

Local Policy 2024-08, Change 1 Local Workforce Development Area 2 (LWDA2) Supportive Services

Purpose: This policy provides guidance and context for providing supportive services, as well as the requirements for issuing these services to participants.

Recission: Local Policy 2024-08 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Supportive Services

References:

- DWD Policy 2021-02 *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Supportive Services* (All references within this policy are included by default)

Change Summary:

- Policy now includes references

Content:

Title I of the WIOA provides for the use of supportive services for individuals participating in Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services. Supportive services are provided to participants when it is necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in activities authorized under WIOA. Supportive services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Assistance with transportation;
- b) Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- c) Assistance with housing;
- d) Needs-related payments;
- e) Assistance with educational testing;
- f) Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- g) Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items such as work boots, eyeglasses, protective eye gear, and other personal protective equipment;
- h) Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items, such as electronic devices, for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
- i) Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

Needs-Related Payments

Needs-Related payments provide financial assistance to eligible participants for the purpose of enabling them to participate in training. The Northern Indiana Workforce Board (NIWB) requires that staff ensure eligibility is established and documented for each participant. Additionally, the payment level for the program should not exceed the approved amount of \$500.00 annually.

Unlike other supportive services, NIWB only allows needs-related payments to eligible WIOA participants who are enrolled in training or accepted in a training program that will begin within 30 calendar days.

NIWB requires that case managers review eligibility requirements and inform the participant that they (participant) are required to report any changes to their employment status and/or eligibility for unemployment compensation or Trade Readjustment Assistance.

Incentives

Supportive services must **not** be used as incentive payments for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. Incentive payments are allowable for youth participants in recognition of achievements directly tied to training activities and work experiences.

Provision of Supportive Services

Supportive services may only be provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers who are participating in career or training services authorized under WIOA and who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. NIWB requires that participants are provided accurate information about the availability of supportive services, as well as referral to such programs.

A participant who is receiving follow-up services cannot obtain supportive services, unless they are a youth participant. Participants can only receive ongoing supportive services if they maintain participation in career services and/or training activities. Supportive services cannot be used to extend the date of completion for career services or training activities.

Determination of Need

Staff must first establish a participant has a financial need of supportive services before they are provided. Supportive services should be used to address the participant's barriers identified through the assessment process. The plan for addressing these barriers, including the provision of support services, must be documented in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP), or their Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Limits to the Amount or Duration of Supportive Services

A supportive service must be reasonable and necessary. Supportive services are not intended to meet every need of the participant. Rather, they provide temporary assistance. NIWB has established limits on the provision of supportive services that must be followed:

- Maximum supportive service amount is \$500.00 annually

- The maximum annual supportive service amount of \$500.00 can be divided into multiple services, to provide support for the customer's current needs, but cannot go over the set amount of \$500.00.
- If determined that the customer will need additional supportive services above the set annual amount of \$500.00, staff must receive approval.

Payment Methods for Supportive Services

NIWB allows for a variety of payment methods such as vouchers, gift cards, or prepaid debit cards for the provision of supportive services, depending on the type of supportive service given. For each supportive service, staff must opt to use a payment method that allows the ability to exercise the highest level of oversight, accountability, and internal controls to ensure the supportive service is used for the intended purpose. For example, transportation assistance could be in the form of a vendor-specific gas card or assistance with uniforms could be provided in the form of a voucher/direct payment to the selected vendor.

Documentation for Supportive Services

As supportive services are paid directly to or on behalf of eligible participants, staff are required to maintain documentation in the approved electronic case management system to demonstrate the need and ensure that funds are allowable and used for the intended purpose. Determination of the participant's need for supportive services should connect to the participant's goals and/or objectives and provide a detailed description of how this supportive service will assist the participant in achieving their goal and/or objectives. Case notes must be provided either confirming that the needed supportive services are not available through other programs or that the urgency of the needed service is such that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the supportive service and create a hardship for the participant, and records of payments.

Supportive Service Process

NIWB requires that subrecipient or subcontractor establish and follow a formal process to distribute supportive services.

For questions, contact:

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