

P3308.11 STUDENT TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (CENTRAL OFFICE ONLY)



U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Prisons

PROGRAM STATEMENT

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Student Temporary Employment Program (Central Office Only)

/s/

Approved: Harley G. Lappin
Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons

1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** To provide students with exposure to public service and enhance their education through temporary employment at the Central Office.

a. **Summary of Changes**

Policy Rescinded: P3308.10 Student Temporary Employment (9/24/01)

The following changes were made to this Program Statement:

- References to the Central Office Human Resource Office (COHRO) have been changed to the Central Office Employee Services Department (COESD).

b. **Program Objective.** The expected result of this program is:

Flexible employment opportunities will be provided to qualified students pursuing high school, technical, or college degrees.

2. **PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

Students employed in the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) must:

- Be U.S. citizens,
- Be at least 16 years of age,

- Conform with Federal, State, or local laws and standards governing employment of a minor,
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) seeking student and be taking at least a half-time (as defined by the school which the student is enrolled) course load, and
- Maintain at least a “C” average in school.

High school students must provide written confirmation from their counselors that STEP participation will not interfere with their graduation. College students pursuing an Associate’s or Bachelor’s Degree must be full-time students or at least be carrying a half-time course load.

The period immediately prior to graduation is the only time when students are allowed to complete fewer than the required hours. Students who need to complete less than a half-time academic course load at this time are still considered students under this Program Statement.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Central Office Employee Services Manager.** The Central Office Employee Services Manager designates a STEP Coordinator, who monitors the program. If the coordinator is not an Employee Services Specialist, the responsibility is assigned in writing as a collateral duty.

b. **Student Temporary Employment Program Coordinator.** The STEP Coordinator coordinates the program among the Central Office supervisors, the Central Office Employee Services Department (COESD), students, and local schools. Functions include:

- Establishing and maintaining program standards and procedures.
- Determining position allocation and placement of students.
- Visiting schools to conduct program business.
- Locating qualified candidates.
- Conducting pre-interviews and arranging job interviews for students.
- Coordinating training opportunities.
- Monitoring student progress with work supervisors and school officials.
- Coordinating intra-office transfers.
- Coordinating student training with supervisors, school officials, and Employee Services.
- Coordinating remedial training programs to ensure there are volunteer tutors available.

4. STUDENT TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (STEP)

a. **Personnel Ceilings.** Positions under STEP count against regular personnel ceilings. Assistant Directors or their authorized representatives must request student positions from the Assistant Director, Human Resource Management (HRM) Division.

b. **Pre-Employment Screening.** Applicants have a pre-employment interview by a panel of at least two people. After a successful interview, the supervisor notifies the STEP Coordinator of his/her intention to hire the student.

When reference checks are completed, a urinalysis is given to applicants after a conditional offer of employment is extended. Staff request an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) background investigation; an OPM number is required before a student is given a start date. See the Human Resource Management Manual for further information.

c. **Appointment.** Students are appointed in the excepted service under Schedule B 213.3202(a) to positions not to exceed one year. Appointments may be extended in one-year increments, provided the original employment conditions are still met and the supervisor concurs. Initial appointments of students may be made at any time.

Students are not eligible for non-competitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment.

d. **Qualifications.** Operating Manual Qualification Standards are to be used as guides for establishing student positions and grade levels. While tests are not ordinarily given, students applying for typist positions must complete a self-certification.

e. **Classification.** COESD classifies a student position at a grade level based on the occupational series hired into and the appropriate classification standard.

STEP employees are eligible for grades GS-01 through GS-05, or equivalent levels under the Federal Wage System.

f. **Starting Work.** Students enter duty at the beginning of a pay period. Supervisors ensure the position descriptions and Request for Personnel Action forms (SF-52) are forwarded to the STEP Coordinator at least two weeks before the student begins work.

g. **Conversion to Student Career Experience Program.** Students may convert noncompetitively to the Student Career Experience Program when they meet that program's requirements and the Bureau has a position available.

Work experience related to the student's academic program and career goals, gained in STEP may be credited towards the 640 hours necessary for non-competitive conversion to a career-conditional or career appointment.

5. HOURS, BENEFITS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS

a. **Hours.** A student's work schedule may be full-time or part-time, as long as it does not interfere with his/her studies. Supervisors are encouraged to arrange work schedules and hours that satisfy the supervisor and the student.

b. **Overtime.** Ordinarily, overtime is not authorized. When students are working full-time, overtime may be scheduled in emergency situations.

c. **Holidays.** Student employees are entitled to holiday pay if the holiday falls within their regular schedule. They are paid for the hours they would normally have worked that day.

d. **Sick and Annual Leave.** Sick and annual leave benefits are authorized on a pro-rated basis (students in the four-hour category accrue one hour of sick and annual leave for every 20 hours worked). Supervisors may not advance sick or annual leave to students.

e. **Benefits and Retirement.** Students are ineligible for Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) and Federal Employees' Health Benefits (FEHB), and for coverage under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

f. **Promotions.** The following criteria, and those in the OPM Operating Manual Qualification Standards, are used as promotion guides:

- **Grade One.** Enrolled as degree seeking students, carrying at least a half-time academic/vocational/or technical course load in an accredited high school or technical school.
- **Grade Two.** Graduated from high school.
- **Grade Three.** Completed one year of academic training above high school (30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours).
- **Grade Four.** Completed two years of academic training above high school or hold an Associate's Degree (60 semester hours or 90 quarters hours).
- **Grade Five.** Completed four years of academic training above high school leading to a Bachelor's Degree or hold a Bachelor's Degree (120 semester hours or 180 quarter hours).

Students in the STEP program are in a **Time Limited Appointment** and are not entitled to step increases. Normally, students are expected to remain in a job assignment for a minimum of six months before being considered for a job change, unless transferred by management.

Supervisors may request promotions based on skills and performance as outlined above. Supervisors contact the STEP Coordinator to verify a student's academic record and class standing before submitting a recommendation for promotion.

g. **Restrictions.** Students under 18 years of age are subject to the same restrictions on hazardous occupations under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

h. **Travel.** With the Assistant Director's approval, students 18 years or older may travel for official duties when school is not in session. Students under the age of 18 in STEP are not permitted to visit Federal prisons.

6. **SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES.** Supervisors are essential to this program's success - STEP usually represents the student's first meaningful job experience. Supervisors must develop on-the-job training standards and good work habits in their STEP employees.

- **Position Description.** Supervisors provide a position description for each STEP position. Each requires a Request for Personnel Action (SF-52) requesting the position be filled and a current position description. If filling behind a resignation or termination, documentation is included with the SF-52.
- **Performance Logs and Evaluations.** Supervisors maintain performance logs for STEP employees. Students receive, at a minimum, quarterly entries for each element in the performance log. Probationary students must receive three-month, six-month, nine-month, and final evaluations. The final evaluation is the rating of record which is sent to COESD for the student's performance file.

When the next rating period begins, the student acknowledges the new set of standards. After a successful probation, the new non-probationary period ends on March 31 (as it does for all GS non-probationary employees).

7. STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES. Each student is required to be in good academic standing (maintaining at least a "C" average or a GPA of at least 2.0). STEP Coordinators may waive this requirement to disabled students on a case-by-case basis. Prospective student employees must bring a copy of their current grades to the initial job interview.

Students notify their supervisors and the STEP Coordinator when they graduate from high school, complete one or more years of college and of any other changes in school status.

High school students turn in grades to the STEP Coordinator no later than December 31, February 28, May 31, and July 31 of each year. College students must turn in grades to the STEP Coordinator no later than January 31 and June 30 each year.

Each student employee signs a limited Privacy Act statement allowing Bureau representatives access to his or her academic records.

When a student wants to resign from the program, he/she informs the STEP Coordinator and sends a memo to COESD two weeks before the resignation date. At that time the student will be given a Clearance Sheet to process out and an Exit Interview is scheduled. On the resignation date, students turn in their identification cards.

8. TRAINING. Supervisors provide students with on-the-job training. Students are eligible to attend government-sponsored training courses.

Agencies may use their training authority in 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41 and 5 CFR part 410 to pay all or part of a student's training expenses.

Both the STEP Coordinator and the supervisor determine the need for formal or remedial training. Supervisors determine which courses, if any, would help the student develop skills needed for the workplace.

These programs are made available through the local Employee Services Office. Nominations to participate are approved by the supervisor.

Student involvement in the remedial program requires prior consultation with his/her school counselor.

9. TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM

Once requirements for a high school diploma, trade school certificate, GED certificate, or Associate/Bachelor's Degree have been met, the student is no longer eligible to participate in the program. If enrolled or accepted in an additional educational program, he/she may be given a new appointment.

Graduates below the Bachelor's Degree level may serve out the unexpired portion of their appointment if they intend to continue their education the next semester or quarter.

Students who fail to be in good academic standing (maintaining at least a "C" average or a GPA less than 2.0) for two consecutive semesters may be terminated.

Students who discontinue their education are terminated no later than the last day of the pay period in which the student leaves school.

A student may be discharged for performance- or conduct-related reasons. A student experiencing performance or conduct related difficulties must be notified as soon as possible and normally is given an opportunity to improve before termination. Supervisors must have documentation on file to support a performance or conduct-related termination.

Students being terminated process out through COESD during the last week of employment.

REFERENCES

Program Statements

P3000.03 - Human Resource Management Manual (12/19/07)

US Code, Code of Federal Regulations and Other Agency Directives

5 U.S.C., Chapter 41

5 CFR Parts 213, 338, and 410

Fair Labor Standards Act

Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual Qualification Standards

ACA Standards

- 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions: None
- 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities: None

- 2nd Edition Standards for Administration of Correctional Agencies: 2-CO-1C-07, 2-CO-1C-08, 2-CO-1C-13, 2-CO-1C-18, 2-CO-1C-20, 2-CO-1C-21, and 2-CO-1D-09

Records Retention Requirements

Requirements and retention guidance for records and information applicable to this program are available in the Records and Information Disposition Schedule (RIDS) on Sallyport and BOPDOCS.