

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

WIOA Supportive Services and Needs-Based Assistance Policy

POLICY NUMBER:	1.4000.100.022
EFFECTIVE DATE:	April 20, 2022
APPROVING AUTHORITY:	Board Chair Prince George's County Workforce Development Board
RESPONSIBLE STAFF:	Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Directors and Managers, Program Performance and Data Management
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:	Operations Division

SUMMARY:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides program guidelines for supportive services for adults and dislocated workers defined in WIOA Sections 3(59) and 134(d)(2) and (3) and supportive services for youth as defined in WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G). WIOA-enrolled adults dislocated workers, and youth are eligible for supportive services defined in WIOA Section 3(59).

POLICY:

The policy is intended to ensure that service providers make available and coordinate supportive services to promote the ability of Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth participants to participate in WIOA activities. We encourage the provision of supportive services to WIOA participants when necessary to promote participants' participation in WIOA Title I services leading to employment or other performance outcomes. Service providers must allocate a portion of their budget to providing supportive services for their enrolled WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants as part of their program. The amount should be based on a reasonable estimate of the demand for and cost of those services. Procedures include documentation requirements to show that the supportive service is allowable, reasonable, and not otherwise available to the participant.

Family and income responsibilities often prevent program participants from successfully entering or completing training. States should ensure that supportive services and needs-related payments are available to support program participants' employment and training needs for priority populations. Incentive payments to youth participants are permitted for recognition and achievement directly tied to training activities and work experiences. Supportive services are necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in activities authorized under WIOA sec. 134(c)(2) and (3) (adults and dislocated workers) and sec. 129(c)(2) (Youth) and defined in WIOA sec. 3(59). The WIOA Final Rules discuss supportive services at 20 CFR 680.900-970, 681.640, and 681.570.

Services may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-related payments, as described below;

- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Legal aid services;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses, protective eye gear, and other essential safety equipment;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

PROVISION

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals participating in individualized career or training services through the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs or who are participating in the In-School or Out-of-School Youth program and who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. In addition, supportive services may only be provided when they are indispensable to enabling individuals to participate in Title I activities. Youth Programs may use incentives for customers who participate in training activities and work experiences. Incentive payment must not be spent on entertainment costs.

REFERRAL TO SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The Title I-funded staff person will refer individuals seeking supportive services to community agencies that provide the type of assistance being sought. If the customer requires a service not available through a referral when said resources are exhausted, or the timeframe for assistance substantially hinders or precludes the participation in authorized WIOA Title I activities, the staff person may utilize WIOA Title I funds on behalf of the individual. Documentation must be included within the participant case file that demonstrates services being provided with WIOA funds were not available to the client through other resources or as established above.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are:

- Participating in programs with activities authorized under WIOA; and
- Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services; and
- Must be necessary to enable the individual to participate in individualized career services or training activities.

The following steps must be completed by the program participant requesting supportive services payments and program staff processing these requests:

I. Participants must:

- Provide proof of supportive service needs as indicated above
- Provide all required documentation to program staff

II. Program staff must:

- Inform their WIOA customers of the availability of this assistance and its limitations
- Complete the WIOA *Supportive Services Request Form*
- Collect the necessary verification of need as it relates to each type of supportive service indicated above
- Submit completed *Supportive Services Request Form* with all verification to management for the signature of approval

- Have customers sign an acknowledgment form after receiving each approved supportive services payment as they are received
- Enter a case note and service code in MWE timely.
- Update IEP/ISS

Participants will not be approved for supportive services payments if all required supporting documentation is not provided. (*Attachment A – Supportive Service Request Form*)

NOTE: For performance reporting purposes, supportive services do not make an individual a participant or extend participation on their own. A participant must be enrolled in training or individualized career services before and during receiving the supportive services. In the case of Youth, supportive services are allowed during follow-up.

A maximum of \$1,000.00 in financial assistance can be provided for the participants who meet the eligibility mentioned above criteria in any combination of the categories below or stated in the sub-recipient’s agreement. WIOA Title I-funded Program Managers only have the authority to approve Supportive Services Payments to participants for assistance with the following services:

CHILD OR DEPENDENT CARE

When daycare costs for a child or dependent exceed the amount subsidized by the Department of Social Services, Title 1 Program assists participants with the additional costs.

To receive this payment, the dependent needing daycare must be:

- Under the age of 13;
- Under the age of 18 and physically or mentally incapable of self-care;
- A spouse who is physically or mentally incapable of self-care and has the same principal address as the program participant; or,
- A parent who is physically or mentally incapable of self-care.

Payment Guidelines: Supportive service payment to actively engaged program participants or those in the first two weeks of new, full-time employment should not exceed the maximum allowable amount of \$25.00 per day or the maximum weekly amount of \$125.00. Only days that the participant is in training or at work will be allowable daycare costs. Before submitting a payment request, it must be determined that the following conditions are met.

To receive childcare payments, the participant must complete ALL of the following steps:

- Apply for purchase of care subsidy through the Department of Social Services;
- Provide application results to LWDB staff;
- Provide proof that the participant has contracted with a State-approved childcare provider;
- Demonstrate evidence of need; AND,
- Document the relationship with the person in care.

To receive dependent care payments, the participant must complete ALL of the following steps:

- Provide legal proof of the adult dependent's condition that causes the need for care;
- Provide proof that the participant has contracted with a State-approved daycare provider;
- Demonstrate evidence of need; AND,
- Document the relationship with the person in care.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation allowances are available to participants in approved training programs and or individualized career services. The transportation allowance must be related to program participation. It can cover the cost of traveling to and from job interviews or job fairs.

Transportation allowances require:

- Documentation to verify the actual distance traveled and/or a receipt for the cost of the transportation service (public transit, taxi services); and,
- Confirmation of the participant's attendance for the program(s) required to travel. Participant reimbursement must only occur after these elements are confirmed. Advance payment is not allowable to participants.
- Google Maps or MapQuest must be used to determine daily mileage. Mileage is calculated from the participant's home address to the training, interview, job fair, or job site.

Payment Guidelines: Transportation allowance can be used for public transit users, taxi service users, or drivers. Staff must collect and maintain appropriate documentation to verify the participant's covered transportation allowance.

Participating WIOA staff may cover the expenses for bus, light rail, metro subway, MARC train, taxi services, Washington Transit, or Commuter Choice Maryland for public transit users when other public transportation options are not available or practical. WIOA staff must consider the length of training and/or employment activity before selecting a transportation method.

WIOA staff may approve a travel allowance at a rate not higher than drivers' official IRS mileage rate. For example, at the date of this policy issuance, the standard is the IRS-issued mileage rate for the period in question per mile for each business mile driven.

New Hire Supportive Services: Transportation allowances are available to participants enrolled in WIOA or WIOA case closure as a support during the first two weeks of starting a new, full-time job. Participants may receive a transportation allowance to be determined on a case-by-case basis but not exceed 14 consecutive days of available users. To receive the new hire allowance, the participant will need to provide proof of employment. Staff will document the approval via case notes and add the appropriate services to the MIS system.

NOTE: Participants who have soft exited the system are not eligible for the new hire allowance.

WORK-RELATED CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIES

Purchase of any work-related clothing and equipment supplies requires written documentation that they are not reimbursed or provided by the employer or training provider.

This category includes, but is not limited to required,

- uniforms,
- tools,
- safety equipment,
- certification/licensing exam fees,
- physicals,
- standardized work clothing or footwear, or instructional supplies.

Other allowable supportive services include and are not intended to be an exhaustive or exclusive list of permissible services.

- Assistance with translation
- Assistance with work and training related licenses and permits (cap industry-specific not to exceed \$500)
- Assistance with employment-related professional membership (cap \$250)
- Professional attire (cap \$250.00)

YOUTH TRAINING INCENTIVE

Incentives paid with WIOA funds must be connected to achieving a milestone in the program tied to work experience, education, or training. Such incentive for achievements could include improvement marked by the accomplishment of credentials or other successful outcomes.

To receive this payment, the Youth must be:

- Enrolled under Youth Title I Program
- Tied to the goal of the specific program
- Outlined in writing before the commencement of the program that may provide incentive payments

Payment Guidelines: Participating providers may provide this training incentive payment to actively engaged program participants who complete an approved training program. The maximum allowable amount is based on a sub-recipient's contract.

OTHER YOUTH SUPPORTIVE SERVICE

Per TEGL 21-16, youth may also receive supportive services as a follow-up service. These program elements must be provided after the exit date to count as follow-up services. DOL recommends that when these services are provided as follow-up services, they are coded as follow-up services in MWE instead of program services provided before program exit. Management information systems differentiate follow-up services from those provided before exit. In addition, such follow-up services should be documented in the case file that they were provided as follow-up services post-exit.

NEEDS-RELATED PAYMENTS

As described in 20 CFR 680.930 through 680.970, needs-related payments provide financial assistance to participants, enabling them to participate in training. Unlike other supportive services, a participant must be enrolled in training to qualify for needs-related payments. Participants may receive needs-related payments thirty (30) days before training; Needs-related payments may be provided within local funding limitations, up to a maximum of \$250.00 per week.

Per CFR 680.940, to be eligible for needs-related payments, adults must:

- Be unemployed;
- Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation; and
- Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA sec. 134(c)(3).

Per CFR 680.950, to be eligible for needs-related payments, dislocated workers must:

- Be unemployed; and
- Have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment allowance under TAA; and
- Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA sec. 134(c)(3) by the end of the 13th week after the most recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the worker's eligibility as a dislocated worker, or, if later, by the end of the 8th week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed six months; or
- Be unemployed and do not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment assistance under TAA and be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA sec. 134(c)(3).

Participants may not exceed the maximum of \$1,000.00 for any combination of supportive services received. On a case-by-case basis, a Director has the authority to increase this limit to \$2,000.00 if the additional supportive services allocations would significantly benefit the participant's ability to continue and complete the program.

Training-related expenses for WIOA eligible adults or older youth that an Individual service agreement may cover do not count against the supportive services limit for each registered participant. Training authorization, such as ITA, ISA, and

TA, related training expenses may include but are not limited to: assistance with the purchases of tools required by the course; current school admission fees, computer and lab fees; and books and supplies.

- ITA – Individual Training Account Authorization
- ISA – Intensive Services Authorization
- TA – Training Authorization

EXCLUSIONS TO THE POLICY:

None

FORMS:

Attachment A – WIOA Supportive Service Request Form

APPROVING SIGNATURES:



Charnetia V. Young (May 9, 2022 11:15 EDT)

May 9, 2022

Board Chair
Prince George's County Workforce Development Board

Date