



EAST TENNESSEE LOCAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT
POLICY MANUAL

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Revised June 30 2023

Approved ETLWDB Chair:

SUBJECT: SUPPORTIVE SERVICES POLICY

INTRODUCTION: The East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board shall adopt a Supportive Services Policy in accordance with WIOA §3(59). Throughout this document, reference is made to a "Program Year". This period is defined as July 1 through June 30.

PURPOSE: To establish the Supportive Services Policy under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (ETLWDB). All WIOA-enrolled adults, dislocated workers, out-of-school and in-school youth are eligible for supportive services as defined in **WIOA Section 3(59)**. This policy will establish guidelines for uniformity, where feasible, in the process and the amounts of supportive services provided to individuals. Such guidelines are consistent with **WIOA Sections 134(d)(2)** and **129(c)(2)** and were developed during the regional planning process by the ETLWDB in consultation with One-Stop Partners and area providers within the WIOA East Tennessee Planning Region (**WIOA Section 106(c)(1)(F)**).

POLICY: Supportive services are available to clients enrolled in ETLWDB career and training grant-funded initiatives who are unable to obtain supportive services through community programs providing such services. In accordance with WIOA, the ETLWDB has developed this written policy to ensure high quality comprehensive service provision, non-duplication of resources and reasonable limits on the amount and duration of these services. Supportive services must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed client choice in selecting supportive service providers (where applicable) and be in accordance with the goals/activities outlined in the client's Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy. The cost of supportive services must be reasonable and competitive in price. When multiple options are available for receiving supportive services, documentation must show a reasonable effort was made to determine and choose the lowest, competitively priced service available. The career specialist will assist the client with such choices but the ultimate decision rests with the client. However, when making decisions regarding these costs, all ETLWDB staff should consider if the purchase is "reasonable" and "prudent" as well as a good use of taxpayer dollars. WIOA is not an entitlement program. Supportive services are limited, must be based upon documented financial need (entered into VOS by case managers) and leveraged with other local and state resources. ETLWDB supportive services payments should be limited to items/needs that are directly related to assisting clients in obtaining gainful employment.

Who May Receive Supportive Services: Funds allocated to the ETLWDB may be used to provide supportive services to the following participants:

Adults and Dislocated Workers

Youth Participants:

Supportive Service to Adul/Dislocated Workers, and Youth may include, but are not limited to (**20 CFR 680.900**) (**20 CFR 681.570**):

- Linkages to community service
- Assistance with transportation
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care
- Assistance with housing
- Needs-related payments
- Assistance with educational testing

- Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities
- Legal aid services
- Referrals to healthcare
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications

Needs-Related payments: One-Stop centers provide financial assistance as a supportive service for the purpose of enabling participants to engage in training **WIOA Section 134(d)(3)**. Unlike other supportive services, to qualify for needs-related payments the participant must be enrolled in training. To receive need-related payments:

- A. **Adults and Out of School Youth (OSY) aged 18-24-** Must be unemployed, not qualify for (or have ceased qualifying for) unemployment compensation and be enrolled in a program of training services under **WIOA Section 134(d)(4)**.
- B. **Dislocated Workers-** Must be unemployed and
 1. Ceased to qualify for unemployment benefits or trade readjustment allowance under TAA, and be enrolled in a program of training services under **WIOA Section 134(d)(4)** by the end of the 13th week of 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; or
 2. Unable to qualify for unemployment benefits or trade readjustment assistance under TAA and be enrolled in a program of training services under **WIOA Section 134(c)(3)**.

Payments to Dislocated Workers shall not exceed the greater of **(20 CFR 680.970)**:

- A. Eighty percent (80%) of the maximum prevailing weekly unemployment benefit rate for participants who were eligible for unemployment as a result of a qualifying dislocation; or
- B. The poverty level (LLSIL for non-distressed counties or poverty level for distressed counties) for an equivalent period, for participants who did not qualify for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying layoff. The weekly payment level must be adjusted to reflect changes in total family incomes, as determined by ETLWDB.

The following guidelines will apply to individuals receiving supportive services through the American Job Centers within the East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area:

A. **Transportation Assistance:**

Transportation assistance will be provided, on an as needed basis, to individuals who are engaged in the following:

- Job search (up to 90 days with work search logs submitted containing a minimum of 6, in person, job search efforts per 2-week period). Career Specialist will evaluate progress towards employment monthly.
- Employment (up to 60 days with employment verification). Transportation assistance may also be provided to individuals participating in work experience.
- Training. Transportation assistance is contingent upon monthly attendance verification from the training institution.

Eligible participants should receive a one-time payment, at the onset of enrolment, in the amount of \$100.00. Subsequent payments should be made within two weeks (a week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday) and continue on a twice-monthly schedule in the amount of 100.00. If the participant's travel is shown to be more than 30 miles one way, the amount will increase from 100.00 to 150.00 per 2-week payment. Transportation assistance payments shall not exceed two (2) checks per month. Transportation assistance includes but is not limited to twice monthly support service transportation assistance, arranged rides, and bus passes. Although transportation assistance is paid for individuals in Job Search, Employment, and Training, participating in multiple services concurrently will not warrant duplicate transportation assistance payments. Transportation assistance may be limited based on available funding within the ETLWDB supportive services budget.

B. **Childcare Assistance:**

If childcare support is not available through other resources, such as Families First or OHS Smart Steps, then support will be provided as needed to WIOA-enrolled participants on a short-term basis to allow the participant to reach an

educational or employment goal. This service will be provided to participants who are currently engaged in training, job search, or employment only and the following will apply:

1. Care must be for children who are dependents between ages 0 through 12 years old. Documentation must be provided (in the form of a birth certificate, court order, etc.) proving that the child is his/her legal responsibility.
2. The ETLWDB Child Care Services Participant Statement of Understanding Form must be signed by the participant and kept in the participant's electronic file prior to receiving payments.
3. Payment may be made to the participant as reimbursement for childcare costs incurred during program participation, after submitting monthly invoice and verification. Payments may also be made to the childcare provider on behalf of the participant. All forms and payments should be documented within the participant's electronic file.
4. Childcare assistance will be limited to *\$2,400 per program year per participant*.

Childcare rates:

- Full-time care (2 years old and younger) \$34/day
- Full-time care (3 through 5 years of age) \$30/day
- Children 6 through 12 years of age \$20/day
- Part-time care (before/after school) \$10/day

5. Medical Care:

Medical care assistance will be provided as needed to WIOA-enrolled participants. This service will be provided to participants who are currently engaged in training, job search, or employment. This service is to cover medical needs/situations that arise when a current participant is actively participating in a Title I activity that would prevent the continuance of their attendance. When possible, payment should be made directly to the provider. If the situation requires payment to the participant, invoices/receipts will be required as proof of the expense. All payments must be recorded in the participant's file. Medical care assistance will be limited to *\$1,000 per program year*. Examples of medical care services include but are not limited to:

- Eye Exam/Glasses
- Dental Services
- Hearing Aids

6. Employment/Training-Related Expenses:

Employment and/or training-related expenses may be funded for a WIOA-enrolled participant. This assistance will be provided to increase the likelihood of establishing and maintaining employment. When possible, payment should be made directly to the provider. Invoices/receipts are required, and all payments must be recorded in the participant's file. Examples of employment/training-related supportive services include but are not limited to:

- Vaccinations
- Blood Tests
- Drug Screens
- Physicals
- Background Checks
- Seminars
- Professional Societies
- Conferences
- Legal aid services

7. Vehicle Repair:

WIOA-enrolled participants may receive support related to vehicle repair and/or maintenance while actively participating in employment, job search or training activities. This service includes, but is not limited to, tires, vehicle repairs, and mechanical repairs. A copy of the registration must be in the participant's file. Invoices/receipts are required, and all payments must be recorded within the participant's file. In the event the participant must use another individual's vehicle for travel to training or work, the owner of said vehicle must furnish a copy of the title with a signed statement explaining the participant's use of the vehicle. Vehicle repairs will be limited to *\$1,000 per program year*.

8. Emergency Supportive Services:

WIOA funds can be used when a current participant has an emergency arise while actively participating in WIOA career or training activities that would prevent the continuation of their program participation. The purpose of the funds must be documented in case notes. Payments made for the participant require a copy of the bill *listing the participant as the debtor* attached to the authorization. Rent/Housing payments will require a copy of a lease agreement naming the participant. Payments will be made to Vendors on behalf of the participant (i.e. utility company, landlord, Internet/telephone provider, insurance provider etc.). The following are cost limits, per service/per Program year, established by ETLWDB:

- Utilities (electric, gas, water) \$500/year
- Ren/Housing \$750/year
- Phone Service/internet/Data Plan \$250/year
- Automobile Insurance \$350/year

9. Workforce Development and Training Supplies:

WIOA-enrolled participants may receive assistance with supplies while actively participating in career or training activities. The ETLWDB has established there are no cost limits imposed on required books and supplies for any post-secondary training. Books and supplies assistance will be determined each semester/trimester, etc. based on a required book/supply list from the training provider. A copy of the required book/supply list and proof of payment should be kept in the participant's file. Additional supply payments must be documented and may be made for the following:

- Basic Supplies for Training (\$150 max/semester), including but not limited to:
Highlighters, Pens, Pencils, Binders, Notebooks, Calculators, 3-Hole Punches, Backpacks (Satchels, Over the Shoulder Bags, Laptop Bags, Laptop Cases), Staplers, Scissors, Markers, Colored Pencils, Loose Leaf Paper, Paper Clips, Binder Clips, Dividers, Index Cards, and other supplies as deemed necessary by the Training Provider
- Supplies needed for employment (\$1,000 max/year), including but not limited to:
Stethoscope, Footwear, Uniforms, Watches, Clothing for Interviews / Employment, Payment of Licensure/Credentials, Hardhats, Earplugs, Gloves, Safety Vests, Thermal Clothing, Protective Gear, and other supplies as deemed necessary by the Employer

10. Tutoring (WIOA Title I Youth Only):

If a WIOA Youth participant needs assistance in completing a training program, HiSET program, getting into a training program, or passing an entrance test for a field of work or military, the Career Services provider may contract with a certified teaching professional to provide tutoring services. The licensed professional must present a recognized license for review by Career Services Provider staff as well as sign a Personal Service Contract. The contracted provider will be paid at a rate of \$22.00 per hour not to exceed 5 hours a week. All payments must be documented in the participant's file. Contracted tutoring for a Youth participant will not exceed \$500.00/year.

11. Incentives CWIOA Title I): Incentive payments may be made to participants in the follow up phase of services for each quarter the participant provides documentation of allowable placement for up to four (4) quarters. Allowable placement includes: employment, military enlistment, post-secondary and advanced training, etc. Documentation includes a completed Employment Verification form documenting contact with the participant's employer, a pay stub, a transcript for current post-secondary or extended training program, proof of active service in the military or other documentation of being employed or attending post-secondary.

HiSET (Youth)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| i.. Attend four classes after orientation
totaling 12 class Hours | \$100 |
| ii. Complete the HiSET voucher | \$100 |
| iii. Completion of HiSET | \$250 |

Follow up (Adult/DW/Youth)

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| iv. Milestones of placement in Q1-Q4 after exit | \$100/quarter |
|---|---------------|

Unallowable Support Services- Support services may not be used to pay for expenses incurred prior to the participant's enrollment into the WIOA program. Advances against future payments are not allowed. Unallowable services include, but are not limited to:

- Fines and penalties such as traffic violations, late finance charges, and interest payments
- Taxes, hospital bills, past due credit card bills
- Entertainment, including tips
- Contributions and donations
- Prescription/over-the-counter drugs
- Vehicle or mortgage payments Refund deposits

- Alcohol or tobacco products
- Pet food
- Items purchased for family or friends
- Out-of-state job searches and relocation expenses that will be paid by the prospective employer

Exceptions- Waivers to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis subject to the approval of the ETLWDB Executive Director. In such instances, a written justification outlining the circumstances shall be required.

Priority of Service- Participants in the WIOA programs who face significant barriers to employment (recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient) should be given service according to their level of need. ETLWDB Priority of Service Policies should be followed.

Monitoring of payments: ETLWDB staff will monitor funds for supportive services to ensure that they are allowable and spent without duplication of services. The service provider should keep monthly reports detailing participant payments and make available to the Board staff upon request. As part of its routine monitoring procedures, ETLWDB staff will regularly examine participant files for allowable payments, basis of determination of needs, and documentation required to ensure program integrity and efficiency.

Conflict of Interest policy- All ETLWDB intake/eligibility forms or documents to provide a benefit (training, gas card, etc.) must include a disclosure stating that workforce system members (CLEOs, LWDB members, Board Staff, WIOA staff, AJC partner staff, and WIOA sub recipients and/or contractors) will not provide direct service during the intake or eligibility determination of a family member or close acquaintance. No workforce staff or member will have a personal or business relationship with, or a positive bias for, or a special interest in, that particular applicant. Accusations that certain decisions were influenced by a conflict of interest will be avoided by the participant being served by another workforce staff member.

- If such a relationship exists between a workforce member and a participant, documentation including the name of the member and the nature of the relationship must be maintained in the participant's file.
- A list of any Workforce members who have disclosed any of these close relationships will be maintained by ETLWDB staff and will be provided to Program Accountability Review (PAR) program monitors at the onset of all monitoring visits.
- Training concerning internal conflicts of interest will be provided to all workforce members on an annual basis. All new staff members and providers will be informed of this policy.

For questions regarding this policy, contact the Director of Workforce Services, East Tennessee Human Resource Agency, 865-691-2551.

Attachments: Child Care Services Participant Statement of Understanding

State 10: _____

County: _____

Child Care Services
Participant Statement of Understanding

1. I understand it is my responsibility to determine the provider and make all the necessary arrangements for childcare services for my child. I alone am selecting my childcare provider and deciding that my child(ren) are well cared for by this provider.
2. I understand that in order for me to receive allowances for childcare services, my child must be under 13 years of age. I understand I must give a copy of each child's birth certificate to my case manager.
3. I understand the program will pay the amount allowable per local policy. I also understand I will be responsible for any charges above the amount below.
 - Full-time care (2 years old and younger) **\$34.00/day**
 - Full-time care (3 through 5 years of age) **\$30.00/day**
 - Children 6 through 12 years of age **\$20.00/day**
 - Part-time care (before/after school) **\$10.00/day**
4. I understand that childcare payments will be provided only when absolutely necessary and when all other means have been exhausted. Payments will be twice monthly to the provider or by reimbursements to me. WIOA will not be responsible for any other payments to regulated or unregulated childcare providers, including registration or late fees.
5. I understand I am responsible for having the Child Care Verification Form completed twice monthly by my childcare provider and will turn it in to my case manager. (This form is required for childcare payment).
6. I understand I will be paid for childcare services based upon proof of enrollment in eligible activities. i.e., Employment, Job Search, or Training. (See Support Services Policy)
7. I understand that childcare services are based upon funding availability.
8. I understand that the childcare provider I choose may NOT be the child(ren)'s parent, legal guardian, or anyone residing in the same household as the parent or child(ren).
9. I understand that my provider may be contacted at any time to verify childcare services. If verification is not given, I understand that childcare allowance will no longer be provided.
10. I hereby release the ETLWDB and its contractors from all liabilities for my child(ren)'s care. Further, I will not attempt to hold the ETLWDB or its contractors responsible for any harm to my child(ren) as a result of this care.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood this document and hereby sign voluntarily.

Child's Name

Date of Birth

Customer Signature

Date

Career Specialist Signature

Date