



Work-Based Learning (WBL) Employer Guide

Updated for 2025-2026 Academic Year

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Overview

Work-Based Learning (WBL) assists students in solidifying classroom knowledge, exploring career options, and demonstrating employability skills. For employers, it provides a platform to develop talent pipelines, increase industry awareness within local communities, and enhance workforce leadership, ultimately leading to increased productivity.

Employers involved in work-based learning (WBL) should implement best practices to create meaningful student work experiences by:

- Designating a primary contact to oversee and guide student workers.
- Treating WBL experiences as valuable opportunities for talent acquisition.
- Ensuring adherence to legal requirements and promoting workplace diversity.

All employers of paid student workers shall abide by both federal and state child labor laws, as well as wage and hour laws. In addition, some occupations and job duties have been declared too hazardous for minors to perform unless they meet all conditions as identified in the Department of Labor's Federal Child Labor Bulletins 101 and 102. All employers are required to maintain records of all student workers including names, ages, and addresses of each minor along with work times and payroll records. Employers are required to provide a safe learning and working environment while ensuring equal employment opportunities and policies. Employers with one or more employees are responsible for purchasing workers' compensation coverage insurance to cover an employee's income loss that occurs due to work-related injury pursuant to Chapter 342 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes. Lastly, all employers must verify approved Kentucky Criminal Background Checks on all supervisors of JCPS student workers (paid and unpaid) completed within the last five years.

Student Work Experiences

JCPS has three (3) main types of work-based learning programs:

- [Apprenticeships](#)
- [Co-ops](#)
- [Internships](#)

Note: *Some WBL types may require student workers to obtain specific enrollment status in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program to participate.*

Apprenticeship

The Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) Youth Apprenticeship program is a partnership between the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) and the Education and Labor Cabinet's (ELC) Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services (OEAS) to accelerate and streamline opportunities for secondary students into **registered apprenticeships**. Upon successful completion at the high school level, the student will be awarded an industry certification and all on-the-job hours worked will be counted toward the postsecondary registered apprenticeship. Apprenticeships must be paid experiences.

Cooperative (Co-op)

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is a **long-term paid work experience** consisting of in school instruction combined with program related on-the-job work experience in a business or industrial establishment.

Internship

Internships are a type of **paid or unpaid work experience** that aligns to the student's career interests and/or program, often leading to course credit and/or compensation.*

****WBL Employers participating in any unpaid work experience should review 803 KAR 1:006 to ensure there is not an employer-employee relationship.***

Other types of work-based learning/experiential learning that may occur in JCPS are guest speakers, career days, workplace challenges, workplace tours, job shadows, mock interviews, school-based enterprises, mentorships, service learning, and entrepreneurship.

Learn more on the [JCPS WBL Website](#), the authoritative source of work-based learning information in JCPS.

Liability & Compliance

District Policies

- **JCPS Board Policy 03.6 Background Checks:** All worksite supervisors responsible for JCPS WBL students have undergone a state criminal background check within the past five years, as required by JCPS policy and Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS 160.380 and KRS 161.148).
- **JCPS Board Policy 09.23 Student Accident Insurance:** JCPS issues a master group policy with an insurance carrier, selected in compliance with prevailing state law, for accident coverage of students including students enrolled in a JCPS-approved WBL program.

Kentucky Regulations

- **705 KAR 4:041 Standards for Work-Based Learning Programs:** Establishes program standards for work-based learning in local school districts.
- **803 KAR 1:006 Employer-Employee Relationship (Unpaid Only):** Determines whether a work experience requires paid compensation based on the existence of an employer-employee relationship.
- **Kentucky Child Labor Laws:** General wage and hour regulations including minimum wage, break periods, work hours, etc.
- **Workers' Compensation Coverage (Paid Only):** Employers are required to have workers' compensation insurance to cover employees, including paid student workers.

Federal Laws

- **29 CFR 570 Child Labor Regulations, Orders and Statements of Interpretation**
- **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Child Labor Bulletins:** List all prohibited occupations for minors and whether there is an exemption available if the student is a “bona-fide student learner or apprentice” in a CTE pathway.

Resources from KDE's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE):

- [Agriculture Hazardous Occupations / Non-Agriculture Hazardous Occupations](#)
- [Hazardous Occupations Exemptions](#)
- [Liability Checklist](#)

Resources from the US Department of Labor (DOL):

- [Child Labor Laws & Employers](#)
- [Youth Employment Compliance Assistance Toolkit](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\)](#)

Employer Process & Forms

Employers looking to hire JCPS student workers as part of the JCPS Work-Based Learning Program will follow these steps:

- **Complete & Submit:** [JCPS WBL Employer Registration](#)
 - Provide the following **Business Information**:
 - **Organization Name**
 - **Full Address**
 - **Website** (If Applicable)
 - Provide the following **Employer Contact Information**:
 - **First & Last Name**
 - **Title**
 - **Phone Number**
 - **Email Address**
 - All Work-Based Learning Forms will be sent to the email provided on employer registration from **JCPS Forms** ([see image](#)). Signers will click on the blue **Review Now** button ([see image](#)) to complete and submit a form.
If the email server blocks external links, provide an additional email address to sign electronic forms.
- **Sign Required Annual Document:** [Work-Based Learning \(WBL\) Employer Compliance Verification Form](#)
 - Form will be sent to the email provided on employer registration from **JCPS Forms** ([see image](#)).
 - Completed form will allow the employer to hire any eligible JCPS student at any JCPS high school for the duration of the academic school year.
 - **If needed**, employers may electronically sign the PDF version of the form using the link provided above, and email the signed form to [Liz Adams, WBL Supervisor](#).
- **Communicate with School/District Staff**
 - School/district staff may reach out to set up an initial site visit to evaluate potential work placement sites.
- **Create & Share Job Posting**
 - Here are some ways to ensure JCPS students view employer job postings:
 - Share with the CTE program area teacher
 - Share with WBL Coordinator at school and/or district WBL Supervisor
 - Post on job sites like [KentuckianaWorks](#) or [WBL Opportunities](#)
- **Conduct Interviews & Extend Job Offer**
 - Conduct Interviews

- Select Preferred Candidate(s)
- Extend Job Offers
- **Verify Work Plan**
 - JCPS student workers will electronically submit Work Plans for their individual work experiences to be approved by their work supervisors prior to being accepted into a WBL program.
- **WBL Program Acceptance**
 - Electronically sign the WBL Program Acceptance
 - Serves as official notice that the student has been accepted into a WBL program and may be eligible to report to work during school hours.
 - **Students are not permitted to leave during the school day to report to work until this form has been signed by all parties.**
- **Verify Work Logs (If Applicable)**
 - JCPS student workers participating in an **unpaid** work experience may submit monthly Work Logs for their work supervisors to approve.
- **Complete WBL Employer Evaluation/Survey**
 - WBL Employer Evaluations are sent to work supervisors to provide feedback for an individual student's work performance.
 - WBL Employer Surveys are sent by the district to primary employer contacts to provide feedback for the Work-Based Learning program experience overall.
- **Respond to Communications**
 - Respond to communications from school/district staff as appropriate.

Supporting Student Workers

To effectively support all JCPS student workers, employers should:

- Structure student worker opportunities with proper supervision and mentoring.
- Clearly communicate student worker job expectations regarding facility layout, schedules, protocols, and professionalism.
- Provide student workers with necessary training on data privacy, IT security, and other relevant topics for success within the organization.
- Maintain communication with JCPS staff.
- Inform JCPS of any changes to the Work Plan or issues with the placement promptly.
- Complete student work hours verification requests *if requested*.
- Submit JCPS Employer Evaluations/Surveys *if requested*.

To effectively support JCPS student workers with additional support needs, employers should:

- Communicate regularly with school support staff and district job trainers regarding work placements and potential student worker accommodations.
- Reach out to local organizations such as [Coalition Forward Kentucky](#) for guidance.

Resources

Websites:

- [After the Tassel](#)
- [ECE Transitions](#)
- [Everybody Counts](#)
- [Futuriti](#)
- [JCPS WBL Website](#)
- [Jobready](#)
- [KDE Work-Based Learning](#)
- [KentuckianaEarns](#)