Organization Review

1. **Access application materials:**
   Login to your SharePoint folder to review applicant materials and the Applicant Review Record.

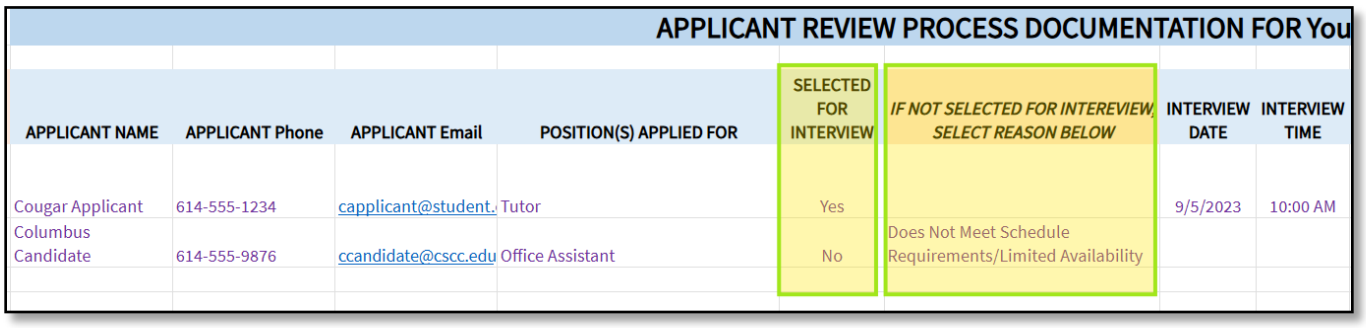


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2. **Applicant review:**
   Review materials of each applicant and make a decision to invite to interview or close (if they do not meet initial qualifications). Document your decision on the Applicant Review Record.

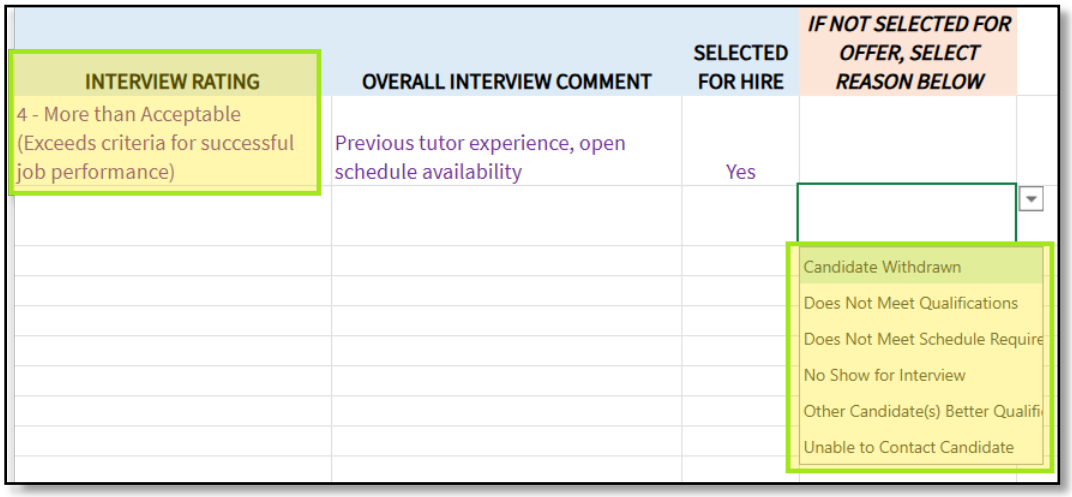


APPLICANT REVIEW PROCESS DOCUMENTATION FOR You

APPLICANT NAME	APPLICANT Phone	APPLICANT Email	POSITION(S) APPLIED FOR	SELECTED FOR INTERVIEW	*IF NOT SELECTED FOR INTEREVIEW, SELECT REASON BELOW*	INTERVIEW DATE	INTERVIEW TIME
Cougar Applicant	614-555-1234	capplicant@student.	Tutor	Yes		9/5/2023	10:00 AM
Columbus Candidate	614-555-9876	ccandidate@cscc.edu	Office Assistant	No	Does Not Meet Schedule Requirements/Limited Availability		

3. **Interview scheduling:**
   Schedule interviews directly with the selected applicant(s). Document the date and time of the interview.

4. **Complete interviews:**
   Hold interview, take interview notes, and make hiring decisions. Career Services is happy to work with you on creating interview questions if needed.
   a. Take notes during your interview and upload to the identified SharePoint folder.
   b. Input an Interview Rating (1-5) and Comment, or identify the reason not selected for hire.



INTERVIEW RATING	OVERALL INTERVIEW COMMENT	SELECTED FOR HIRE	*IF NOT SELECTED FOR OFFER, SELECT REASON BELOW*
4 - More than Acceptable (Exceeds criteria for successful job performance)	Previous tutor experience, open schedule availability	Yes	

Candidate Withdrawn
Does Not Meet Qualifications
Does Not Meet Schedule Require
No Show for Interview
Other Candidate(s) Better Qualifi
Unable to Contact Candidate

Once a candidate is noted as "Yes" on Selected for Hire, Career Services then works with the candidate for their pre-employment steps.

There is no requirement to hire a student applicant simply because they are FWS eligible. They must meet the position requirements, and they should also be a good fit for your organization.

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What must be completed before a student starts work?
Students must complete all required hiring steps with Columbus State before working any hours or beginning training. Steps include an offer letter acceptance, background screening, I-9 employment verification, tax forms, direct deposit enrollment, and required onboarding tasks.

The cost of a standard criminal background check is covered by Columbus State. If your organization requires a more intensive background check (i.e. FBI fingerprinting), this cost is covered by and arranged for by the organization.

You must receive official confirmation a selected is eligible to begin work/training.

Community Work Study hires are employees of Columbus State, not the partnering organization.

Helpful Links and Resources

Career Services Cougar Connect: https://connect.cscc.edu/engage/organization/career-services

Student Employment Cougar Connect: https://connect.cscc.edu/organization/studentemployment

Career Services Website: https://www.cscc.edu/services/careers/community-work-study.shtml

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