

Updated May 2023

Supportive services provide financial assistance to address barriers that enables an individual to participate in and complete career and training activities authorized under WIOA Title I that is not otherwise available from other sources and when the participant is unable to pay for the necessary expense themselves. Staff should coordinate with core and non-core programs to obtain the necessary support needed that will assist customers to successfully complete services and enter employment. Supportive services are not meant to address long-term financial needs.

Career and training services include activities related to the individual's employment plan such as short-term or long-term occupational skills training; work-based training; GED/diploma programs; career preparation activities; participation in one or more of the youth program 14 elements; etc.

The types of supportive services allowed include the following:

- Assistance with costs needed to access emergency mental health/dental/medical care that assists in program participation.
- Transportation assistance
- Childcare (for ages 12 and under) and dependent care
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related supplies/equipment (such as laptop or similar device/hot spot, etc.), applications, tests, and certifications (for those not funded by other training costs), access to vital records documents, or assistance with required training for work-based learning opportunities such as safety skills training, etc.
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities
- Emergency assistance to include housing rental costs (rental deposits or mortgage payments are not allowed); utility bills (electric, water, heating, internet as required for training/job search/employment); repairs or tires for a participant's car; car insurance; appropriate work-related hygiene products and attire (does not include uniforms required for training which is considered other training costs) and work-related tool/supplies/clothing; eyeglasses; or legal aid services. *Emergency assistance is generally a one-time expense.*

Note: Except for emergency situations for youth participants, groceries for participants are beyond the scope of WIOA and should be addressed by local resources.

Career advisors must substantiate and document the need for the supportive service for the enrolled participant. Expenses incurred prior to enrollment are not allowable for supportive services.

Individuals must be enrolled with full eligibility completed to be eligible for supportive services.
Individuals only enrolled in WP basic career services are not eligible for
WIOA funded supportive services.

Adults and dislocated workers who are in follow-up services prior to exit (follow-up begins on the 1st day of employment) are eligible for supportive services. Adults and dislocated workers are not eligible for supportive services after program exit. Needs related payments are **not** allowed for youth, adults, and dislocated workers.

Youth may receive supportive services during enrollment *and* after exit while in their 12 months of follow-up if it supports their continued completion of program goals and is part of their service plan.

In most cases, supportive services payments are to be paid directly to the vendor providing the service, with staff having all the necessary documentation to support the costs. In the event that supportive services are provided via gift/store cards, staff must have cards safeguarded such as in a locked cabinet/desk and a process in place for customer's signing off they have received payment for the supportive service.

Limitations

Supportive services assistance is based on individual participant need and local budgets. It is not guaranteed for any single participant or timeframe. Individuals are also limited per year and over their lifetime in cases of multiple enrollments.

Yearly and Lifetime Limits:

Supportive services for emergency assistance have an annual limit per participant of \$500 per program year, with a lifetime limit of \$1,000. Currently there is not a limit on transportation or childcare assistance. However, based on local budgets, this may become necessary during the year.

In general, payments for "owned" property are not allowed such as automobile and/or mortgage payments.

Note: In extreme circumstances, when the participant has used the yearly or lifetime limit or has an emergency need that exceeds the limit, the service provider may submit a request by email to WDB staff for approval. If approved, staff should document in case notes and include approval email in participant file. Requests should include the following information:

- ✓ Participant name
- ✓ Program enrolled in (adult, dislocated worker, youth)
- ✓ Amount of request, what it is for, and why it is needed
- ✓ Previous emergency assistance received

Participants enrolled in the ARPA Substance Use/Recovery Grant, may exceed this policy limit, following the ARPA budget/guidelines.

Documentation Required

Career advisors are to maintain a stringent attitude towards documentation of all supportive services provided and each activity must have a corresponding case note. Documentation must include the following:

- Need for supportive services identified on participants service plan
- Case notes summarizing the need and efforts to locate other resources
- Type of service provided and the amount (childcare requires child's birth certificate)
- Copies of supporting documentation if applicable (travel/attendance logs; invoices; etc.)
- Supportive Service CSS activity in NCWorks

Supportive Service activities start and end dates should correspond with the service provided or date of issued payment. If the service is a one-time payment (such as payment for a licensure exam) or the provision of a prepaid item (such as a bus pass), the Activity is opened and closed the day of issuance.

- Example 1: A customer received transportation reimbursement assistance for attending training for two weeks. The activity start date would be the first day of travel assistance; the end date would be the last date of travel assistance for that invoice.
- Example 2: A customer receives \$50 gas card for future travel assistance for three weeks. The activity start/end date would be the date gas card issued.
- Example 3: Staff authorizes car repair. Customer receives services. Staff receives invoice from provider. The start and end date would be tied to the date of payment of the invoice.

A customer may have multiple supportive service activities related to transportation assistance for each occurrence. When emergency assistance is provided, a stand-alone Supportive Service activity should be keyed.

In most cases, when a supportive service is paid directly to a vendor, that vendor should be selected as the provider in NCWorks when keying the activity (for example High Country Tires). To have new vendors added to NCWorks, a W-9 should be obtained and submitted to the WDB Super User for keying. Generally, when keying a supportive service for participant travel, the WIOA service provider can be listed as the activity provider.

Note: Supportive Service activities do not prevent program exit. NCWorks requires that at least one other activity is open (such as training, etc.) in order to key a Supportive Service activity. *Please refer to keying guide under Staff Online Resources in NCWorks.*

Childcare and Dependent Care

Assistance with childcare and dependent care is allowable when the participant is the primary care provider and assistance is necessary for the participant to continue their participation in WIOA services such as training, workshops, work experience, etc. or during the initial obtainment of employment. Career advisors must refer to local Department of Social Services (DSS) for assistance prior to authorization. Payments can be made directly to a daycare facility or to an individual providing childcare services at the agreed upon average local rate. If childcare assistance is received from DSS and a parent fee is required, this is an allowed supportive service cost.

Childcare should be limited to children 12 and younger. To ensure against fraud, a copy of the birth certificate of the child receiving daycare services is required.

Transportation

Assistance with transportation is allowable if it is necessary for a participant to continue their participation in WIOA activities such as training, workshops, work experience, initial employment or during employment and a temporary need arises, etc.

Financial assistance can be provided to an individual using the mileage reimbursement rate, or by using a paid vendor such as the local transportation authority or local service when the service provider is billed at an agreed upon rate/schedule, or in the form of gas cards purchased from local retailer.

Gas cards can be provided up front in “advance” if there is an immediate need based on their schedule/mileage documentation. Gas cards should not be provided for more than the current month in advance. Prior to issuing additional cards, the participant should provide appropriate documentation of travel for the previous period awarded. Gas cards should be purchased in \$25 increments. Rounding up/down to the nearest \$25 increment is acceptable when calculating an award rate for the month. Customers should sign off stating they have received gas cards when provided. Staff must keep cards secured/safe guarded at all times such as in a locked desk/file cabinet.

Due to the increased costs often associated with using a local transportation provider, staff must assess the budget and timeframe. The reimbursement of mileage is typically paid directly to the participant or to an individual that is providing the transportation for the participant. If an individual is providing transportation for multiple participants, duplicate reimbursement is not allowed.

An attendance form is to be used to support travel that is signed by the participant, the school instructor or worksite supervisor (or copy of approved timesheet), and the individual providing transportation that verifies the person was in attendance on the days reported along with the daily miles driven.

Mileage reimbursement will be paid using the following daily rates, and mileage should be verified by using on online maps site such as Google Maps or MapQuest:

MILES PER DAY	RATE
1-10	\$3.00
11-25	\$6.00
26-40	\$9.00
41-75	\$12.00
76+	\$15.00

Note: NCWorks Career Centers are expected to have an up-to-date listing of available resources for customers and staff and provide referrals to services. The listing should be inclusive of all known resources to ensure non-duplication of resources when possible. Legal aid services may assist to reduce barriers to employment by helping to secure a driver’s license, expunging criminal records, and addressing debts or credit reporting issues.

(Reference: WIOA Sec. 3 (59); Sec. 134(d)(2); 680.900; 681.570)