

# Northwest Workforce Development Board

## PROGRAM POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Issuance No: P2  
Issuance Date: July 8, 2004; Revised 4/4/07, 3/29/11, 6/5/12, 6/11/13,  
6/10/14, 5/7/15, 12/2/15  
Subject: Supportive Services Policy

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### **Northwest Region Supportive Service Policy For WIOA Adult / Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs**

*Effective – January 1, 2016*

*(In compliance with DWD Issuance 12-2010)*

The definition of supportive services is generally any type of payment that is necessary to enable a participant to engage in an authorized activity under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In all cases, an Individual Employment Plan for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs must contain the need for, and extent of, supportive services, as well as service note documentation of the linkage of payment for the supportive services to an authorized activity. Supportive services should only be provided when the services are not available elsewhere, since WIOA is considered funding of last resort, and only under the guidelines and limits that follow:

*Supportive Services are designed to assist WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program participants in securing and sustaining employment and credential attainment. In addition, supportive services are available to enrolled WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth participants who are actively participating in WIOA approved activities. Temporary suspension of supportive services can be approved at the program director and coordinator discretion based on individual's lack of participation.*

Supportive services are not entitlements and all supportive services requests must be supported by demonstration of financial need. Participants who are eligible or have been eligible for TANF or SNAP in the past six (6) months are automatically considered financially in-need of WIOA Supportive Services. Documentation of TANF or SNAP eligibility must be maintained in the participant's file, noted in the *Toolbox 2.0* financial needs assessment tab, and updated semi-annually. If the participant is not eligible for TANF or SNAP financial need will be demonstrated by completing the Assessment section, "Financial Needs" tab in *Toolbox 2.0* and determining the participant's household expense to income ratio (*attachment 1*). The "Financial Needs" tab must be completed annually if supportive services are obligated based on the expense to income ratio. In cases where the participant shows little or no income an

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applicant statement explaining their means of support must be completed. In cases where expenses seem inflated staff may request documentation of the expenses.

All supportive services must link back to employment or education goals identified in the "Employment Plan"; youth must also include those goals on the "Individual Services Strategies Goal Planning Worksheet". Supportive service payments must be submitted on the Participant Voucher. In all cases, staff must review "service notes" prior to making any supportive service payments to avoid duplicate payments.

All documentation must support the service dates being paid for. All appropriate supportive documentation and vouchers (including appropriate signatures) must be provided in the customer's file. For WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers, *Toolbox 2.0* "4003 Supportive Services" must be opened on the date the cost was incurred. For WIOA Youth, *Toolbox 2.0* "607 Supportive Services" must be opened on the date the cost was incurred. Costs incurred prior to program enrollment are not allowable. At the time "4003" or "607" services are opened in *Toolbox 2.0*, a service note must be entered stating what has been obligated to the participant including type of service, justification of participant's need for the service, lack of other community resources, total amount offered, date(s) or date range, and if it is a one-time payment or a reoccurring obligation. Once the expense is incurred, a detailed service note must indicate type of supportive service, dates and amount paid.

Supportive Services may be paid for participants enrolled in WIOA follow-up services. Supportive Service payments for participants in follow-up must be submitted to WDB staff for approval, the maximum amount paid in Supportive Services to follow-up participants is \$250.00.

Supportive services will not exceed \$2,000 per person per program year. If an individual is enrolled in more than one WIOA program, the maximum of \$2,000 total supportive service payment per person per program year may not be exceeded.

*Supportive Services may include the following:*

- Child Care;
- Transportation; and/or
- "Other" - reasonable expenses required to keep an eligible WIOA participant in an activity.

## **Child Care**

Childcare will be paid based on contracted days and will be supported by a class schedule or timesheet and daycare provider contract or attendance sheet. Each participant must apply for state childcare assistance prior to receiving WIOA childcare supportive services. Childcare costs will be paid directly to the participant and the participant is responsible for paying their

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childcare provider. Childcare may be paid during school breaks to ensure continued availability only if it is documented in the childcare provider's policy.

Maximum childcare rates will be as follows and based on funding availability:

\$10 per day for one child, maximum

\$15 total for two or more children, maximum

## **Transportation**

Mileage Reimbursement will be paid based on scheduled days and will be supported by a training schedule or attendance log. It will be calculated based on the round trip mileage from the participant's home directly to the training facility and back; a minimum of 20 miles round trip. Verification documents must be obtained prior to payment. Mileage can be calculated using *MapQuest* or *Yahoo Maps* and the lesser will be used for calculations of mileage. WIOA funds will be funds of last resort.

Round trip mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.32 per mile up to 50 miles.

Travel over 50 miles round-trip will receive \$16.00 per day.

Emergency Travel may be provided if it is determined that there is an immediate need and the participant must have assistance before they can travel to work, training, or an approved workshop or activity, a voucher system can be used to assist the participant. The subcontractor will set up an account with a local vendor and a voucher system will be used to charge gas for the participant. The vendor will bill the subcontractor; the sub-contractor will bill the appropriate WIOA program.

The participant must complete a voucher for the dates that will be traveled and sign the "ticket" when they receive the gas for travel. The amount of emergency travel will not exceed the regular transportation rate of \$.32 per round-trip mile up to 50 miles or \$16.00 per day for over 50 miles round trip.

Bus Passes will be provided based on scheduled days and will be supported by a class schedule, work schedule or attendance log. Passes may be obligated for the duration of the training, not to exceed a semester. Passes may be distributed no more than 30 days at a time. Daily bus passes may be issued for job search; a job search log will be needed to support the voucher.

Vehicle repairs costs may be provided but must be directly linked to an allowable activity. Required documentation includes: 1) copy of title or registration showing that the client or their spouse, parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle; 2) proof of car insurance. Only one vehicle repair will be allowed per program year, no cosmetic repairs will be paid from WIOA funding.

The participant cannot receive mileage reimbursement and vehicle repairs during the same week. If vehicle repairs are paid, no transportation will be paid concurrently.

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## Other Supportive Services

All other supportive services must be necessary to enable an individual to participate in services authorized under and consistent with Title I of WIOA. The support must be necessary for the participant to continue their education, obtain employment or retain employment. Any additional supportive services not listed in this policy must have prior approval by WDB staff.

To qualify for background check/finger printing, it must be directly work or education related in order for the participant to obtain employment or for admission in post-secondary education; documentation must include a statement from the employer or educational institution indicating the requirement.

To qualify for application or exam fees, the post-secondary educational facility must require a fee for the application or exam; documentation must be provided from the educational institution stating exam or application fee is required.

To qualify for medical testing fee, the post-secondary educational facility must require the medical testing; documentation must be provided from the education institute stating the testing is required.

To qualify for clothing assistance, the clothing items must be directly related to their occupational goal. Clothing that is allowed to be purchased includes uniforms and footwear **required** as a condition of training, employment or job interview clothing. No undergarments, makeup, hair accessories, or personal hygiene items are allowed. Clothing is limited to \$150 per program year. The participant must submit proof from the training site the items are required.

To qualify for tools or equipment, the participant must submit proof that the employer or training provider requires the participant to have specific tools or equipment to perform job duties or complete training.

To qualify for rent assistance or house payment, the participant must indicate a need and sign an applicant statement requesting the assistance. Rent assistance or house payment is limited to one time per household, per program year. Deposits are not allowable since the amount may be reimbursed to a participant at a later date. Payment of late fees or interest charges are not allowable. Required documentation for payment includes: copy of a signed lease with participant's signature or proof from the lending institution documenting monthly amount due and participant's name.

If the lease or house loan payment is not in the participant's name, an applicant statement must be made explaining the relationship between the participant and the person named in the lease or loan and will be approved by WDB staff on a case by case basis.

To qualify for gas or electric utilities assistance, the participant must indicate a need and sign an applicant statement requesting the assistance. Gas or electric utilities assistance is limited to one time per program year. Deposits or start-up costs are not acceptable. Required

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documentation includes: shut off notice and a service note documenting that the participant attempted to receive this assistance elsewhere, but was determined ineligible (by local Community Action Agency or FSD energy assistance program).

To qualify for car insurance assistance, documentation of linkage to authorized activity must be in service note; the participant must complete an applicant statement and indicate a need. Car insurance assistance is limited to one time per program year and only for start-up cost and one month premium. No pre-payment of premiums are allowable. Required documentation includes: copy of title or registration showing that client or their parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle and invoice from insurance provider.

Payments of luxury items are not allowed. These items include: telephone services, internet, cable service or air conditioning for home or vehicle.

### **Needs-Related Payments**

Needs-related payments can be provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers to enable them to participate in training; and may also be provided to a customer who will begin a training program within thirty (30) calendar days. The law does not include needs-related payments in the list of Supportive Services that an eligible Youth can receive. An Older Youth (eighteen (18) years or older) who is enrolled in training and has been determined to be in need of a needs-related payment(s), should be enrolled in the WIOA Adult program in order to receive the payments.

#### Eligibility requirements for Adults:

- Must be unemployed;
- Not qualify for, or ceased qualifying for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation; and
- Be enrolled in an eligible WIOA training service.

#### Eligibility requirements for Dislocated Workers:

- Must be unemployed;
- Not qualify for, or ceased qualifying for UI compensation or Trade Readjustment Allowance under Trade Adjustment Assistance; and
- Be enrolled in an eligible WIOA training service by:
  - The end of the thirteenth (13th) week after the most recent layoff that resulted in unemployment; or
  - After the thirteenth (13th) week, but by the end of the eighth (8th) week after being informed the short-term layoff will exceed six (6) months.

Needs-related payments cannot exceed the applicable weekly level of UI compensation. If the customer didn't qualify for UI compensation then the payment cannot exceed the poverty line which is adjusted to show changes in total family income. These payments are equal to \$175 a week or the previous amount of unemployment compensation. If there is no previous unemployment compensation, the amount is equal to the \$175 as this is below the poverty level analysis. These payments do not count toward the participant's \$2000 Supportive Service limit.

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## **Trade Act Funding**

If a customer is enrolled in Trade Act, this funding source must be utilized prior to WIOA funding. If the customer needs resources not covered by Trade Act, local policy should be followed to provide these wrap-around services.

### **For example:**

- The customer is enrolled in Trade Act and WIOA. The customer is attending Trade Act approved training. If the customer travels more than 50 miles one-way between their residence and a training facility, Trade Act allows for transportation reimbursement of \$0.50 a mile with a maximum payment of \$57 a day. The customer travels 100 miles and is in Trade Act approved training; therefore, the transportation reimbursement is \$50 (100 miles @ \$0.50). Local WIOA funding is not used since Trade Act already reimbursed the full mileage.
- The customer is enrolled in Trade Act, WIOA, and a NEG. The customer travels 35 miles one-way; therefore, Trade Act will not pay this expense. Local WIOA policy allows for reimbursement of \$0.25 a mile up to 100 miles. If all of the stipulations of the Policy are met, WIOA would then pay \$17.50 (70 miles @ \$0.25).

## **Pell Grant**

DWD Issuance 12-1999 addresses the “Coordination of all Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) Title I-B programs with programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act including the Pell Grant Program.” This Issuance should be adhered to when determining funding including Supportive Services.

- Duplicate payments must be avoided when the customer is eligible for both WIOA and other assistance.
- The mix of funds should meet the needs of the customer and be determined based on the availability of funding for either training costs or Supportive Services so that the training can be completed successfully.
- Simply reducing the amount of WIOA funds by the amount of Pell Grant funds is not permitted. The NW Region will obligate funding based on budgets and customer’s unmet need.

**NW WDB Supportive Service Policy Attachment 1  
Need Based Assessment Standards**

- 1. Participants will complete the financial needs assessment annually at a minimum. The participant's expense/income ratio will be calculated. Customers whose expense to income ratio is 85% or higher will be eligible for WIOA supportive services to assist up to 100% of the expense. Participants with less than 85% expense/income ratio will contribute up to 85% of their income to monthly supportive service's needs, WIOA funding may assist with expenses beyond 85%.**

**If the expenses seem excessive or inflated staff may request that the customer to provide documentation of the expenses. If the client claims little or no income they must write an applicant statement explaining their means of support.**

*Example 1: Joe and his family have \$2000 a month income, financial needs assessment shows that the family's expenses are \$1600 a month. This is 80% income/expense ratio*

- Joe has to pay for a \$50 application fee for training, can WIOA help? No, his income to debt ratio is only 80% and he has the excess \$100 to meet the expense/income ratio of 85%.  
(\$2000 x 85% = \$1700 - \$1600= \$100)
- Joe's car breaks down and needs a \$575 transmission, can WIOA help? Yes, Joe will be responsible for \$100, WIOA will assist with \$475.
- Joe requested travel assistance, he travels over 50 miles to school, 3 days a week for the next 4 months. (\$16 x 3 = \$48 per week, \$48 x 4 = \$192 per month)  
Joe contributes \$100 per month in travel, WIOA pays Joe \$92 per month in travel
- Joe's \$100 per month contribution will be subtracted from his monthly supportive service voucher.

*Example 2: Mary and her family have \$1200 a month income, financial needs assessment shows that the family's expenses are \$1100 per month. This is 92% expense to income ratio.*

- *Mary has to pay for a \$50 application fee, can WIOA help? Yes, her expense to income ratio is 92%*
- *Mary does not have a monthly contribution amount*

**OR**

- 2. If customer is eligible for TANF or SNAP in past 6 months (see other tab) they automatically are determined financially in-need of supportive services. The "other tab" must be printed, initialed and dated by staff. For customers that are not eligible for TANF or SNAP in the past 6 months we would use assessment info to determine income/expense ratio from #1.**

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## Guidelines for Supportive Services

The Workforce Development Act is not an entitlement program.

In order for us to monitor our funding, it is important for us to pay expenses within the time frame in which they are incurred, within 45 calendar days. It is also necessary to monitor each semester so we can plan accordingly.

We are not able to obligate tuition and supportive services for more than one semester. Within 3-4 weeks prior to the beginning of each semester, call to arrange an appointment to complete the required documents.

Funding will be obligated on a financial need, first come-first served basis. Supportive services such as childcare and transportation reimbursements are also permissible pending the availability of funding.

The reimbursement policies will be effective from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 and will apply to each participant. Your cooperation will ensure your reimbursement. If you have any questions, please contact us. All assistance is contingent upon available funding.

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Participant Signature / Date

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Parent/Guardian (if applicable) / Date

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Team Member Signature / Date