

WorkLink

WIOA INSTRUCTION LETTER NO.: PY'16-02 (Replaces Revised PY'10-01)

SUBJECT: Local Supportive Service Policy (Adult and Dislocated Worker Only)

ISSUANCE

DATE: November 16, 2016

EFFECTIVE

DATE: November 16, 2016

EXPIRATION

DATE: Indefinite

PURPOSE: The purpose of this instruction is to establish guidelines for providing supportive services for WIOA participants in the local WorkLink Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Area.

BACKGROUND: The goal of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to ensure access for all individuals, of every skill level, the opportunity to pursue the skills, training, and education they need to obtain employment that will lead to financial stability and economic security for themselves and their families. The Act authorizes supportive services for individuals registered in WIOA programs who are receiving WIOA services.

POLICY: The term "Supportive Services" refers to those financial-based or physical accommodations that are reasonable and necessary, and required, in order for a client to participate in activities authorized under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In addition, any adult or dislocated worker who is enrolled and receiving WIOA services may be eligible for supportive services if they are unable to obtain assistance from other programs providing such services. Youth participating in WIOA services should follow the Youth Supportive Service policy. In general, supportive services may include needs-related payments, childcare, transportation, housing assistance, and a variety of other related expenses.

Maximum Allowable Limits

- Supportive Services for adults and dislocated workers are available up to a maximum total of \$3,000 per program year.

The availability of and referral to non-WIOA sources is one of the services that must be made available to adults and dislocated workers through the One-Stop delivery system.

The need for supportive services must be considered when developing the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). **Recipients of supportive services must be considered low-income.** The need for supportive services must be documented in an assessment and in case notes. The case note must document the specific need, the amount to be paid out by the WIOA program, and details regarding a plan for the participant to be self-sufficient if similar situations occur in the future.

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WIOA is a payer of last resort and so only if a participant cannot obtain services by other means should WIOA provide supportive services. Case Managers must document in case notes efforts to access non-WIOA sources to justify providing supportive services through WIOA. It will be left to the discretion of the Case Manager that all non-WIOA sources of funding have been exhausted. Also, WIOA participants must check with local agencies regarding emergency relief funds to address any one-time emergency costs.

I. Budgetary Plan

When participants request supportive services, the Case Manager must assist the participant with a budgetary plan to ensure that the participant has the means to pay for the services in the future. The budgetary plan also justifies the need to provide supportive services. This plan and the justification are kept in the participant's hard file and documented in a SC WOS case note.

Example case note:

John Doe called and stated that he did not have money for gas to attend class on Friday. According to his WIOA application, he is considered low-income. The case manager issued a gas card in the amount of \$25 to the participant in order for the participant to attend class. John Doe and the Case Manager discussed his plan to have gas money for next week's class. The Case Manager provided some suggestions on ways to generate income during his classes. John Doe stated that he will host a yard sale on Saturday and will use the money he earned for gas to attend class next week. John also stated that he has an interview for a part-time position at MacDonal'd's on Monday. He will contact the Case Manager on Tuesday with the results of the interview.

II. Supportive Service Tracking

A Supportive Services Report for each supportive service recipient will be maintained by the SC Works Operator and made available upon request. The SC Works Operator will verify that the maximum amount of funded supportive services is not exceeded. All referrals to partners will be issued through the SCWOS system and a hard copy will be provided to participants.

III. Supportive Service Payment Overview

All supportive service assistance payments issued on behalf of WIOA enrolled participants within the Worklink Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Area will be issued on the basis of an established and documented need, identified as follows:

- a. Supportive Service assistance payments are limited to the amount necessary to satisfy the emergency and permit the WIOA enrolled participants to continue or complete the applicable WIOA activity. Payments cannot exceed \$3,000 during a program year without written approval of the Administrative Entity.
- b. A supportive service need that was identified during Assessment.
- c. A need that is identified due to an emergency occurring after the individual became a WIOA enrolled participant. Payments can only be made toward relief of situations continuing after the individual becomes a WIOA enrolled participant and cannot be made retroactive.

- d. With the exception of transportation reimbursement, all supportive service assistance payments will be issued directly to the vendor providing the needed assistance or service to the WIOA enrolled participants (i.e. childcare provider, automotive repair shop, gas or electric utility company, etc.) Under no circumstances will supportive services assistance payments be made directly to the WIOA enrolled participants.

IV. Who May Receive

Those who may receive supportive service assistance payments include those who meet the following criteria:

- a. Those who are determined low-income, as described in Table 1 of the current WIOA 70 percent LLSIL, as outlined in the current Instruction Letter: Update for WIOA Family Income and Self-Sufficiency Guidelines. **Note:** Initial determination for Supportive Services will be based on low-income status as notated on the Eligibility Determination application for WIOA assistance. If a participant is not low-income at the time of application, a participant may re-apply for supportive services after six months. (WIOA staff should use the same procedures as that of Eligibility Determination to determine low-income.)
- b. Those who are actively participating in a WIOA activity, that requires travel for more than one day in length, for which he or she may not otherwise be able to continue or complete without supportive services assistance. There must be at least one open activity in SCWOS.
- c. Those who have established a supported or documented allowable need for assistance.
- d. Those who have presented documentation or evidence that all other reasonable means for getting non-WIOA assistance/support have been exhausted.
 - i. For childcare assistance – applicant must have proof of ABC Voucher eligibility determination
 - ii. For transportation – applicant must have proof of valid driver’s license
 - iii. For car repairs – applicant must provide two quotes from licensed repair facilities and proof of ownership (i.e., name listed as a driver on insurance, registration, car title, etc.)

V. Allowable Supportive Services for WIOA Participants in Career or Training Services

For both adult and dislocated worker services

Medical Assistance – Limited funding is available to provide medical services required for an individual to participate in intensive services and/or training also to obtain or retain unsubsidized employment. Payments for medical assistance should be made to the provider not the participant. The maximum amount that can be paid per participant is \$500 during participation in the program.

Allowable Medical Assistance

- Pre-employment/training physicals required by an employer or training program
- Immunizations
- Pre-employment drug tests
- Dental extractions and dentures
- Eyeglasses but not contact lenses or any type of eye surgery

- Hearing devices

Work Clothing or Uniforms – Supportive Service funding can be provided for work clothing or uniforms required but not paid by an employer or training program. Clothing and uniforms include steel-toed shoes, hard hats, smocks, etc. Individuals needing general-purpose clothing should be referred to a community clothes bank or other agency. The maximum amount for work clothing is \$250 during participation in the program.

Training-Related Equipment - Pays for training related equipment not already covered, such as books and supplies.

Background Checks – Pays for background checks, such as, motor vehicle records check, criminal records (SLED), etc. when required by the occupation or employer.

Expungements - Assistance for an expungement may be offered in situations where a single offense is prohibiting a participant from obtaining employment and the participant is unable to pay for expungement his or herself. In determining whether or not to provide expungement assistance, the case manager should consider whether or not the participant will be employable upon the conclusion of the expungement process and any career and training services they may be participating in. The following conditions must exist:

1. The participant must first complete the expungement application and submit the expungement application to the solicitor's office. Participant must then provide to the case manager confirmation from the solicitor's office that the offense is eligible for expungement.
2. Assistance is limited to a one-time payment made to the solicitor's office.
3. Assistance is capped at \$500. If total costs of the expungement is more than \$500, participant would need to pay any difference to the solicitor's office and provide confirmation of this payment.

Test fees - Pays for fees related to obtain certification, such as real estate license, driver's license, GED fees, etc. This is only for participants not enrolled in a training activity.

Driver's Training - Pays for driver's training. This does not include CDLs.

One-time Emergency Costs* -

Minor Car Repair - Minor Car Repair should not exceed \$500.00.

Utilities - Pays for electric, water or gas bill. Excludes telephone bills.

Housing - Pays for housing cost, such as rent. Mortgage payments may not be paid with WIOA funding.

*One-time emergency costs exceeding \$1,000.00 must be approved by the Administrative Entity.

Childcare or Dependent Care – Participants who have out-of-pocket expenses associated with attending training/activities may receive childcare assistance. Reimbursements are linked to attendance - if a participant is absent from training, a reimbursement may not be made for that day. For childcare supportive service assistance, vendor agreements and invoices are required documentation that must be kept in the participant's hard file.

\$25 a day for pre-school children

\$10 a day for school-age children 12 years old and younger and for dependent adults

Direct Transportation – If a participant is unable to attend an activity or training because he or she lacks a driver's license and/or access to a car, the case manager may provide or procure transportation. Transportation will be provided temporarily while participants make a transition plan to provide their own transportation. Bus and other fare fees are allowable costs.

Case managers should consider cost when procuring transportation. Public transportation should be utilized when available. Arrangements may be made with other agencies that transport participants and for-profit businesses may be utilized. The grantee should have an agreement with the transportation provider specifying the cost and billing arrangements. Grantees may choose to pay private individuals selected by participants to provide transportation. Prior to using a private individual to provide transportation, the grantee must verify the individual has a valid driver's license and insurance.

Transportation Reimbursement – Participants not receiving direct transportation services may receive transportation assistance to help defray the out-of-pocket expenses associated with activities/training. For those (1) attending approved training full-time, (2) not receiving other transportation funds from partner programs, and (3) traveling more than 10 miles one way to a training provider, reimbursement will be \$10 per day for up to 40 miles, \$15 per day for up to 80 miles, and \$20 per day for up to 120 miles of training attended. An authorized training instructor must sign the attendance sheet prior to reimbursement.

VI. Allowable Needs-Related Payments (NRP) for WIOA Participants in Career or Training Services

For both adult and dislocated worker services – can be received in conjunction with other supportive service payments and is subject to the \$3,000 supportive service cap per year

NRP may be provided to unemployed adults and dislocated workers if the eligible client has been enrolled in an allowable training activity.

NRP are available for adults and dislocated workers who meet the following criteria:

A. Specific eligibility requirements for adults

1. Must be unemployed:

2. Does not qualify for, or has ceased to qualify for, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or unemployment compensation; and
3. Must be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA/TAA.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Needs-Related Payments – Eligible adults and dislocated workers may be certified to receive a needs-related payment in the amount of \$2.50 per hour for active participation in training services (not to exceed a weekly maximum of \$100). Time and attendance sheets are to be used to ensure adequate participation in training services and are to be submitted along with each needs-related payment request. Please note this applies to adults and dislocated workers who do not qualify for the receipt of weekly unemployment insurance (UI) payments or Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) at the point of registration in the WIOA program. Adults and dislocated workers who were receiving UI payments or TRA at the point of registration in WIOA but exhaust such assistance may be certified eligible to receive a *Continuance Needs-Related Payment*.

The amounts to be paid are based on a set rate only for the actual number of hours the client is enrolled and/or participating in a training activity. All documentation and eligibility determination is the sole responsibility of the Intensive Services Provider.

B. Specific eligibility requirements for dislocated workers

1. Must be unemployed; and
2. Have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment allowance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA, and
3. Must be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA/TAA.

Continuance Needs-Related Payment – Eligible adults and dislocated workers who exhaust UI payments or TRA after registration in the WIOA program may receive a weekly payment up to the amount received under UI or TRA for active participation in training services, not to exceed \$100 per week. This may enable the participant to continue receiving the same level of income maintenance as when they first entered the program. The participant must provide proof of the status of their UI or TRA weekly payment amount during the needs-related payment certification appointment. Time and attendance sheets are to be used to ensure adequate participation in training services and are to be submitted along with the needs-related payment request. **NOTE: In order to qualify for this type of needs-related payment, the WIOA customer is required to attend 100% of approved training each week.**

Needs-related payments are not wages but training payments used to assist participants with related costs for participating in training services. Needs-related payments are not subject to tax withholdings.

The case manager and participant must complete the Needs Related Payment Approval to document the need. In the event a waiver is required, this completed form is to be submitted with the waiver request.

VIII. Supportive Services NOT Allowable for WIOA Participants

- a. Legal or punitive services costs, which includes child support or driver's license reinstatement fees.
- b. Payments for food or food items.
- c. Payments for automobile payments, insurance, taxes, and tags.
- d. Personal debt or obligation that occurred before WIOA registration.

ACTION: WorkLink Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Area Grantees must abide by the policy as stated. All staff must be familiar with the policy. All other forms of supportive service requests not listed must be made in writing to the Administrative Entity.

Please copy and distribute this information appropriately within your agency.

INQUIRIES: Direct all inquiries on this Instruction Letter to the WorkLink Workforce Development Board, 1376 Tiger Blvd., Suite 102, Clemson, SC 29631, telephone 864.646.1515, fax 864.646.2814, or e-mail jkelly@worklinkweb.com.



Trent Adker, Executive Director
WorkLink Workforce Development Board

DISTRIBUTION: All WIOA/TAA staff