

# **SOUTHWESTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

## **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES POLICY 17-09.5**

### **DATE OF ISSUE**

May 13, 2020

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

May 14, 2020

### **APPLICABILITY**

This applies to Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board (SAWDB), providers of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, out-of-school youth employment, and training services.

### **PURPOSE**

To provide SAWDB contractors of WIOA, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth supportive services with a supportive services policy.

### **BACKGROUND**

To provide the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board (SAWDB) WIOA contractors with a guideline for determining supportive services, the restrictions hereto, and eligibility criteria and procedures for payment of supportive services to participants enrolled into WIOA programs.

To provide guidance regarding the roles of the training institution(s), local Board and/or service providers with respect to tracking certification of participant time, attendance, and other related issues as applicable to payment to supportive services.

### **ACTION**

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Service Providers shall adopt this Supportive Services Policy and forms as referenced herein.

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- A. All WIOA program applicants and participants shall be informed by their case manager of paid and unpaid supportive services available through the local One-Stop system including the One-Stop partners, Service Providers, and any applicable community resources.
- B. Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are: (a) participating in career or training services, to include training in any WIOA program (Title I, II, III, and IV), and other trainings that are not within the WIOA programs (b) unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Additionally, supportive services may only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities.
- C. To ensure successful participation in the appropriate employment or training activities, program staff shall determine the supportive service needs of each individual to be enrolled. Such determination shall be based

on the comprehensive assessment along with the documented justification and approval of supportive services as outlined in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

- D. As a requirement for applying for supportive services, service providers must first explore to see if the needed services are available through other agencies in the local area. Participants shall secure documentation of at least one denial letter from other agencies or a case note in the participant's NMWCOS file showing due diligence. To prevent the duplication of costs and efforts, participants first must exhaust related available services before WIOA services will be authorized.
- E. Service providers will review the participant's need for, and the receipt of supportive services, and will document actions in the participant online files (case note, etc.). Changes in supportive service needs are to be reflected in the assessment Objective Assessment Summary (OAS), and case noted appropriately. Sound case management and timely participant follow ups are essential to ensuring completion of activities, and in meeting IEP goals and objectives.
- F. Authorization of supportive service payments shall be made using the appropriate local board supportive service forms to request approval of supportive service payments for groups of participants. A modification to the supportive services form is required when there are changes in payment amounts or duration.
- G. All required documents must be uploaded in New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (NMWCOS) and appropriate service activity created in NMWCOS; vouchers shall be created at that time. Youth payment of supportive service will be made directly by the youth provider in agreement with the youth contract scope of work. Payments issued shall have copies of the checks uploaded to participant files. For payments issued directly to participants, proof of receipt of payment, such as copy of the check signed and dated by participant and uploaded to the electronic record.
- H. Service Providers are responsible for tracking participant attendance, time keeping, and related duties. For On-the-Job Training (OJT) employers, the reimbursement negotiated in each contract includes time keeping, reporting, and other related duties as specified in the OJT contract.
- I. Provision of paid WIOA supportive services shall be limited to twelve months after the date of WIOA exit.
- J. Supportive services request and payment forms or their subsequent replacements are located on Employnm.com. SAWDB forms shall not be modified without prior written authorization from SAWDB staff.

#### **ALLOWABLE WIOA PAID SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

Transportation and Temporary Shelter Allowable Supportive Services include the following:

##### **Transportation Mileage/Commuting assistance Determination**

To compute distance for transportation assistance, participants may determine actual point-to-point mileage between locations traveled to (i.e. city-to-city, etc.), or the local board may establish a standard methodology. The Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board will allow career and training participants living 25 (rounded to nearest mile) or more miles from the training site to receive \$0.25 per mile for travel for attendance. This need must be verified and documented by the case manager in the participant's counseling record and must be maintained in the participant's online file.

##### **A. Bus Passes**

Bus passes will be provided based on scheduled days and will be supported by a class schedule, work schedule or attendance log. Passes may be obligated for the duration of the training, not to exceed a

semester. Passes may be distributed no more than 30 days at a time. Daily bus passes may be issued for job search; a job search log will be needed to support the voucher.

#### B. Vehicle Repair

Vehicle repair costs may be provided but must be directly linked to an allowable activity. Required documentation includes: 1) copy of title or registration showing the client or their spouse, parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle; 2) proof of car insurance. No cosmetic repairs will be paid using WIOA funds.

The participant cannot receive mileage reimbursement and vehicle repairs during the same week. If vehicle repairs are paid, no transportation will be paid concurrently.

#### Other Supportive Services

##### 1. Background check/finger printing

This service must be work or education related in order for the participant to obtain employment or for admission in post-secondary education. Documentation must include a statement from the employer or educational institution indicating the requirement.

##### 2. Clothing and footwear assistance

The clothing items must be directly related to their occupation goal. Clothing that can be purchased includes uniforms and footwear required as a condition of training or employment. No undergarments, makeup, hair accessories, or personal hygiene items are allowed. Clothing is limited to \$300.00 per program year. The participant must submit proof from the employer or training site the items are required.

##### 3. Tools or equipment

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. The participant must submit documentation from the employer or training institute that the items are required.

##### 4. Rent assistance

The participant must indicate a need and sign an applicant statement requesting the assistance. Rent assistance is limited to one time per household per program year. Deposits are not allowable since the amount may be reimbursed to a participant at a later date. Payment of late fees or interest charges are not allowable. 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.

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.

##### 5. Gas or electric utilities assistance

The participant must indicate a need and sign an applicant statement requesting the assistance. Gas or electric utilities assistance is limited to one time per household per program year. Deposits or startup costs are not acceptable. Required documentation include shut off notice and a service note documenting that the participant attempted to receive this assistance elsewhere but was determined ineligible.

##### 6. Car insurance assistance

Documentation of linkage to authorized activity must be in case note; the participant must complete an applicant statement and indicate a need. Car insurance assistance is limited to one time and only for one-month premium. No pre-payment of premiums is allowable. Required documentation include copy

of title or registration showing that participant or their parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle and invoice from insurance provider.

7. Vehicle registration renewal

Documentation of linkage to authorized activity must be in case note; the participant must complete an applicant statement and indicate a need. Vehicle registration is limited to one time per household. Required documentation includes a copy of renewal letter and proof of insurance showing that the participant or their parent/guardian legally owns the vehicle.

8. Laptop and software purchase assistance

Participants that need laptops, internet service, and other supportive services must provide written documentation from the training site indicating the need for these services. The laptop may be retained by the participant after the completion of training. Laptop assistance may not exceed \$1,000.00 and will only be provided one time per participant. Internet services shall not exceed \$100.00 per month. These supportive services for internet are limited to the time that the individual is in a training activity.

The need for the above services must be necessary and the cost reasonable to the purpose of the program defined by the Service Provider unless otherwise stated.

Other Supportive Services: Supportive services not listed in other sections of this policy may be paid to allow an individual participating in a WIOA or non-WIOA training to obtain or retain employment. Such items include, but are not limited to:

- Medical exams or tests
- State licensing fees
- Application or exam fees
- Government Issued Driver's License
- Government Issued Identification Card
- Government Issued Birth Certificate

#### Temporary Housing/Emergency Shelter

Participants that need temporary housing/shelter - The service provider must document that the service is necessary and that the cost is reasonable. Participants must provide appropriate documentation to verify no other sources of temporary housing/emergency shelter are available.

A. Training Related Short-term Housing Assistance

Short-term housing assistance may be provided to individuals that are attending training more than 60 miles from their permanent residence. The amount paid to the participant shall not exceed the participant's balance of unmet need as reflected on the ITA cost sharing document.

B. Emergency Shelter

Assistance may be provided to participants who are in need to enable them to attend career or training activities. The amount paid must be reasonable and for no more than seven consecutive (7) days.

#### **CHILD CARE**

Childcare assistance may be provided to eligible participants who require such assistance in order to participate in a WIOA activity and whose need has been identified in their IEP. To qualify, participants must have legal responsibility or custody of the children thirteen (13) years of age or younger and must furnish documentation that they do not have any other source available to care for the child(ren), which include immediate family members. Children placed in a licensed day care facility, or with a certified day care provider as verified by the case manager must furnish documentation of a paid receipt in order to continue to receive childcare payment

at this level. A participant may receive thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) per day per child for certified or licensed childcare. Service providers must verify the participant's children's age(s). Days of childcare will be determined by the participant's timesheet.

#### **MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

Minor medical and health care services that may be provided include, but are not limited to:

- A. Physical examinations
- B. Eye and/or ear examinations
- C. Filling of eyeglass prescriptions
- D. Purchase of hearing aids
- E. Purchase of orthopedic devices (must refer to Vocational Rehabilitation)

Other minor medical or health care services not listed herein that are necessary in order for the individual to participate in the program. With the exception of hearing aids, a one-time maximum of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for minor health or medical care services may be provided to participants enrolled in a WIOA funded training activity that require such assistance in order to participate in the program. The participant must provide proof of need (statement from health care or medical practitioner). The participant shall only be eligible for this assistance if he/she cannot obtain such services from other available resources as documented in the participant file by the case manager (i.e. One-Stop partners, local community health care programs, etc.). Payment for services shall be made directly to the vendor or provider upon receipt of billing. Participants shall not be paid directly or reimbursed after-the-fact for these services.

Participants in the "HOLD" status are not eligible to receive payments for this service.

Documentation should be tracked by a case manager in a participant's online file based on their minimum need. The *need* is to be greater than or equal to the amount of supportive services that will be received.

#### **NEEDS-RELATED PAYMENTS**

Needs-related payments provide financial assistance for the purpose of enabling individuals to participant in training and are one of the supportive services authorized by WIOA. Eligibility requirements for adult and dislocated worker to receive needs-related assistance are as follows: §CFR680.950 – 680.990

Adults must:(a) be unemployed due to no fault of their own (b) not qualify for or have ceased qualifying for unemployment compensation (c) be enrolled in a program of training services.

Dislocated Workers must: (a) be unemployed, and (1) have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade adjustment allowance under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA) or the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)-TAA due to no fault of their own, and (2) be enrolled in a program of training services by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed 6 months; or (b) be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade adjustment assistance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA. (c) Needs-related payments may be provided to a participant waiting to start training classes if the participant has been accepted to a training program that will begin within 30 calendar days. Local boards may submit a written request to the SAE for a 30-day extension to this time limitation to address appropriate circumstances.

### **DETERMINATION OF THE LEVEL OF NEED-RELATED PAYMENTS §680-970**

The level of needs related payments shall be determined as follows:

- A. The level for adults will be the same as the level for dislocated workers
- B. For dislocated workers, payments must not exceed the greater of either of the following levels:
  - 1) For participants who were eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation, the payment may not exceed the applicable weekly level of the unemployment compensation benefit for the participant's situation (such as working at spot jobs or part time) or
  - 2) For participants who did not qualify for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying layoff, the weekly payment may not exceed the poverty level based on family size for an equivalent period. The weekly payment level must be adjusted to reflect changes in total family income.

Supportive Services for Youth Supportive services are one of the 14 required program elements for youth and shall be made available to all WIOA youth participants, and may include the following: A. Linkages to community services

- B. Assistance with transportation costs
- C. Assistance with childcare and dependent care costs
- D. Assistance with housing costs E. Referrals to medical services
- F. Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tool costs, including items such as eyeglasses and protective eye gear.
- G. Needs related payment for youth 18-24 years of age

#### **Other Types of Supportive Services Not Listed in this Policy**

Contingent upon the availability of funding, other types of supportive services may be provided based on the need of the participant. The need for such services must be necessary and the cost reasonable to the program,

#### **Waivers**

A waiver may be requested for a supportive service that will exceed any monetary limits listed in this policy. The waiver must demonstrate the need and that the cost is reasonable. The waiver must be submitted to the administrative entity of the local board for approval.

### **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PAYMENT PROCESS**

Timesheets need to be completed and sent to the Fiscal Agent's office following the WIOA supportive service payment schedule developed by the Fiscal Agent.

- A. Fiscal Agent processes timesheets for payment
- B. Payment is then sent to the Workforce Connection Center office

### **DIRECT PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS**

The appropriate Supportive Services Request and Approval forms shall be used to authorize supportive services payments for participants. Supporting payment documentation e.g. timesheets, paystubs and receipts shall be uploaded in NMWCOS.

**PAYMENT TO VENDORS AND SERVICES PROVIDERS**

For payment to vendors and providers of medical care, and other health care services, the supportive service forms approved by the SAWDB are available at [www.employnm.com](http://www.employnm.com).

**GENERAL LIMITATIONS**

A. Time Limits

For eligible Adults and Youth, supportive services may be provided for a period of time required to complete the IEP objectives; however, shall not exceed the participation time limitations established in the Southwestern Area plan or board policy.

B. Budget Limitations

The amount and types of supportive services in each local area is based on funding available to the local boards. No supportive services in any WIOA title is to be considered an entitlement. C. Participants in "Hold" Status.

Participants who are in a "hold" status, for whom continued training is scheduled, will not be eligible for health care and minor medical services, group services and/or other supportive services that are not paid directly to the participant during this "hold" status.

**SERVICE PROVIDER AND TRAINING INSTITUTION TIME AND ATTENDANCE REPORTING AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES/ROLES**

Service providers are responsible for overall tracking and reporting on participant activities as specified in their sub grants or contracts. They are also responsible for coordinating with area training institutions on time and attendance for those participants concurrently enrolled in classroom training, WE, OJT, or enrolled in a customized training activity and receiving supportive services. As part of the ITA agreements, training institutions are required to track and report participant time and attendance. In order to help defray some of the administrative overhead associated with additional responsibilities including item keeping and reporting, training institutions may charge a reasonable administrative cost normally charged for performing related functions. WE and OJT employers are responsible for tracking/reporting time and attendance of participants assigned to them. WIOA program staff shall be available to assist employers as necessary.

**INQUIRIES**

Questions related to this policy should be directed to the Administrative Entity at (575) 744-4857.

**ATTESTED**

This policy was reviewed and approved by the SAWDB on: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
SAWDB Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date