

## SUPPORTIVE SERVICE POLICY

Effective Date: March 17, 2022

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### BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, in Section 129 and 134, defines supportive services as: "services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under this title, consistent with the provisions of this title." While this definition contains some illustrative examples, such examples are not intended to comprise an exhaustive or exclusive list of such services. Under WIOA, rules governing the permissible and/or mandatory provision of supportive services vary by funding stream (adult, dislocated worker, and youth).

### POLICY:

Supportive services are one mechanism available to assist individuals to participate in WIOA program services and/or activities to secure and retain employment. Supportive services are not a participant entitlement. Registration, pursuant to the provisions of the WIOA, is an absolute prerequisite to the provision of supportive services.

For adult and dislocated worker participants under WIOA Title I-B, supportive services may be provided, within the constraints established by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and regulations, to participants in need of financial assistance when:

- 1) the participant is receiving WIOA Title I-B intensive or training services; and
- 2) is regularly attending classes while demonstrating satisfactory progress;
- 3) a 2.0 GPA per semester is required if the participant is enrolled in an applicable training program;
- 4) supportive services are necessary to enable participation in career or training services; and
- 5) the participant is unable to obtain similar services from another source.

Service providers must establish internal controls that result in equitable treatment, maximize allocations, and ensure coordination with, and referral of participants and applications to, other community resources.

For WIOA Title I-B youth participants, supportive services are among the fourteen required program elements and must be available to all registered participants.

As a part of assessment, program staff will determine a participant's need for supportive services and appropriate resources. The employment plan must document supportive services needed to address barriers to an individual's employment goals and how they will be accessed. Alternatives to WIOA-funded supportive services will be sought prior to providing supportive services with WIOA funds.

For the purpose of categorizing and defining participant supportive service limitations, the Region VII WDB recognizes the following three types of support:

## **1. Employability and/or Emergency Assistance**

A participant may receive Employability and Emergency Assistance during program participation, provided that the support is determined necessary to: a) facilitate or continue participation; b) maintain or increase employability; and/or c) assist with meeting emergency needs. When emergency assistance is provided, there must be a reasonable expectation that the assistance will resolve the situation; for example, if rent is paid for one month, there must be a reasonable expectation that the individual will obtain the resources to pay rent for the following months. Assistance may include, but is not limited to, clothing, food, and housing assistance; grooming supplies/services; personal vehicle repair/maintenance; and medical, dental, and optical services.

In most instances, it is desirable for the supportive service payment to be issued to the party providing the supportive service, rather than to the participant. When participants receive cash payments for employability and emergency assistance, receipts may be required to verify that the payments were used for their intended purpose.

Maximum of \$5000 issued per participant

## **2. Child Care Assistance**

Child care assistance is a supportive service provided to participants if it is determined that without it a participant will not be able to participate or transition to employment. Participants will be encouraged to make child care arrangements that they can afford when supportive services terminate.

Childcare assistance may be provided to participants with children twelve years of age or younger. Payment will be based on participant attendance; the applicable rate will be paid for each day of participation. Travel time may be added to the actual hours of participation, when necessary. If the participant is absent, childcare assistance will not be paid.

Childcare assistance may be provided as a reimbursement to the participant or a direct payment to a licensed child care provider. Childcare assistance will not be provided when a competent adult (over the age of 18 years) residing at the same address as the participant is available to provide childcare.

Childcare assistance will be provided at no more than the rate charged by the provider subject to the following maximum rates. These rates are established as maximums, which should be reduced to reflect the participant's circumstances, estimated needs, and other sources of support. Child/dependent care services shall be paid to a licensed vendor unless the vendor is providing services in the participant's home. Exceptions can be made if it is clearly demonstrated that such care is not readily available due to the child's/parent's age or special needs or in instances when there is no appropriate care available in the area. Such exceptions are intended as a temporary measure to allow the participant to engage in program activities until acceptable care can be found.

Maximum of \$5000 issued per participant

Maximum of \$25 issued per participant per day

Requests for childcare payments will coincide with the submission of attendance reports. Program staff will review and endorse timesheets to verify the accuracy of the participant's request for childcare payments for training and work-based activities.



### **3. Transportation/Meals Assistance**

The Eastern Panhandle is a mix of rural and suburban environments. This causes a variety of transportation problems for participants who do not own a vehicle or must travel great distances to and from work or training.

Region VII WDB may provide transportation assistance in the form of bus passes, trip tickets, or a gasoline allowance. Participants will be encouraged to use public transportation when available except when doing so will create costlier problems or major inconveniences. Gasoline vouchers will be used in lieu of direct payment to the participant, except when doing so will create costlier problems or major inconveniences.

Region VII WDB recognizes that some trainings/services may require a participant to provide meals for him/herself during the course of the day or evening.

For the aforementioned reasons listed above Region VII WDB allows participants with a demonstrated need to be issued \$25 per day for transportation/meals.

Maximum of \$5000 issued per participant

Maximum of \$25 issued per participant per day

In order for eligible participants to receive the above supportive service payments he/she must have turned in an approved timesheet signed by his/her instructor.

### **LIMITATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are provided to assist in administering Supportive Services:

- A. Region VII WDB may provide Supportive Services Payments up to \$5000 per participant per twelve months. For participants who are co-enrolled (Adult and Dislocated Worker, Adult and Youth, etc.), the maximum amount remains \$5000.
- B. Daily supportive service payments must not exceed \$40 per day without prior approval from the Region VII WDB Executive Director. Approval will be based on documentation demonstrating a need for Employability and/or Emergency Assistance.
- C. An amount above \$5000 a waiver request must be submitted to the Region VII WDB Executive Director.
- D. Participant files must adequately document that all supportive services are allowable, reasonable, justified, and not otherwise available to the participant and show evidence of collaboration, when feasible. Assessment of the participant's need for supportive services must also be documented in MACC case notes.
- E. Supportive Services cannot be expended before a participant is registered.
- F. Supportive Service Payments will be issued every two weeks on the Friday closest to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- G. Timesheets are due Friday before payments are processed.
- H. Timesheets must be signed by the participant, the instructor and the WIOA Career Coach.

- I. The WIOA Career Coach will scan the timesheets to the WDB office for final approval and processing.
- J. Participants submitting timesheets late will have his/her payments processed in the next payment period. Participants will have three business days past the Friday due date to submit timesheets. If timesheets are submitted more than three business days late they will **NOT** be accepted and payment will **NOT** be issued.
- K. Supportive-Service payments will not be reissued to clients without just cause. No Supportive-Service payments shall be reissued after forty-five (45) days.
- L. Supportive-Service payments will be managed by the Region VII Workforce Development Board.
- M. In the event fraudulent activity is discovered, all payments to the fraudulent party will cease and all funds paid will be recovered. All cases of fraud or suspected fraud will be forwarded to the appropriate legal authorities for prosecution. Supportive-Service Payments have been classified as non-taxable income by the I.R.S.
- N. Any questions or concerns should be addressed to:

Region VII WDB  
Ms. Stacy Swick, Compliance Director  
151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Road Suite 2  
Moorefield, WV 26836

**Right to Reduce or Eliminate Supportive Services:**

The Region VII WDB reserves the right to reduce or eliminate WIOA-funded supportive services in the event funding is reduced or other budgetary constraints exist. In such circumstances, the Region VII WDB would work to determine equitable measures to effect the reduction or elimination, including sufficient prior notice for participants. In no event would a reduction or elimination of WIOA-funded supportive services be retroactive.

**SUPPORTIVE SERVICES WAIVER PROCESS:**

In some unique circumstances, Region VII WDB may be unable to obtain receipts for goods or services. In such circumstances, staff shall investigate the circumstances and document in writing his/her findings and what, if any, corrective action is taken.

On an individual basis, limitations for supportive services may be waived by the Region VII WDB Executive Director or his/her designee. Consideration of waiver requests shall ensure to the extent possible that similarly-situated participants receive similar payments. Copies of the approved waiver documenting the extraordinary circumstances that exist/existed will be maintained in the participant's master record and in the fiscal records.

**Equal Opportunity and Grievances:** The Region VII Workforce Development Board prohibits discrimination in all aspects of the administration, management, and operation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs and activities. Services offered at the Region VII WorkForce WV Career Centers will be provided universally without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief. Individuals may file a complaint or grievance by following the Region VII Workforce Development Board Grievance Procedure Policy, a copy of which will be provided upon request.

**Questions:** Contact the Region VII Workforce Development Board Executive Director, 151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Road, Suite 2, Moorefield, WV 26836. Telephone number is (304) 530-5258. Fax number is (304) 530-5107.

**Expiration:** Effective until rescinded, in writing, by the Region VII Workforce Development Board.



T.J. Van Meter, Executive Director



Date



Layne Diehl, Chairperson Region VII WDB



Date