

**BACKGROUND:** This policy provides clarification on when and to whom supportive services may be provided and the procedures for doing so. Supportive services provide those enrolled in WIOA programs with the resources they need to overcome barriers for successful participation in career and training services and are an essential part of their employment plan.

**POLICY:** All participants must receive a welcome letter upon enrollment which informs them of the services available through the WIOA program which includes supportive services. Participants must also have the opportunity to discuss it with career planners and are required to sign the form, acknowledging that they received it. It is expected that career planners, as part of their initial and ongoing assessment, screen for barriers and supportive service-related needs, document the needs, and provide suggestions for how to address those needs. It is also expected that career planners provide referrals to other resources first, documenting the referral and participant follow-through and results. When other resources are not available, are too burdensome to obtain, or will not be available on a timely basis, WIOA funded supportive service options may be explored. Career planners must offer and provide services in an equitable fashion providing the same referrals for those with similar circumstances.

**ELIGIBILITY:** School related supportive services are allowable for all participants who have a training-related goal on their IEP. Other supportive services may be provided to WIOA participants who are receiving priority of service, are low-income, are youth program participants, are single-wage households, and/or would struggle with career or training service completion without the assistance. Eligibility may change during the program if the participant's circumstances change (e.g., participant gets divorced and is now the only income in the home) and the need for supportive services must be re-examined. If determined to be eligible, supportive services may be provided, if needed and applicable.

**TYPES OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AVAILABLE:** WIOA supportive service funds may be made available for the following types of assistance:

- Education-related entrance, assessment and testing fees;
- Fees for pre-employment or pre-training drug testing, background checks, and medical exams;
- Training-related required items;
- GED vouchers;
- License and certification exam fees, including retake fees;
- Uniforms, work attire, and work-related equipment and tools;
- Books and fees for training programs;
- Transportation;
- Child care (only for participants enrolled in training); and
- Other items related to transportation, child care, housing, testing, needs-related payments, and accommodations may be considered on a case-by-case basis and with approval by the WDB Director.

### AMOUNTS AND DURATION:

- Funding is allowable for required items for school programs or to start of new job. Items must enhance employability or be required for participation in career or training services.
- Participants may show that items are required by providing the following types of documentation: cost estimate worksheet from a training provider, letter from an employer, printed verification of test costs, or a syllabus from an instructor.
- School items must be above and beyond the typical school supplies of paper, pens, and folders, and must be program specific (e.g., scrubs for certified nursing assistants, weld helmets for welders).
- It is best to try to determine exact costs. When that is not possible, it is expected that career planners request amounts that are reasonable for any particular item. Costs are considered reasonable if they are of a nature and amount that would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs. To help determine a reasonable cost, participants and career planners may price an item on-line and find an average cost. This may be used as a guide for determining reasonable

cost. Participants may elect to purchase more expensive items and pay the difference between what is reasonable and what they want.

- It is expected that the participant and career planner will work to find the most cost effective supportive service to make the funding available to the largest number of participants.
- It is allowable to have multiple funders for the same service if there is no overlap in funding.
- Exceptions to the amounts and duration of supportive services may be made on a case-by-case basis with approval by the WDB Director.

#### **TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE:**

- Reimbursement during training is limited to \$0.12 per mile after the first 16 miles (round trip).
- Bus passes, taxi tickets and/or gas cards may be distributed for use during career and/or training services. Participants must acknowledge receipt of gas cards, taxi tickets, bus passes, and/or gift cards by signing off on the Transportation Assistance form in the designated area. This may happen on the same day and time as the items are distributed if there has been prior approval for distribution of the item(s).
- A single interview or appointment will be limited to the equivalent of \$20 (gas card) or lowest price for a one-time taxi ticket or bus pass.
- For the start of a job (or Youth Program Work Experience services), assistance will be limited to the first two weeks or when the person receives their first paycheck, whichever comes first.
- For participants requiring ongoing assistance to attend school or at the start of a new job, a daily or monthly rate may be assigned for public transportation, but will be limited to 50% of the total cost (for those in training) or when the person receives their first paycheck.

**CHILDCARE:** Childcare may be reimbursed only for the hours that the participant is in training plus an additional one hour per day for travel to and from training. Associated costs for childcare are not covered (e.g., registration fees). Compensation will be for actual childcare hours provided each month. Reimbursement rates for childcare are as follows: 1 child= \$2.00/hour; 2 children= \$3.50/hour; 3 or more children= \$4.50/hour.

#### **PAYMENTS/REIMBURSEMENT:**

- Expenses incurred without prior approval will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement will be made only after receiving itemized receipts that clearly show payment or purchase.
- Mileage reimbursement and childcare costs will be paid monthly after receiving attendance report forms. Attendance forms should be turned in monthly and must be turned in during the current fiscal year. Attendance forms turned in after the end of a fiscal year will not be reimbursed.
- School items purchased at the school and paid for by the participant for any given semester will be reimbursed after the school provides itemized invoices for each semester. These reimbursements are typically made between four to six months after the start of the semester.
- Supportive services may be provided for someone in non-WIOA funded training program only if the participant and training are WIOA-eligible.
- During a public health crisis or state of emergency as declared by the federal, state, or a WOW county government, supportive service payments and/or reimbursements may be made through virtual or electronic systems such as mobile payment services, electronic gift cards for specific services (e.g., fuel), or other secure and trackable means. General electronic gift cards are not permitted. Service providers and participants must retain all related documentation and receipts for monitoring and eligibility purposes.

**DOCUMENTATION/ASSET ENTRY:** For each participant receiving supportive services, career planners must:

1. Upon enrollment, during the initial assessment phase, and ongoing throughout the program, all supportive service needs (information/referral and program-funded) must be documented in the participant's employment plan and indicate how the needs will be addressed.
2. Add supportive services that are both planned and provided to the ASSET Manage Services screen (referral and WIOA funded).
3. Document the reason the supportive service is needed in the ASSET Supportive Service screen comments field.

For program-funded supportive services only, career planners must also:

1. Complete a Supportive Service Request form and have it approved before allowing a purchase to be made.
  2. Save documentation of payment and expenses (e.g., estimates, vouchers, receipts, mileage logs, etc.) in the case file as applicable.
  3. Document in the ASSET Supportive Service screen comments field:
    - The specific career or training service supported by the supportive service; and
    - That the service is not available through other WIOA titles, Federal or State public assistance programs, or job center partners in the local WDA.

Note: "Not available" means not offered or not offered within the time frame the participant needs.
  4. Document case notes in ASSET if the career planner offers a supportive service to address a barrier to employment but the participant declines it.
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Policy Adopted: 01.00.2005  
Policy Revised: 06.00.2008; 02.19.2014; 10.00.2015; 03.10.2016; 12.06.2018; 04.02.2020  
References: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; DWD/DET, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program Guide; 2 CFR Part 200—Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards