



## I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for supportive services provided to eligible participants enrolled in WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. This policy ensures that supportive services are allowable, reasonable, and unavailable through other resources. This policy supersedes any previous supportive services policy in the Southeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area (STLWDA).

## II. Background

Under WIOA Section 3(59), supportive services are defined as assistance necessary for individuals to participate in WIOA-authorized activities, including transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments. Supportive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers are further detailed in WIOA Sections 134(d)(2) and (3), and for Youth in section 129(c)(2)(G) and are governed by 20 CFR 680.900 through .970.

Supportive services are available to enrolled individuals who cannot afford the necessary expenses to engage in WIOA activities. For Youth participants, these activities must align with the 14 Youth Program Elements. Not all eligible participants will require supportive services. Supportive services are not an entitlement and must be based on demonstrated financial need. They should also be leveraged with local resources, including co-enrollment with core partner programs.

## III. Instructions

Supportive services should only be provided when other resources are unavailable, as WIOA is considered funding of last resort. Staff must follow these general guidelines:

- **Assessment and Documentation:** The need for supportive services must be evaluated during initial and ongoing assessments and documented in the participant's case file. Participants must demonstrate the need for supportive services in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS).
- **Cost Consideration:** The cost of supportive services must be reasonable and competitive. If multiple options exist, staff must document efforts to select the most reasonable price.
- **Eligibility:** Supportive services must be necessary for participation in WIOA activities and an allowable cost under federal guidelines.
- **Timing:** Supportive services cannot be provided before a participant's IEP/ISS is developed and documented.
- **Coordination:** Supportive services must be coordinated with other federal and local funds, such as PELL and core partner programs.
- **Time and attendance:** Time and attendance records must be maintained to support the provision of supportive services.
- **Duration and scope:** Supportive services are short-term and may be limited in duration and amount.
- **Adult/Dislocated Worker:** Adults and Dislocated Workers may receive supportive services while actively participating in career and training services. Supportive services must be provided prior to program exit.



- Youth: Youth participants may receive supportive services during WIOA activities and the required 12-month follow-up period after program exit. Follow-up supportive services are limited to emergency, short-term needs directly impacting placement outcomes.
- Reimbursement: Expenses will only be reimbursed if requested and approved before the expense is incurred.
- Cost Overruns: If a cost exceeds the approved amount, a modification request with proper verification and justification must be submitted.

## Allowable Supportive Services

- Linkages to community services
- Assistance with transportation (See Guidance Attachment A – Transportation Assistance Guidelines)
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care (See Guidance Attachment B – Child Care Assistance Guidelines)
- Assistance with housing (rent only, no mortgage payments)
- Needs-Related Payments (currently unavailable in STLWDA)
- Assistance with educational testing
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities
- Legal aid services
- Referrals to health care
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear.
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes.
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, test, and certifications
- Other Supportive Services that have not been described in this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis when presented in a written statement of need.

## IV. Documentation Requirements:

Initial and ongoing assessment of an individual's need for supportive services must be documented in Jobs4TN.

Eligible participants must prepare a personal budget to verify they do not have the financial resources to self-pay for the supportive service. Staff shall upload the budget into the participant's Jobs4TN record with the supportive service request packet. When an individual's budget does not change since receipt of previous supportive service, staff need only case note this, and a new budget need not be uploaded.

Each supportive service provided to a participant will have an activity code and corresponding case note recorded in Jobs4TN. Recurring supportive services paid out during a training term, such as transportation and childcare, can be entered as a single activity code with an obligated amount



aligned with the total anticipated funding to be spent, with case notes attached each time a service against that budget is requested. Case note will include justification for the supportive service that includes explanation of how the funding is necessary to complete the participant's IEP/ISS, explanation of attempts to acquire funding through other community organizations, description of what is purchased, who is being paid, initial requested amount and actual amount spent, and the outcome of the supportive service request (exam scores, receipt of service date, reason why request was made and not ultimately paid, if applicable, copy of check, bus pass, etc.).

Eligible participants must provide a written statement of need along with any requested supporting documentation for supportive services to be paid directly to the participant.

1. Needs Assessment: The participant's need for supportive services must be documented in Jobs4TN through both initial and ongoing assessments.
2. Budget Submission: Participants must submit a personal budget verifying their inability to self-pay. The budget must be uploaded with the supportive service request. If the budget has not changed since the last request, a case note will suffice instead of a new budget.
3. Written Statement of Need: Participants must provide a written statement of need with supporting documentation if services are paid directly to the participant.
4. Activity Code and Case Notes: Each supportive service must have an activity code and corresponding case note in Jobs4TN. Recurring services (e.g., transportation, childcare) may be entered as a single activity code with an anticipated funding amount, with case notes added each time services are used. Case notes must include:
  - Justification for the service
  - Attempts to obtain funding from other sources
  - Description of purchases and recipients of payment
  - Requested vs. actual amounts spent
  - Outcomes (exam scores, receipts, etc.)

All documentation requirements must be kept in accordance with the LWDBs **Electronic Case Files Guidance**

### **V. Unallowable Support Services:**

Support services may not cover expenses incurred before WIOA enrollment. Examples of unallowable services include, but are not limited to:

- Fines, penalties, and late fees
- Entertainment, including tips
- Contributions and donations
- Vehicle or mortgage payments
- Refund deposits
- Alcohol or tobacco products
- Pet-related expenses
- Items to be purchased for family or friends
- Out-of-state job search and relocation expenses if paid by the prospective employer



## **VI. Funding Limits:**

The total amount of supportive services awarded to each participant is based on individual financial need and must directly connect to the objectives in the participant's IEP/ISS.

Total lifetime supportive services per participant shall not exceed \$1,500. This limit does not reset upon re-enrollment.

Training-related expenses included in an Individual Training Account (ITA) are not allowed to be covered as a supportive service. ITA-related expenses may include tools, admission fees, and course materials.

## **VII. Duration Limits:**

Participants receiving supportive services for training can receive them on a semester-by-semester basis through training completion or until they stop attending.

Participants receiving supportive services for career and employment-related activities are eligible for up to three months of services, with an option for a three-month extension based on documented needs in the participant's IEP/ISS.

## **VIII. Availability of Funds:**

All services under WIOA are subject to the availability of WIOA funds and Local Board policy.

## **IX. Exceptions:**

Requests exceeding funding or duration limits require prior approval. Participants must submit these requests in writing, with justification and supporting documentation.

## **X. Priority of Service:**

Participants facing significant barriers to employment, such as recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient, are prioritized for supportive services. Refer to the LWDA's *Priority of Service for Adults, Veterans and Eligible Spouses Policy* for more details.

## **XI. Duplication of Services:**

Funds for supportive services should be used efficiently, avoiding redundancy by using all available resources, including private, community, and faith-based organizations. Co-enrollment in partner programs should be maximized to leverage resources for participant benefit. See LWDA's *Co-Enrollment Policy* for best practices.

Enclosures:

Attachment A – Transportation Assistance Guidelines

Attachment B – Child Care Assistance Guidelines



# Supportive Services Policy

Effective Date: 3.14.18

Revised Dates: 6.9.2021, 12.10.2024

Duration: Indefinite

**AUTHORIZED BY:**

Michele Holt, Director, Workforce Development

12/10/2024

Date

**APPROVED BY:**

Marshall Graves, Chair, Workforce Development Board

10 DEC 2024

Date

*Supportive Services Policy, Effective Date 3.14.2018, Revised Dates 6.9.2021, 12/10/2024*

## **Supportive Services Policy– Attachment A Transportation Assistance Guidelines**

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### **Transportation Assistance may be provided to participants who:**

- live at least ten miles (one way) from the training site AND can demonstrate the need to receive such services by providing a written statement for the file  
**AND**
- who are entering **WIOA sponsored training services** or who are actively participating in **WIOA approved training services**

### **Expectations of WIOA Participants:**

- Participant must submit an Attendance Verification Form on a monthly basis. Attendance Verification Forms must be submitted to the American Job Center by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month. **Forms received after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month may not be paid.**
- Participants must complete Attendance Verification Forms in **blue or black ink only.**
- Participants must maintain satisfactory progress while in training to remain eligible for all WIOA services including transportation.
- Participants must maintain **monthly contact** with the Title I Career Service Staff to remain eligible for all WIOA services including transportation.

### **The following restrictions shall apply to transportation assistance:**

- Title I Career Service Staff will determine eligibility to receive transportation assistance on a semester by semester basis. Eligibility is based on the participant's status at the time of the request as well as the availability of funds. Therefore, eligibility to receive transportation assistance for a particular semester does not guarantee eligibility to receive transportation assistance for future semesters.
- Title I Career Service Staff will update and assess the participant's residency, training site, financial need and academic status each semester in order to verify continued eligibility to receive transportation assistance.
- Title I Career Service Staff will verify the participants current address prior to submitting an SSR for approval by collecting two forms of identification (Drivers License or State Issued ID **AND** Utility Bill, Voters Registration Card or Documentation from a State/Federal agency validating the address). Both forms of ID should have the same address and match the address in VOS. Title I Career Service Staff should MapQuest driving directions to verify that the customer lives 10 or more miles one way from their residence to the training site. Both forms of ID and the MapQuest print out should be attached to the approved copy of the SSR in the file.
- Title I Career Service Staff must submit an SSR each semester/quarter to request continuation of transportation assistance (*after verifying the customer's current address and distance from the training site by following the process above*).
- Payments will be made based on a monthly Attendance Verification Form submitted by the participant and approved by the appropriate authorized staff.
- Payments will be terminated for participants upon completion of training or at the point they are no longer attending.

- Payments will not be made to participants who fail to reply to requests for communication from Title I Career Service Staff.
- Payments may be terminated if the participant fails to follow the proper procedures for submitting the Attendance Form.
- Transportation payments will be made in the amount of **\$10.00 per day** of classroom attendance and may not exceed **\$50.00 per week**.
- **All supportive services offered through WIOA are contingent upon the availability of funds and may be discontinued at any point.**

**Job Search Transportation Assistance may be provided to participants who:**

- Are actively engaged in **job search activities** which require them to travel from home to a place of business to submit an application, attend and interview or provide any required information for a potential job placement (drug screens, background checks, etc). This can include daily visits to the Resource Room for internet based job search activity.
- All job search transportation assistance will be approved on a case-by-case basis, may be offered for up to **6 months**, and will be reimbursed monthly at a rate of **\$10.00 per day** with a maximum of **\$120.00 per month (12 days per month)**.
- Job search participants will be required to provide a job search log form to the Title I Career Service Staff with the Attendance Verification Form.

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I have read the Transportation Assistance Guidelines and understand the expectations required of me in order to receive this service.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Supportive Services Policy– Attachment B Childcare Assistance Guidelines**

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**Child Care Assistance is a Supportive Service. In addition to the current Supportive Service policy, the following conditions apply:**

**Child Care Assistance may be provided to customers who:**

- Have dependent children in need of child care
- AND**
- Are actively participating in **training services**

**Expectations of WIOA Customers:**

- Customers must submit a receipt of child care payment on a monthly basis. Receipts must be submitted to the Career Center within 3 business days of the time period end date.  
**Receipts for payment received after the 3<sup>rd</sup> business day may not be paid.**
- Customers must maintain satisfactory progress to remain eligible for all WIOA services including child care
- Customers must maintain **monthly contact** with their Career Service Coordinators to remain eligible for all WIOA services including child care

**The following restrictions shall apply to child care assistance:**

- WIOA staff will determine the amount of time that the customer will receive child care assistance.
- WIOA staff will periodically review the customer's financial and academic status in order to verify customers continued eligibility to receive child care assistance.
- WIOA staff must submit a new SSR each semester/quarter to request reimbursement for child care assistance
- Payments will be made based on receipts submitted by the customer and approved by the appropriate authorized staff.
- WIOA staff reserves the right to terminate child care payments to customers who fail to follow requirements of the WIOA program.
- Child care payments will be terminated when a customer stops attending training as outlined in the WIOA Individual Employment Plan. (Customer drops out of training)
- Child care payments will not be made to customers who fail to reply to requests for communication from WIOA staff.
- All supportive services offered through WIOA are contingent upon the availability of funds and may be discontinued at any point.
- Any child care service not outlined in this document must receive WIOA Assistant Director approval.

***I have read the Child Care Assistance Guidelines and I understand the consequences of failing to abide by the statements listed above.***

Customer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_