NWA EDD
Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

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The term "supportive services" means services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs related payments, which 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 customers' 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. The Supervisor will review and approve the request. Staff must document that the participant has exhausted all other means of providing the supportive services requested by having the participant complete a "Lack of Supportive Services Resources" statement.

Participants must be participating in a WIOA activity, the service must be necessary to enable participation, and the participant must be unable to obtain grant assistance through other sources. 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. Supportive 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 or transitioning into new employment 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 the 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 childcare and dependent care; Linkages to
community services;
Assistance with housing and/or utilities, including any past due amounts;

Northwest does not provide needs-related payments.

Definitions and approved services, including initial limits. Limits can be exceeded with management approval based on a participant's needs.

Combined funding for training and supportive services is limited to $15,000 per eligible WIOA participant. However, this limit may be increased with approval from the Executive Director of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District.

Clothing

The costs of items such as clothes and shoes, which are necessary for participation in WIOA training activities, are allowable.

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, referrals to counseling services are critical.

Tutoring and Academic Support

Tutoring or other academic support may be provided when determined necessary to help an eligible participant participate in or successfully complete an approved education or training activity. Tutoring may be provided to Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Workers and may include support related to coursework, remedial education, or other academic requirements associated with the participant's approved activity.

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 where the participant lives. Total amounts per participant will be approved by the supervisor.

Residential

The cost of rent, rental deposits, house payments, utility deposits, internet, and utility assistance may be provided for participants who are participating in a WIOA activity when a need is demonstrated, and the participant is not able to obtain the services themselves and not able to receive service from other WIOA and/or non-WIOA partners. A secure nighttime residence is essential to the success of our participants.

Documentation required for rent or house payments includes a copy of the lease agreement with the participant's name listed or a payment statement from the lease holder stating that the participant is responsible for a portion of the rent/house payment. The lease agreement must be included with the payment statement. The Landlord must complete a W-9 form if applicable.

Documentation required for internet and/or utility assistance includes a copy of the statement from the internet or utility provider with the participant's name listed or a payment statement from the person responsible for the bill stating that the participant is responsible for a portion of the internet or utility. The statement from the internet or utility provider must be included with the payment statement.

Training programs require some participants to be away from their nighttime residence 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 are required to find the most economical means of hotel charges for the participant. It is based on the need and the requirement for an overnight stay because of the distance to the training.

Emergency Housing - under extreme circumstances, staff may provide the cost of a hotel stay until appropriate housing has been found. Staff are required to find the most economical means of hotel charges for the participant. It is based on emergency needs. The Executive Director must approve any costs related to Emergency Housing.

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 eyeglasses if not otherwise available from another source.

Insurance - Health-related insurance may be purchased for a participant if it is a requirement for participation in training activities.

Transportation

Transportation may be provided for participants who are participating in a WIOA activity when a need is demonstrated, and the participant is not able to obtain the services themselves and not able to receive services from other WIOA and/or non-WIOA partners.

The cost of transportation to assist participants in getting 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 for gas assistance is the distance to training times 2 times the number of days per week divided by miles per gallon x a set price per gallon of gasoline. We will use Wal-Mart cards, fuel-only purchase cards, or agreements with service stations as a method of providing assistance. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to provide assistance to a participant with the Operations Manager's approval. Signed gas receipts will be used to verify what participant received the service. Other methods that are reasonable will be worked out with Operations Managers if needed. The dollar limit for this service will vary based on participant needs.

Participants engaged in approved WIOA 1-8 activities who don't have the means for transportation will use Public Transit where available. If no Public Transit is available, ride-share vouchers will be provided for the participant. Staff will determine the required distance to participate in approved **WIOA** 1-B activities times two times the number of days per week and will load the appropriate amount needed onto the vouchers one week at a time for up to four weeks. When necessary,

Staff may request additional weeks of vouchers based on the participant's need and with the Operations Manager's approval.

Electric Bicycle (E-Bike)

Effective immediately, the purchase of an electric bicycle (e-bike) may be authorized as a supportive service for eligible WIOA participants when it is determined to be necessary to overcome a documented transportation barrier that would otherwise prevent participation in WIOA-funded activities or the attainment or retention of employment.

Approval of an e-bike shall be made on a case-by-case basis and must be supported by documentation demonstrating that:

1. The participant has a documented transportation barrier;
2. The e-bike is necessary to enable participation in WIOA services, training, work-based learning, or employment;
3. The purchase represents a reasonable and cost-effective transportation solution compared to available alternatives; and
4. The expenditure is allowable under applicable federal regulations, state guidance, local workforce board policy, and available funding.

The participant's case file must include appropriate case notes, an update to the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) or Individual Employment Plan (IEP), documentation supporting the need for the purchase, and proof of purchase. Participants receiving an e-bike under this provision are responsible for its operation, maintenance, security, and compliance with all applicable state and local laws governing its use.

The Workforce Development Board reserves the right to establish reasonable cost limits and approval requirements for e-bike purchases consistent with fiscal responsibility and program objectives.

The cost of transportation can include car payments, gas, car repairs, insurance payments and registration fees as identified through assessment by the Career Advisor.

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

Emergency Food - Under extreme circumstances, staff may purchase food for a youth 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 on a case-by-case basis on a case-by-case basis with management approval.

Laptops and software required to complete Occupational Skills Training may be provided to participants when a need is demonstrated, and the participant is not able to obtain the equipment themselves, and the participant is not able to receive services from WIOA and/or Non-WIOA partners.

In situations where a computer, or similar item, may be deemed a necessity for an individual to participate in an approved training program, the following elements must be met: The training provider must provide a written explanation for the necessity of the equipment.
The participant must provide written acknowledgement that he/she must return the equipment if he/she does not complete the course, for whatever reason.

Career Advisors will submit documentation to the Operations Manager for approval.

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, be employed, or 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 eyeglasses 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 test 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.

Those in Occupational Skills training and other approved WIOA activities may continue to receive supportive services as they demonstrate a need to allow them to participate in approved WIOA activities.

NWA WDB Supportive Services Procedure

The purpose of this procedure memo is to describe and to detail the procedures to be used by NWA WDB and NWAEDD staff as it relates to the regulations and requirements concerning supportive services, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 WIOA), the WIOA Final Rule, Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) published by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S.

Department of Labor
(ETA and policies of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) and the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (NWA WDB).

Procedures:

1. Supportive services may only be provided to participants when it is necessary to enable individuals to participate in approved WIOA activities. (20 CFR § 651.10)
2. In addition, supportive services should be provided after the participant and the **WIOA** Career Advisor has sought out all other resources from other partner sources. This will be verified by an interview with the participant, cross-references with partners, and the completion of a financial assessment with the Career Advisor.
3. Participants must sign a Supportive Services Statement, attesting that all terms are understood. Additionally, participants must complete and submit all necessary supporting documentation and forms in a timely manner in order to receive supportive services.
4. Supportive services will be provided to assist with unmet needs.
5. Participant agrees to notify the Career Advisor in the event of a change in training and comply with all other conditions and terms listed in the Scholarship Enrollment Agreement.
6. Tracking must be done on funding for Supportive Services on work-based learning, transitional jobs, and Occupations Training.
7. Training programs must be approved on the ETPL while participants are receiving training-related supportive services. WIOA participants enrolled with an eligible training provider removed from the ETPL may continue to receive supportive services for the duration of an ITA.
8. The NWA WDB reserves the right to set limits on the provision of supportive services. This includes a maximum amount of funding and a maximum length of time for supportive services to be available to participants. WIOA 680.920
9. Combined funding for training and supportive services is limited to $15,000 per eligible WIOA Participant. However, this limit may be increased with approval from the Executive Director of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District.

Travel Supportive Services Procedures:

1. A Lack of Supportive Services Resources Statement must be completed by the participant that indicates that they have sought assistance from other sources to help with travel expenses and were not able to find any. An email from the participant may be used in lieu of the Lack of Supportive Services Statement form. This statement must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant file.
2. Participants will be given a limit based on a locally developed formula. The formula for NWA WDB 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.

3. We will use Arvest fleet gas purchase cards, Walmart gas cards, or agreements with service stations as a method of assisting.
4. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to provide assistance to a participant with the Operations Manager's approval.
5. Signed gas receipts will be used to verify what participant received the service.
6. Other methods that are reasonable will be worked out with Operations Managers if needed.
7. Spreadsheets will be used to track all purchases, and signed receipts will be on file.
8. A copy of all documentation verifying round-trip map miles from the participant's home address to the training site must be presented for approval and documented in the participant's file.
9. Career Advisors will document supportive services received on the participant's IEP/ISS and Case Notes in AJL.

Tires and Car Repairs

1. Tires and car repairs may be made with Operations Manager approval if the Participant cannot participate in training or career services without this service. A Lack of Supportive Services Resources Statement must be completed by the participant that indicates that they have sought assistance from other sources to help with supportive assistance and they were not able to find any. An email from the participant may be used in lieu of the Lack of Supportive Services Statement form. This statement must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant's file.
2. Participants will contribute a portion of such cost when possible.
3. This service requires Operations Managers' approval, and the amounts will vary based on participant need.
4. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to assist a participant with the Operations Manager's approval.
5. Career Advisors will document supportive services received on the participant's IEP/ISS and Case Notes in AJL.

Utility Supportive Services Procedures:

1. Utility assistance is a service used to ensure access to utility services when a participant is unable to pay. Unable to pay is defined as "a status causing a participant who is facing documentable financial challenges to not meet the minimal amount of payment on a necessary living expense." A statement from the participant explaining the "unable to pay" status is required. (Utility assistance for current (most recent), including, but not limited to, electric, gas, water, phone, internet, or sewer bills)

2. A Lack of Supportive Services Resources Statement must be completed by the participant that indicates that they have sought assistance from other sources to help with supportive services and they were not able to find any. An email from the participant may be used in lieu of the Lack of Supportive Services Statement form. This statement must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant's file. A Purchase Authorization will be completed for each separate Supportive Service being provided. Every request should include:
    a. The Participant's name
    b. The mailing address and the name of the person/company the check should be mailed to.
    c. Date of purchase

    d. Program
    e. Amount of payment
    f. Backup documentation will be attached to the Payment Authorization
3. The Purchase Authorization form will be submitted to the Operations Managers for review
4. Once reviewed, the forms will be submitted to the Finance Department for processing for payment.
5. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to assist a participant with the Operations Manager's approval.

Career Advisors will document supportive services received on the participant's IEP/ISS and Case Notes in AJL.

Work-Related Items Supportive Services Procedures:

1. Work-related items must be identified by the training provider or employer and documented in the participant's file
2. Work-related items may include, but are not limited to, uniforms, work boots, small tools, gloves, etc.
3. Participants will provide itemized documentation for work-related items from the training provider or employers.
4. A Lack of Supportive Services Resources Statement must be completed by the participant that indicates that they have sought assistance from other sources to help with supportive assistance and they were not able to find any. An email from the participant may be used instead of the Lack of Supportive Services Statement form. This statement must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant's file. A Purchase Authorization will be completed for each separate Supportive Service being provided. Every request should include:
    a. The Participant's name
    b. The mailing address and the name of the person/company the check should be mailed to.
    c. Date of purchase
    d. Program
    e. Amount of payment
    f. Backup documentation will be attached to the Payment Authorization
5. The Purchase Authorization form will be submitted to the Operations Managers for review.
6. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to assist a participant with the Operations Manager's approval.

Other Supportive Services

1. A Lack of Supportive Services Resources Statement must be completed by the participant that indicates that they have sought assistance from other sources to help with supportive assistance and they were not able to find any. An email from the participant may be used in lieu of the Lack of Sur2portive Services Statement form. This statement must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant's file. A Purchase Authorization will be completed for each separate Supportive Service being provided. Every request should include:
    a. The Participant's name
    b. The mailing address and the name of the Person/company the check should be mailed to.

c. Date of purchase
d. Program
e. Amount of payment
f. Backup documentation will be attached to the Payment Authorization

2. The Supportive Service Purchase Authorization form will be submitted to the Operations Managers for review
3. Once reviewed, the forms will be submitted to the Finance Department for processing for payment.
4. When necessary, staff may use the purchase card to assist a participant with the Operations Manager's approval.
5. Career Advisors will document supportive services received on the participant's IEP/1S and Case Notes in AJL.
6. In situations where a computer, or similar item, may be deemed a necessity for an individual to participate in an approved training program, the following elements must be met:

   a. The training provider must provide a written explanation for the necessity of the equipment.
   b. The participant must provide written acknowledgement that he/she must return the equipment if he/she does not complete the course, for whatever reason.

Career Advisors will submit documentation to the Operations Manager for approval.

John "Bo" Phillips
Northwest Workforce Board Chair