



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the provision of supportive services to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants.

SCOPE

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I contracted Service Providers

RESPONSIBLE PARTY

Workforce Alliance of the North Bay
Regional Workforce Development Board

REFERENCES

- WIOA Sections 3(59), 134(d)(2) and (3), 129(c)(2)(G)
- Title 20 CFR WIOA "Final Rules" 20 CFR 680.300, 680.900-970 and 681.570

DOCUMENTS

- Policy Template

DEFINITIONS

Supportive Services - are services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, clothing, housing, and medical, that are allowable, necessary and reasonable for an individual to participate in activities authorized under this Act.

POLICY

I. Supportive Services

WIOA funds may be used to provide such assistance, but only when there are no other resources available.

- A. Supportive services may be provided to participants while enrolled in a WIOA and/or special project when it is determined necessary to enable participation in career or training services (not including follow-up services). For WIOA youth enrollees, supportive services may be provided as a follow-up service.
- B. Supportive Services must be determined in an equitable manner so all participants have equal access and opportunity to supportive services.
- C. Supportive services may only be provided when an individual does not have the financial resources to pay for such services on their own and are unable to obtain through other resources, programs, or partner agencies providing such services.

Workforce Alliance of the North Bay is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

- D. Supportive services may be provided for Special Project participants if specified in the grant. The grant guidelines and requirements must be followed and, in some instances, may supersede the requirements outlined in this policy.
- E. Service Provider must document all of the above in the participant's case file, including at a minimum Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and Individual Service Strategies (ISS) for youth, and in the narrative case notes describing the assessment and reasons for the decision to provide supportive services.
- F. Participants are not entitled to receive supportive services. Supportive services are limited by the availability of funds.
- G. Supportive services may not be utilized to pay for expenses incurred prior to the participant's enrollment into WIOA or any special project/grant, unless it is allowable under the grant. Payments may not be requested for:
 - 1. Bad debts, (i.e., late service charges, penalties, tickets, and/or fines).
 - 2. Purchase of an asset (car payments, mortgage payment, etc. or interest on borrowed capital
 - 3. Entertainment
 - 4. Settlement of insurance claims
 - 5. Child support payments
 - 6. Consumer debt
 - 7. Life insurance
 - 8. Bail or restitution
- H. Needs Related Payments (NRPs) which are a form of supportive services available to eligible WIOA participants in training are not authorized by Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.
- I. Supportive service funds may not be used to pay for tuition for any training activity.
- J. For participants enrolled in a Training activity, certain supportive services may be included in a participant's Individual Training Account. This may include, but not limited to: parking fees; uniforms; tools; equipment; classroom supplies; and books. Supportive services included in the ITA may only be provided if they are not included as part of the training costs and are required as documented on the syllabus or by the instructor.
- K. Supportive services may be terminated immediately based on the following reasons:
 - 1. Failure to meet program requirements;
 - 2. Purchase of unauthorized items
 - 3. Failure to submit receipts or correct back-up documentation;
 - 4. Supportive service system is being abused;
 - 5. Supportive service funding is not available;
 - 6. Individual is making unsatisfactory progress; or
 - 7. Re-determination of financial need reveals individual has other resources to meet needs or no longer needs the service.

II PROCEDURE

- A. The service provider staff is responsible for assessing and determining the participant's need for supportive services. This determination is based on a review of the participant's financial circumstance and the availability of the service from other partners or resources. An email from the participant demonstrating their need for supportive services is considered sufficient documentation to support the request for services and initiate the process.
- B. Prior to the approval of supportive services, the service provider staff must assess the participant's financial resources and ensure that no other resources exist or that the need is so urgent that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the supportive service and create a hardship to the participant.



- C. Participant files must adequately document that all supportive services are allowable, reasonable, and necessary, and not otherwise available to the participant and show evidence of collaboration, when feasible. This shall be documented on a payment authorization form and in a case note in CalJOBS. The case note shall include:
1. Item, why it is necessary and reasonable.
 2. Cost, and procurement if applicable.
 3. Activity code and funding
 4. Manager/Supervisor approval

III. DOCUMENTATION AND RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS

- A. Supportive Services may be provided in the form of a pre-paid vendor gift card or reimbursement. No payment of supportive services, with the exception of reimbursements, will be made directly to the participant. All reimbursement should be the last resort and documentation as to why must be in a case note. Prior approval from the Program Manager is required for reimbursements. Participant's original signatures are required verifying the receipt of supportive services. Original receipts or proof of payment are required for each supportive service provided. Receipts must contain enough information to determine the validity of the purchase. At minimum, a receipt shall include:
1. Name of the company/vendor
 2. Date of service
 3. Type of purchase or service provided
 4. Amount of the purchase or service
 5. Type of payment (e.g., cash, gift card, credit card)

Scanned receipts are acceptable if legible and contain the above information to validate the purchase and must be submitted within **30 days** of purchase.

Failure to return appropriate documentation and/or receipts may result in suspension of supportive services to the participant.

If the participant fails to return receipts within **30 days** after supportive services are provided, the service provider staff must:

1. Inform the participant the expense shall not be reimbursed. This may be waived by the Program Manager if the participant has had a life-threatening event and is unable to submit the receipt within the 30 day window and must be documented in case notes.

In the event that a participant loses a receipt, a written statement from the participant indicating the receipt was lost, the items purchased, and the amount spent must be obtained. This must be verified by the service provider staff and the Director shall have the authority to determine if the participant is eligible to continue to receive supportive services.

B. Gift Cards

Gift cards should only be used as a last resort.

1. Participants who receive a gift card must submit an original receipt that documents what was purchased and the balance of the card. If the participant does not spend the full amount issued, they must return the gift card with the remaining balance to their service provider. Gift cards with remaining balances should be submitted back to the service provider's fiscal department for tracking of unspent monies. Gift cards must be tracked when issuing.



POLICY UPDATE HISTORY

May 5, 2017 – New Policy

December 12, 2019 – Revised to include documentation and receipt requirements and gift card requirements.

September 15, 2023 – Removing spending limits adding a syllabus or instructor email documenting items required.

INQUIRIES

Questions regarding this policy can be sent to Operations Unit.

