

Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board (CWMWDB) General Policies and Procedures	
Policy: Stipends for Adult/DW through NRP	EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/10/2024
Approved by: CWMWDB	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for CWMWDB's service provider when considering stipends for participants in WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as well as participants in WIOA's National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG).

II. Background

It has become evident that adults who participate in Adult, Dislocated Worker, and NDWG programs often need support while enrolled in short term, occupational skills-based training. The use of a stipend, to offset living costs, can incentivize adults to participate and complete a training program that would increase their ability to find a good job in a high wage, in-demand occupation. For this reason, CWMWDB is creating a policy to enable service providers to award, if funds are available, stipends for WIOA participants who attend short-term (15 weeks or less), occupational skills-based training, pre-apprenticeships, or work-ready programming. Although there is specific reference in the WIOA final rules regarding stipend payments to youth, there is no similar reference to stipends for adults and dislocated workers. However, Needs-Related Payments (NRPs) can provide financial assistance to eligible adults and dislocated workers for the purpose of enabling them to participate in training programs, and are one of the supportive services authorized by section 134(d)(3) and section 170 of WIOA.

IV. Stipends for Adults

Needs-Related Payments (NRPs) may be provided, as a part of support services, to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and individuals enrolled in National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) funds based on the following:

A. Eligibility for Needs-Related Payments

Participants must meet all financial and non-financial requirements, as set forth in law, regulation and policy, to be eligible to receive NRPs.

Adult NRP Eligibility

To be eligible for NRPs, an adult must:

- Be unemployed;
- Be ineligible for or ceased to qualify for Unemployment Compensation (UC); and
- Be enrolled in a program of training services under section 134(c)(3) of WIOA.

Dislocated Worker NRP Eligibility

To be eligible for NRPs, a dislocated worker must:

- Be unemployed;
- Be ineligible for or ceased to qualify for UC or TRA; and

- Be enrolled in a program of training services under section 134(c)(3) of WIOA within the timeframes described below.

The dislocated worker must be enrolled in a program of training services by the end of the 13th 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 8th week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed 6 months.

B. Level of Payments and Conditions

Reasonable stipend payment amounts for pre-apprenticeship and work readiness training can be agreed upon between service provider and pre-apprenticeship, work readiness programs.

Adults

By federal standards, the level of NRP made to adults may not exceed the equivalent weekly amount of the local area's annual 100 percent LLSIL for a family of one. However, for the purpose of this region and limited funding resources, the level of NRP will not exceed \$1500 for the duration of enrollment.

Dislocated Workers

The level of NRPs for participants may not exceed the following:

1. For participants who were eligible for UC and who are no longer receiving benefits, the weekly payment may not exceed the applicable weekly level of the UC benefits; or
2. For participants who did not qualify for UC as a result of the qualifying layoff, the weekly payment will be equal to the poverty line based on family size and income for an equivalent period.

The above are federal regulations, however for the purpose of this region and limited funding resources, the level of NRP will not exceed \$1500 for the duration of enrollment.

Weekly or biweekly NRPs may begin on the Monday after both eligibility and training enrollment criteria have been met without requiring proration of the benefit amount for a partial week of eligibility.

Note: Documentation verifying all UC or TRA payments, the amounts paid, and that the participant is no longer receiving benefits, must be maintained in the participant's WIOA program case file.

C. Training Services

All training must be on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Types of training that qualify a participant for NRPs may include:

- Occupational skills training;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
- Training programs operated by the private sector, as long as they are on the ETPL;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;

- Job readiness skills;
- Adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with any other training service listed above; and
- Customized training with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

E. Termination of NRPs

NRPs must be terminated for a recipient who:

1. Notifies the service provider that he or she no longer plans to attend the training classes;
2. Fails to attend or stops attending the training classes;
3. Fails to maintain a full-time training schedule as defined by the training provider;
4. Begins to qualify for TRA or UC benefits;
5. Becomes employed; or
6. Dies or becomes incarcerated, institutionalized, physically incapacitated, or otherwise unable to participate in current or future training services.

If a recipient's eligibility for NRPs was based on his or her false claims, provision of fraudulent documentation, or failure to disclose information affecting NRP eligibility within the CWMWDB area's reporting time limit, the recipient may be held liable for repayment of NRPs received in error.

Under no circumstances will recipients be required to pay back NRPs that were issued incorrectly through no fault of the recipient, such as if the recipient reported changes resulting in termination of his or her NRPs within the local area's reporting time limit but the subsequent payment(s) could not be stopped in time.

Recipients who disagree with the decision to terminate their NRPs may file a programmatic complaint in accordance with the local area's WIOA complaint process. The initiation of the programmatic complaint process or subsequent appeal process, if applicable, shall not require continuation or reinstatement of the terminated NRPs by the local area. However, if it is determined during the complaint resolution or appeal process that the recipient/complainant was eligible for NRPs for some or all of the benefit weeks after NRPs were terminated, then payments for those missed benefit weeks shall be issued retroactively. The complaint resolution and appeal process shall also address the complainant's potential eligibility for reinstatement of NRPs for future benefit weeks.

V. References

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128.

20 C. F. R. §§ 680.930 – 680.970.

USDOL, Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16, Guidance on Services provided through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for implementation of the WIOA Final Rules (March 1, 2017).

USDOL, Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 02-15, Operational Guidance for National Dislocated Worker Grants, pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA or Opportunity Act) (July 1, 2015).

Direct Inquiries:
Executive Director
Central/Western Maine WDB
87 Winthrop Street, Suite 400
Augusta, ME 04330
207-446-3052