

PS 3308.10 STUDENT TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (CENTRAL OFFICE ONLY)



Program Statement

OPI: HRM
NUMBER: 3308.10
DATE: 9/24/2001
SUBJECT: Student Temporary
Employment Program
(Central Office Only)

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

2. **SUMMARY OF CHANGES.** The following changes were made to this Program Statement:

- # The criteria for promotions have been increased to include the GS-5 level.
- # References to the Central Office Personnel Office (COPO) have been changed to the Central Office Human Resource Office (COHRO).

3. **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.

4. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED**

a. **Directive Rescinded**

PS 3308.09 Student Temporary Employment (10/24/97)

b. **Directives Referenced**

PS 3000.02 Human Resource Management Manual (11/1/93)

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

5. STANDARDS REFERENCED

a. American Correctional Association 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions: None

b. American Correctional Association 3rd Edition Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities: None

c. American Correctional Association 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

6. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

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

- (1) Be U.S. citizens or lawfully admitted to the U.S. as a permanent resident or otherwise authorized to be employed,
- (2) Be at least 16 years of age,
- (3) Conform with Federal, State, or local laws and standards governing the employment of a minor,
- (4) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) seeking student and be taking at least a half-time (half-time as defined by the school which the student is enrolled) course load, and
- (5) Maintain at least a "C" average in school.

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

c. Students who need to complete less than a half-time academic course load immediately prior to graduation are still considered students for this Program Statement's purposes.

The period immediately prior to graduation is the only time that students are allowed to complete less than the required amount of hours.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Central Office Human Resource Manager.** The Central Office Human Resource Manager is to designate the STEP Coordinator, who is to be responsible for monitoring this program. If that individual is not a Human Resource Specialist, the responsibility must be assigned, in writing, as a collateral duty.

b. **Student Temporary Employment Program Coordinator.** The STEP Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the program among Central Office supervisors, the Central Office Human Resource Office (COHRO), the Employee Development Office, students, and local schools. These 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 for the program;
- ! Conducting pre-interviews and arranging job interviews for students;
- ! Coordinating training opportunities for students;
- ! Monitoring progress of students through contact with work supervisors and school officials;
- ! Coordinating intra-office transfers of students with supervisors and personnel;
- ! Coordinating student training with supervisors, Employee Development, Education, and Human Resources; and
- ! Coordinating remedial training programs to ensure there are volunteer tutors available.

8. 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 Division.

b. **Pre-Employment Screening**

- ! A pre-employment interview must be given to all STEP applicants.

! All applicants are to have a panel interview consisting of no less than two people. After a successful panel interview, the supervisor is to notify the STEP Coordinator of his or her intention to hire the student.

! When all vouchering has been completed, a urinalysis test for detecting illegal drugs must be given to all STEP applicants after a conditional offer of employment is extended. A request is to be made to obtain an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) investigation number in order to initiate a background investigation. An OPM investigation number is required before any student is given a start date.

Refer to the Human Resource Management Manual for further information.

c. **Appointment.** Students are appointed in the excepted service under Schedule B 213.3202(a). Students are appointed to a position not to exceed one year. Appointment under this authority may be extended in one year increments, provided the original employment's 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 under this authority.

d. **Qualifications.** Operating Manual Qualification Standards are to be used as guides for establishing student positions and grade levels. While tests are not given ordinarily, students applying for positions that have the title of typist must complete a self-certification. Students may be required to take a typing test administered by the Office of Personnel Management or at the school the student attends if the supervisor or Human Resource Management Office requests.

The final evaluation of a student's qualifications must be based upon the student's:

! formal training,
! education,
! past work history, and
! ability to do the job.

e. **Classification.** COHRO is to classify a student position at a grade level based on the occupational series for which he or she is hired. Grade level is to be set according to the criteria in the appropriate GS or WG classification standard.

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

f. **Starting Work.** Students are to begin work at the beginning of a pay period. Supervisors are to 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 is to begin work.

g. **Conversion to Student Career Experience Program.** Students may be converted noncompetitively to the Student Career Experience Program whenever they meet that program's requirements and the Bureau has an appropriate position available.

Work experience related to the student's academic program and career goals, gained while under the Student Temporary Employment Program, may be credited towards the 640 hours work experience necessary for non-competitive conversion to a career conditional or career appointment.

9. HOURS, BENEFITS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS

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

b. **Overtime.** Ordinarily, overtime is not authorized. When students are working full-time schedules, overtime may be scheduled only to meet emergency conditions.

c. **Holidays.** Student employees are entitled to holiday pay if the holiday occurs within their regular tour of duty. They are paid for the number of hours that they would normally have worked that day.

d. **Sick and Annual Leave.** Sick and annual leave benefits are authorized for students 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.** Students in the STEP program are not eligible to enroll in the (FEGLI) Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance and the (FEHB) Federal Employees' Health Benefits programs.

f. **Promotions.** Once a student has been hired, the following criteria, and those outlined in the OPM Operating Manual Qualification Standards, are to be used as guides when promoting students:

! **Grade One.** Individuals must be 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.** Individuals must have graduated successfully from high school. A supervisory recommendation is required.

! **Grade Three.** Individuals must have completed successfully one year of academic training above high school study (30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours). A supervisory recommendation is required.

! **Grade Four.** Individuals must have completed successfully two years of academic training above high school or hold an Associate's Degree (60 semester hours or 90 quarters hours). A supervisory recommendation is required.

! **Grade Five.** Individuals must have completed successfully 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 quarters hours). A supervisory recommendation is required.

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 must request verification of student's academic record and class standing from the STEP Coordinator prior to submitting a formal recommendation for promotion.

g. **Restrictions.** Students under 18 years of age are subject to the same restrictions on hazardous occupations as those determined by the Secretary of Labor under the authority of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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

i. **Retirement.** Students are not eligible for coverage under the Federal Employees Retirement System.

10. **SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES.** Supervisors are essential to this program's success because this 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 are required to provide a position description for each STEP position. Each vacancy requires a Request for Personnel Action (SF-52) requesting the position be filled and a copy of a current position description for the position to be filled. If filling behind a resignation or termination, appropriate documentation must be included with the SF-52.

! **Performance Logs and Evaluations.** Supervisors are required to maintain performance logs for STEP employees. Students are to 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 to be the rating of record and must be sent to the Human Resource Management Office to be processed and placed in the student's performance file.

When the next rating period begins, the student is to acknowledge the new set of standards. The new rating period, after a successful probationary period, will end on March 31 as it does for all GS non-probationary employees.

11. **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES.** Each student is required to be in good academic (maintaining at least a "C" average) standings with his or her school. STEP Coordinators may grant a waiver from this requirement to handicapped students on a case-by-case basis. Prospective student employees must bring a copy of their current grades when reporting for the initial job interview.

- ! Students are responsible for notifying their supervisors and the STEP Coordinator when they graduate from high school or complete one or more years of college. Students must notify their supervisors and the STEP Coordinator of any changes in school status.
- ! Receiving less than a "C" average grade, suspensions, or non-attendance at school are grounds for termination.
- ! High school students must 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 must sign a limited Privacy Act statement authorizing Bureau representatives access to his or her academic records.
- ! When a student wants to resign from the program, he or she should inform the STEP Coordinator and also furnish an SF-52 to COHRO two weeks before the final resignation date. At that time the student will be given a Clearance Sheet to process out and an Exit Interview will be scheduled.

On the resignation date, students are required to turn in their identification cards.

12. **TRAINING.** Supervisors must 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 are to determine the need for formal or remedial training. Supervisors should

determine which courses, if any, would assist the student in developing better skills needed for the work place.

Diagnostic and self-study programs are to be available for those students whose reading, mathematics, and writing skills hinder their effectiveness on the job. Supervisors are authorized and encouraged to allow students to participate in these programs during duty hours.

However, if for any reason, official time is not available for this training, students should be prepared to participate on their own time.

These programs are made available through the local Employee Development Office. Nominations to participate in any program are to be approved by the student's supervisor.

Student involvement in the remedial program requires prior consultation with the student's school counselor.

13. **TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM**

! Once the requirements for obtaining a high school diploma, trade school certificate, GED certificates, or Associate/Bachelor's Degree have been met, the student is no longer eligible to participate in the program. If enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an additional educational program he or 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 standings (maintaining at least a "C" average) with their school for two consecutive semesters may be terminated from the STEP.

! Students who discontinue their education must be terminated from the program no later than the last day of the pay period in which the student leaves school.

! A student may be discharged from the program for performance or conduct related reasons.

A student experiencing performance or conduct related difficulties must be notified as soon as possible and normally given an opportunity to improve prior to a termination decision. Supervisors are to have adequate documentation on file supporting a performance or conduct-related termination.

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

/s/

Kathleen Hawk Sawyer
Director