

Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board Policy

Policy Name	Supportive Services
Effective Date	June 7, 2017
Date Approved by the Board	June 7, 2017

The term “supportive services” means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing and needs related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate and be successful in activities authorized under WIOA.

Supportive Services may be the key to assisting the hard-to-serve participants enrolled in WIOA programs. There are numerous agencies and programs providing health care, temporary shelter, financial counseling, transportation, childcare and other support, which are well suited to customer needs. WIOA staff will make referrals to other programs prior to providing supportive services with WIOA funds. When no other services are available they will make a request to a supervisor to provide services. Staff must document that the participant has exhausted all other means of providing the supportive services requested by completing a verification form.

Continued eligibility – at a minimum each semester staff will revisit a participant’s need for continued supportive services and will document that the review has occurred and the results of that review.

Supportive services are designed to provide a participant with the resources necessary to enable their participation in career and training services, are governed by the DOL-only Final Rule at 20 CFR 680.900 through .970.

Supportive services may be available to any youth, adult or dislocated worker participating in Title I career services or training activities who is unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Supportive services may NOT be provided to an adult or dislocated worker participant once they exit WIOA program or during follow-up. This does not apply to youth participants. They may still receive supportive services during follow-up if it is deemed necessary and appropriate.

Supportive services may include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-Related Payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and must be consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960 and 680.970);
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes;

- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; and
- Legal aid services;

Needs Related Payments -

To receive needs-related payments, individuals must be unemployed and must not qualify for (or have ceased to qualify for) unemployment compensation.

A request for needs related payments must be presented to a supervisor for approval. Once the request is received a determination will be made by the supervisor whether the participant is eligible to receive in accordance with federal regulations and guidance.

The law is very specific to Dislocated Workers eligibility and how payments are calculated and those guidelines will be followed.

The amount of weekly payment an Adult participant may receive will be calculated using the following formula: HHS poverty level based on the number in the household divided by 52 weeks will determine the eligible weekly payment amount.

Example: Family size of 2 poverty level is \$16,020 divided by 52 = weekly amount of \$308.08.

Definitions and approved services including initial limits. (Limits can be exceeded with management approval based on a participants needs).

- A) **Clothing**
The costs of items such as clothes and shoes which are necessary for participation in WIOA training activities are allowable. A \$150 limit per participant for employment training related or interview clothing is allowed. A \$350 limit for participants enrolled in classroom training activities which require uniforms is allowed.
- B) **Counseling**
The costs of personal counseling services that will enhance a participant's employability are allowable. This may include employment, financial, individual, family, and drug and alcohol abuse counseling. Generally, major personal or emotional problems are outside the scope of WIOA services, therefore referrals to counseling services are critical. A limit of \$200 per participant will be implemented for personal counseling.
- C) **Childcare**
Agreements can be made with licensed childcare facilities for participants who do not qualify for childcare assistance through other sources. The maximum amount to be paid by WIOA fund will be in accordance with comparable rates in the area which the participant lives. Total amounts per participant will be approved by the supervisor.
- D) **Residential**
The cost of rent, house payments and utility assistance may be provided in extreme cases where participants are in danger of losing their housing or having utilities disconnected. A secure nighttime residence is essential to the success of our participants. A limit of \$600.00 per participant will be implemented for housing or utilities. In cases where supportive services are paid instead of paying ITA cost this limit may be increased with management approval.

Training programs require some participants to be away from their nighttime residence in order to complete training. An example of this is traveling to another city to complete a rotation required for clinical training for an RN student. This is an allowable supportive service and staff is required to find the most economical means of hotel charges for the participant. This activity is not included in the \$600.00 limit. It is based on need and the requirement for overnight stay because of distance to training.

E) Health

The health category includes such items as vaccinations or physicals required for a participant to enroll in a particular training program. It may also include things such as one time dental work or eye glasses if not otherwise available from another source. A \$400.00 limit applies to this category.

Insurance – Health related insurance may be purchased for a participant if it is a requirement for participation in training activities. A \$400.00 per participant limit applies to this category.

F) Transportation

The cost of transportation to assist participants to get to and from training activities including job search activities is allowable. Participants will be given a limit based on a locally developed formula. The formula is distance to training x 2 x number of days per week divided by miles per gallon x a set price per gallon of gasoline. We will use gas cards or agreements with service stations as a method of providing assistance. On occasion staff may use the purchase card to provide assistance to a participant who lives in a rural area. Signed gas receipts will be used to verify what participant received the service. Other methods that are reasonable will be worked out by management staff if needed. The dollar limit for this service will vary based on participant need.

Tires and car repairs may be made with management approval if the participant cannot participate in training without this service. Participants will contribute a portion of such cost when possible. This service requires management approval and the amounts will vary based on participant need.

The process for paying supportive service varies based on the availability of vendors. Wal-Mart cards and purchase cards may be used when needed. OneDrive will be used to track all purchases and signed receipts will be on file.

G) Emergency Food – Under extreme circumstances staff may purchase food for a participant at a restaurant or grocery store; for example a youth participant who has no funds to purchase lunch during their work or training day. These limits will be approved case by case basis with management approval.

H) Needs related payments will be awarded only when the provision of the other supportive services does not provide the assistance a participant needs. The forms are an attachment to this document. WIOA regulations will be followed when providing this service.

I) Other services may be provided if allowable within WIOA and regulations with management approval as situations arise.

Assistance with educational testing – for example testing fees required for an LPN license

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities; - for example an amplified stethoscope may be needed for a participant who is hearing impaired and enrolled in LPN training

Health care – insurance premiums may be paid after all other health care options have been exhausted and the coverage is a requirement to attend a training program. Examples include preventative and corrective care necessary to enter training; participate in training, to be employed or to retain employment. Drug and alcohol treatment are not included in this body of health care. Glasses, dental corrections, etc., may be required to be employable or to complete training. Treatment not covered by medical insurance or program elements may be provided to a trainee or employee in some cases.

Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear; - must be a requirement for the job or the training program and not just a nice to have item.

Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes; - must be a requirement for the training and not just a nice to have item.

Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; - for example a background check required for entrance into a training program or a CDL text packet required for entrance into a truck driving program.

Legal aid services – for example, payment of a minor offense so a participant may retain or obtain a driver's license.