



# Mississippi Valley Workforce Development Board

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## Support Services Policy

**Approved Date:** August 23, 2021

**Effective Date:** August 23, 2021

**Amended Date:** April 25, 2022

### A. Purpose

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To provide MVWA contractors of WIOA, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth with guidelines and restrictions on supportive services.

### B. Background

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1. Support services are available to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth who meet WIOA eligibility requirements as described below. As WIOA programs are not an entitlement, supportive service payments are made on a case -by-case basis only when determined necessary and allowable.
2. Due to funding limitations, WIOA supportive services are always the last resort.
3. All other sources of funding must be sought first and documented to avoid duplication of services.
4. All attempts to find other supportive service funding and the reasons for needing WIOA funding must be documented in the state case management system.
5. Potential sources for other funding may include state-funded sources, Pell Grants, or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

### C. Eligibility

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1. Supportive services, including needs-related payments, may only be provided to participants who:
  - a. Are participating in Career services or Training services approved by WIOA Title I.
  - b. Are unable to obtain supportive services via their support network or through other programs including community agencies that provide these services; and
  - c. Require those services to enable him/her to participate in WIOA Title I activities.
2. A review of the Adult, Dislocated Worker participant's budget shall be completed to determine need. Details of the budget will be provided into the state case management system. In all cases, staff must review service notes prior to making any supportive service payments to avoid duplicate payments from multiple sources and to ensure the participant has not exceeded any limits set forth in this policy.
3. The supportive service(s) must be necessary for the customer to achieve the goals outlined in their Employment Plan (EP).
4. The Comprehensive and Affiliate Job Centers must keep an up-to-date listing of available community resources (paper and/or electronic) and make available to participants prior to any

WIOA payment for supportive services. Providing information about the availability of, and referrals to, alternate supportive services sources is required by 20 CRF 678.430 (a) (9).

#### **D. Support Payments**

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1. The MVWA has a support cap maximum of \$6,000.00 per participant.
2. The board has a 60-day limit for supportive services after a customer completes training or is no longer participating in an approved WIOA activity, excluding Youth participants.
3. Youth participants are provided support services through follow-up.
4. Following are the allowable types of Support Service Payments and a description of each. Payments may be made directly to vendors on behalf of a participant, or as a reimbursement to the individual unless otherwise noted below.

#### **E. Clothing (CHG)**

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1. Payments for items such as clothes and shoes that are necessary for participation in WIOA Title 1 activities, including interviewing, employment or work experience are allowable.
2. Items such as uniforms and safety equipment are generally allowable. Maximum expenditure is \$300.00 per activity.

#### **F. Dependent Care (DPC)**

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1. The costs of dependent care from licensed daycare providers or from private sources agreed upon by the participant are an allowable expense.
2. Dependent care assistance may be provided to eligible participants who require such assistance in order to participate in a WIOA activity and whose need has been linked to an activity.
3. Dependent care includes child or adult care for which the participant would normally be responsible.
4. If an unemployed parent of the child resides in the home, no childcare support will be provided.
5. DPC payments are paid directly to the participant after verification by the case manager.
6. The case manager will verify:
  - a. the childcare provider form identifying the person(s) for whom they are providing care,
  - b. the provider is not being paid by other sources (or verification of participant co-pay),
  - c. documentation of the days/hours the care is provided, and
  - d. the attendance/progress form from the training provider verifying that the childcare is necessary.
7. Dependent care support should only be used when the participant is not eligible for, or is pending approval of, childcare assistance through DHS/Promise Jobs.
8. A maximum of \$2.50/hour per person or the rate of the provider, whichever is less. \$20/day maximum per person or \$35/day maximum for family.
9. Maximum expenditure is \$1000.00 per participant.

#### **G. Educational Assistance (EST)**

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1. Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, laptops, internet access, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes are allowable.

2. In the event a program participant has been awarded a Pell Grant, the Pell Grant must be applied against the cost of allowable educational expenses before WIOA funds are utilized.
3. Participants that need laptops, internet service, and other supportive services must provide written documentation from the training site indicating the need for these services.
4. The laptop may be retained by the participant after the completion of training and will only be provided one time per participant.
5. Services for internet are limited to the time that the individual is in a training activity.
6. Maximum expenditure is \$1500.00 per academic year.

#### **H. Educational Testing (EDT)**

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1. Assistance with educational testing required for participation in WIOA Title 1 activities is allowable.
2. Some examples of educational testing include, but are not limited to, high school equivalency testing and vocational testing.
3. If required for employment, the costs for licenses and application fees are allowable, examples include nursing boards. Maximum expenditure is \$450.00 per participant.

#### **I. Health Care (HLC)**

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1. Health care assistance can be made available to participants when lack of assistance will affect their ability to obtain or maintain employment, or if it is a requirement of an educational program.
2. Allowable expenses include but are not limited to physical exams, drug tests, and co-pays for prescription drugs.
3. This supportive service should be used only when there are no other resources available to the participant.
4. Maximum expenditure is \$300.00 per participant.

#### **J. Services for Individuals with Disabilities (SID)**

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1. The costs of special services, supplies, equipment, and tools necessary to enable a participant with a disability to participate in an education or employment related activity are allowable.
2. It is not an allowable use of WIOA Title 1 funds to make capital improvements to a training or worksite for general compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
3. Maximum expenditure is \$1000.00 per participant.

#### **K. Transportation (TRN)**

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1. The cost of transportation necessary to participate in WIOA Title 1 activities and services, including job searching and job interviews, is allowable.
2. Assistance can consist of per mile reimbursement, fuel purchase orders, and bus and/or taxi passes.
3. bicycle purchases capped at \$250.
  - a. Bus passes must not be provided for more than 30 days in advance, 1-day bus passes are also allowable.

- a. Maximum mile reimbursement is \$0.23/mile.
- b. Daily travel reimbursements are limited to one round trip per day per activity, capped at \$23.00 per day.
- c. Maximum amount per participant is \$2880.00 paid directly to the individual.
- d. Transportation expenses must be supported with a map from a web mapping service.

#### **L. Housing/Rent/Utilities**

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1. The participant must indicate a need and sign an applicant statement requesting the assistance.
2. Deposits are not allowable since the amount may be reimbursed to a participant at a later date.
3. Payment of late fees or interest charges are not allowable.
4. Required documentation for payment includes a copy of a signed lease with the participant's signature; monthly amount due; and a notice of late payment from the landlord.
5. If the lease is not in the participant's name, an applicant statement must be made explaining the relationship between the participant and person named in the lease.
6. Payments will be based on actual rent expense minus any subsidies.
7. Maximum for rent \$850, maximum for mortgage \$1,000.
8. Rent assistance is limited to one time per household per program year.
9. Utilities are allowed up to \$500 per program year and must be supported by actual bills

#### **M. Car Repairs/Insurance**

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1. Vehicle repair costs may be provided but must be directly linked to an allowable activity.
2. Required documentation includes:
  - a. copy of title or registration showing the client or their spouse, parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle;
  - b. proof of car insurance.
  - c. No cosmetic repairs will be paid using WIOA funds.
3. Vehicle insurance premiums for up to 6 months are also an allowable expense, and is a one-time only payment. Two quotes for repairs are required unless the vehicle has to be towed. Maximum per participant \$1,000.
4. The participant cannot receive mileage reimbursement and vehicle repairs during the same week.
5. If vehicle repairs are paid, no transportation will be paid.

#### **N. Tools or Equipment**

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1. 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.
2. The participant must submit documentation from the employer or training institute that the items are required.
3. The maximum amount per participant is \$500 per enrollment.

## **O. Employment Related Expenses**

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1. Employment related expenses include various fees not covered in other categories that are related to education and/or employment, including licensing, bonding, background checks for work-based learning, and application fees.
2. The cost of required identification documents for education or employment is allowed.
3. The cost of a laptop for a participant doing a remote work-based learning activity is allowed.
4. The maximum amount per participant is \$500 per enrollment.

## **P. Supported Employment and Training (SET)**

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1. Supported Employment and Training payments are allowable to provide individuals requiring individualized assistance with the one-to-one instruction and with the support necessary to enable them to complete occupational skill training and/or obtain and retain competitive employment.
2. SET may only be used in training situations that are designed to prepare the participant for continuing non-supported competitive employment.
3. An example of SET use in conjunction with an occupational skills training would be hiring a tutor to assist with classes.
4. SET may be conducted in conjunction with experiential learning activities.
5. An example of SET use in this situation would be the hiring of a job coach to assist an individual who has been placed in competitive employment.
6. The length of a Supported Employment and Training contract may not exceed six months per enrollment.
7. The service provider must have an established rate for the service and charges must be in the same manner and at the same rate as other entities purchasing similar services.

## **Q. Needs Related Payments**

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1. Needs-related supportive services must be approved by the WIOA Project Director and paid directly to the participant.
2. The maximum for a Need Related Payment is \$500 per participant.
3. Needs Related Payments (NRP) are cash payments to WIOA participants for general living expenses to enable them to continue and succeed in the WIOA Program.
4. NPR's are one of the supportive services authorized by WIOA.
5. Unlike other supportive services, in order to qualify for needs-related payments a participant must be enrolled in training.
6. NRPs are available for the following fund sources:
  - a. Adult,
  - b. Dislocated Worker,
  - c. Out-of-School Youth, and I
  - d. n-School Youth.

## **R. Adult Eligibility**

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1. Participants enrolled in the **Adult program** must meet the following criteria to receive needs-related payments:
  - a. Be unemployed,
  - b. Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation,
  - c. Be enrolled (applied and accepted) in training services under WIOA Title I that has already begun or will begin within 30 calendar days.

## **S. Dislocated Worker Eligibility**

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1. Participants enrolled in **the Dislocated Worker** program must meet the following criteria to receive needs-related payments:
  - a. Be unemployed, and
  - b. Have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or Trade Readjustment Allowance, and;
  - c. Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA Title I 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 6 months; or
  - d. Be unemployed and not qualify for unemployment compensation or Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) under TAA and be enrolled (applied and accepted) in training services under WIOA Title I that has already begun or will begin within 30 calendar days.
2. For dislocated workers, payments must not exceed the greater of either of the following levels:
  - a. The applicable weekly level of the unemployment compensation benefit, for participants who were eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation; or
  - b. The poverty level for an equivalent period, for participants who did not qualify for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying layoff.
  - c. The weekly payment level must be adjusted to reflect changes in total family income, as determined by Local WDB policies.
  - d. At least quarterly, the amount of family income must be reviewed to determine if adjustments must be made in the amount of NRP payments.

## **T. Youth Eligibility**

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1. Participants enrolled in the **Youth program** must meet the following criteria to receive needs-related payments:
  - a. Be unemployed
  - b. Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for unemployment compensation.

## **U. Approval of Support Payments**

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1. A WIOA Project Director and/or Operations Supervisor in each center will be responsible for reviewing and approving support payment request for WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers, and

Youth to ensure all WIOA requirements have been met, and the request is appropriate and to ensure sufficient funds are available.

2. In the event that any supportive service not previously outlined in this policy is requested or requires more than the allowable maximum amount or cap, as stated in policy a waiver may be submitted to the board Executive Director and authorization to exceed the maximum will be awarded on a case-by-case basis. Proper justification must be outlined on the waiver. Written justification from the customer is required prior to making the payment.

#### **V. Related Information**

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N/A

*Equal Opportunity Programs/Employer – Auxiliary aids and services available upon request for individuals with disabilities*