

Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board (CWMWDB) General Policies and Procedures	
Policy: WIOA & DWG SUPPORT SERVICES	EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/16/2016 <i>Review Date: 9/17/2018</i>
Approved by: CWMWDB	

Background:

Supportive services are allowed for youth, adults and dislocated workers are defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA, enacted January 3, 2014 **sec. 134 (3) (c) (2) (ix) (1) and sec. 129 (c) (2) (G)**. They include services such as transportation, child-care, health care and medical services, general clothing, relocation assistance, and other support payments. WIOA and NEG Service Providers are required to adhere to all policies and guidelines set forth in the policy below.

**General Supportive Service Policy Guidelines for Formula WIOA Programs
(Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)**

1. The provision of accurate information on the availability of Supportive Services and the referral process through the CareerCenter must be made available to adults and dislocated workers. [WIOA Section 134 (d) (2) (H) and WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR Part 680.900 and 680.910]
2. Supportive Services are services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and other related payments based upon the necessity to complete employment, education, and training goals established in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS), availability of funds, and are for expenses that are not available from other available sources (such as General Assistance (GA) or the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)). Supportive Services are those deemed necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I including during follow-up. Supportive Services are under no circumstances the same as Needs-Related Payments [NRPs] and may not be considered or coded as such. A separate Needs-Related Payments Payment Policy governs NRPs and may be considered by the LWDB if implementation becomes necessary.
3. Supportive services may be in-kind aid, cash assistance, or services payable through arrangements with other agencies. Except under emergency/exceptional circumstances (with documented approval of the Case manager's supervision), Supportive Services are provided directly to an organization/entity which has issued a dated invoice/bill/statement filed together with all supporting documentation and record of payment in both the customer's physical file and noted as part of the customer's case notes recorded in the Maine Job Link (MJL) operating system.
4. Under WIOA Supportive Services may only be provided to adults and dislocated worker participants who are:
 - Participating in individualized career services or training services, and

- Unable to obtain support services through other programs providing such services. [WIOA Section 134 (B) (2) (A) and (B)]

5. Under WIOA Supportive Services may not be provided to adults and dislocated worker participants who have completed individualized career or training services and have exited the program. WIOA sec. 134 (d) (2).

6. When more than one supportive service need exists for a participant, WIOA program providers are only to pay for the least expensive appropriate supportive service option provided that is accessible to the participant.

7. The participant's family income that falls below the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) guidelines will be given priority to receive supportive services. Although National Emergency Grants (NEGs) and Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker programs are exempt from the LLSIL requirement, approval of supportive services is not based on entitlement but rather the services that are reasonable and necessary for the participant to complete her/his reemployment and/or retraining goals.

8. Tools, uniforms, and other items that are requirements of a training program in which the participant is duly enrolled will be covered under "Training" expenses and not under Supportive Services.

9. The Central/Western Maine Workforce Development Board [CWMWDB] has developed with its Regional Managers' Team guidelines for the use of Supportive Services by its subcontracted service providers in Area III. Amounts (and categories) listed in Appendix A are subject to change upon agreement between Area III Regional Managers and the LWDB as a result of an annual review.

10. The CWMWDB in consultation with Area III CareerCenter Managers has determined that all Supportive Services, excluding books, may not exceed \$3,000.00 per participant per year, starting at the date of the first supportive service (s) with a limit of two successive years. Books, by themselves, may not exceed \$2,000.00 per year starting at the date of the first supportive service (s) with a limit of two successive years. Any exception to the upper limit of these amounts or to covering expenses past two years must be reviewed by the CareerCenter Manager and approved in writing by the Executive or Deputy Director of the CWMWDB. Other financial aid that customers are able to secure such as a Pell Grant or other grants will be a factor in determining the amount provided from WIOA funds for Supportive Services. WIOA Supportive Services will be the resource of last resort in reviewing resources for financial support.

11. The CareerCenter Manager reviews and approves use of any and all Supportive Services funds by Staff members on a case-by-case basis, and will provide a signed (or direct e-mail signature) and dated indication of her/his approval, indicating (1) the specific circumstances for providing the support service payment, (2) the specific products and/or services under consideration, and (3) rationale for the provision and amount of any payment determined necessary for continued participation in the participant's training and employment program. The Manager's approval with Staff member's case notes providing rationale and documentation for the approval will be inserted in the participant's physical/paper file(s) and reference to it will be made in the case notes recorded in the Maine Job Link (MJL) operating system.

12. The Supportive Service Policy for Formula WIOA Programs will apply to National Emergency Grants and other specialized grants funded by the US DOL.

13. WIOA Title I funds must not be spent on other adult, dislocated worker or youth services, including supportive services, for incumbent or employed worker unless they also meet the eligibility criteria for those services. [WIOA section 680.780 and 680.790]

Youth Services

For each youth participant, Service Providers will

- Follow the Policy for Supportive Services as outlined above;
- Provide an objective assessment including a review of academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs of the youth, including Supportive Services needs;
- Develop a Basic and Training plan including identification age-appropriate career goals and assessment results; and
- Provide preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for employment, and effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers. [WIOA Section 129 (c) (1) (A) (B) (C)].

Specific Supportive Service Guidelines

Transportation:

- Service providers may use mileage reimbursement (signed travel sheets) or gas cards to support travel to training, existing employment, and/or specific job prospects (interview, testing, orientation, job shadowing, etc.). Provider policies on formula for issuance of gas cards or reimbursement shall be evident and participant receipt(s) shall be clearly documented in case files.
- Bus tickets/ferry tickets are allowable transportation costs.
- Driver's License/Education (Class C) not to exceed \$750.00.
- Vehicle repairs only for required State Safety deficiencies i.e., failure of State inspection are allowed. If tires are needed to pass inspection, only all-season tires will be allowed. Itemized written estimates (at least two) must be documented in the file. Expenses may not exceed \$800.00 as an allowable amount for supportive services. Quotes for written estimates must have an authorized mechanics sign off. Registration and proof of insurance must be with the primary customer; a valid driver's license is also required. Note: this policy may cover costs even if the primary customer is unable to drive but has retained a "driver" for the vehicle to be used for the purposes enumerated above.

Childcare:

- Supportive Service payments for WIOA participants will be based on current DHHS guidelines. Exception: there will be no supportive service payments made to family members for childcare (unless a family member is a licensed childcare provider operating a business and there is prior approval from the CWMWDB.)

Clothing/Uniforms:

- Such items may be covered under support services when they have not been included as part of a training plan. Such items may not exceed \$250 and will be documented as a need related to **training or** employment.

Safety Equipment:

- Such equipment maybe covered if it is required by an employer **or training** and meets established safety standards in order to obtain and retain employment. Examples include steel-toed boots, safety glasses, helmet, safety gloves, etc. Staff must only approve the lowest bid/costs which may not exceed \$250.00. If employers, as part of the normal course of hiring usually supply the safety equipment, then the equipment will not be purchased for the participant as she/he should be treated the same as other new hires.

Tools:

- Supportive service payments for tools must not exceed \$600.00. If the tools are required by the employer to successfully obtain employment, a valid job offer from the employer must be verified prior to purchase. If employers, as part of the normal course of hiring usually supply the safety equipment, then the equipment will not be purchased for the participant as she/he should be treated the same as other new hires. **If tools are purchased for training, they must be required as part of the curriculum. If the training is not completed, the tools must be returned to the service provider.**

Medical:

- Medical supportive services must be a requirement of a training course, employment-related or required for admission into training. Written documentation from a medical professional stating that an eye/hearing exam, glasses/hearing aid, dental work*, or medical equipment is necessary for participation in training and/or employment will be sufficient proof of the need for these services. No-cost clinics and General Assistance must be considered prior to expending funds on medical services. Support may include glasses, eye exams, physicals, inoculations, lab fees, etc. Prescription drugs are NOT an allowable expense. Medical services/equipment is limited to a maximum of \$500.00. Eye exams/eye glasses are limited to a combined maximum of \$250.00. Dental services and supplies are limited to a combined maximum of \$600.00.
- Mental Health/Substance abuse treatments are not covered. Staff will make referrals to appropriate agencies.

Miscellaneous Emergency:

- Emergency needs are items not previously covered under this policy. Documentation must be clear—supporting the need and establishing that the items or services are required to enable the participant to continue her/his activity in the program and/or to obtain or retain employment. Support items in this category shall not exceed \$1,000, which may include up to \$400 in Housing assistance. This category may cover items such as short-term housing (for purposes of emergency/safety) or reconnecting electrical power, for examples. Supportive Services under this category are based upon the necessity to complete employment, education, and training goals established in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS), availability of funds, and are for expenses that are not available from other sources (such as General Assistance (GA), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), food pantries, etc. Insurance coverage costs are not to be covered; insurance may not be purchased as an "emergency" cost.

Any requests in this category will be approved in writing at the Regional Management level of the service provider who will consult with the Executive or Deputy Director of the CWMWDB, who will also indicate approval in writing. Documentation of required approvals will then be filed in the participant's case file and referred to in case notes entered into the Maine Job Link (MJL) operating system.

Licensing and Testing:

- Such items may be covered under support services and may include applications, tests, and certification exams. Such items may not exceed \$250 and will be documented as a need related to training or employment.

Educational Testing:

- Such testing may include testing done by a school or CASAS/TABE testing and may not exceed \$250. It will be documented as a need related to training or employment.

School Materials and Fees:

- Fees* and supplies that are required for students enrolled in postsecondary education. Such items may not exceed \$500. Required supplies must be listed as part of the course syllabus, school policy, or in a letter from the instructor. Any school supplies that are not a requirement of the course such as notebooks, pens/pencils, highlighters, calculators, etc., will not be covered and are the responsibility of the student.

*if fees are included as part of the tuition bill, they may be paid as part of training costs and subject to the ITA policy.

Books for School:

Books may not exceed \$2000 per year and will be documented as a need related to training.

Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks:

- Such item may be covered under support services when it has not been included as part of a training plan. Such item may not exceed \$100 and will be documented as a need related to employment. *

Computer/Software Purchase:

- If a participant does not have reasonable access to a computer or software of sufficient capacity required for employment or training, then funds may be used to contribute up to \$600 for either the purchase of a new or refurbished computer, or to upgrade an old one, whichever is the least expensive method, or for required software to meet the employment or training need. The purchase, upgrade, or software must be a requirement for employment or training and documented in the participant's file. A computer or software will not be purchased, if the employer normally provides these items. A purchase, upgrade, or software will be provided one time only. Damaged, lost, or stolen computers or software will not be replaced.
\$600 maximum for a computer or software or a combination of the two, but not \$600 for each.

Direct Inquiries:

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NOTES: Amendments to the Supportive Services Policy (highlighted) approved by the Board on September 15, 2017

Appendix A

Supportive Services Guidelines

Supportive Services are based upon necessity and availability of funds and are for expenses that are not covered by insurance or another agency or grant. Supporting documentation paperwork is necessary to be filed in the participant's file; at least two price estimates must be collected whenever possible. Supportive Services amounts include the following maximum expense for each supportive service per enrolled client per year, starting at the date of the first supportive service(s) provided. Supportive Services, excluding books, are limited to \$3,000.00 per participant per year, starting at the date of the first supportive service(s) provided with a limit of two successive years. Books may not exceed \$2,000.00 per year starting at the date of the first supportive service (s) with a limit of two successive years.

Allowable Maximum for Supportive Services

Optical: services and supplies	\$250.00
Medical: services/equipment	\$500.00
Dental: services and supplies	\$600.00
Driver's Education (Class C license)	\$750.00
Housing (see "Miscellaneous Emergency," page 4 above)	\$400.00
Transportation: vehicle repairs and maintenance	\$800.00
Transportation: mileage reimbursement	Prevailing State rate
Transportation: liability insurance	\$300.00
Basic Needs: grooming, and food	\$200.00
Clothing/Uniforms/Boots	\$250.00
Tools	\$600.00
Safety equipment	\$250.00
Childcare	use current DHHS guidelines
Licensing and Testing	\$250.00
Educational Testing	\$250.00
School Materials and Fees	\$500.00
Books for School	\$2000.00/year
Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks	\$100.00

Computer and/or Software**

\$600.00

~~*If uniforms/special clothing is required for training or employment, they are considered "training expenses" and are not subject to supportive services guidelines.~~

Emergency needs request by participants will be reviewed by local managers and may be granted by waiver in consultation with and written approval by the Executive Director of the CWMWDB.