

Eastern Area Workforce Development Board
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Policy 16-12 Supportive Services

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Contact: Inquiries regarding this document should be directed to Administrative Staff of the EAWDB at (575)208-2210.

REFERENCES:

The WIOA of 2014; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost principles codified in 2 CFR Part 220, Part 225 and Part 230; NMSA 1978, Section 50-14-1 *et seq.*
[11.2.16.NMAC - N, 8-15-2012]

1. PURPOSE:

Provide information and direction for the service providers and Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Career Development Specialists (CDSs) in the delivery of supportive services and define the process for the use of supportive services to eligible adult, dislocated worker and youth participants.

2. BACKGROUND:

The WIOA outlines the responsibility of the local boards in developing a policy to define supportive services available to the adult, dislocated worker (DW) and youth participants. Such services should not be otherwise available from other non-WIOA programs. Further, supportive services are based on need and participants are not automatically entitled to supportive services. Supportive services for adults, DWs, and youth shall include but not be limited to services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, needs related payments, work clothing, incentives, stipends and other reasonable expenses approved by the contract manager or his/her designee that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training and employment related activities authorized under WIOA. Local Boards, in consultation with the One-Stop partners and other community service providers are required to develop policy on supportive services that ensures resource and service coordination in the local area. Such policy should address procedures for referrals to such services including how such services will be funded from other sources. The provision of accurate information about the availability of supportive services in the local area, as well as referral to such activities, is one of the basic career services that must be available to adults and dislocated workers through the One-Stop delivery system.

3. DEFINITIONS:

Supportive Services means services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA or the Wagner-Peyser Act.

4. ACTION

A. General Provisions

(1) All WIOA program applicants and participants shall be informed of paid and unpaid supportive services available through the local One-Stop system. This is to include services provided by the One-Stop partners, Service Providers and any applicable community resources.

(2) Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are:

- (a) Participating in career or training services; and
- (b) Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs that offer such services

Supportive services may only be provided when they are proven necessary to enable individuals to participate in WIOA provided activities.

(3) To ensure successful participation in the appropriate employment or training activities, program staff shall determine the supportive service needs of each individual to be enrolled. Such determination shall be based on the comprehensive assessment and is to include documentation of the participant's need to receive supportive services to be eligible to receive the services. The information shall be included in the customer's employment plan service strategy and case file as appropriate.

(4) The need for supportive services shall be included in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS) or Individual Employment Plan (IEP) as appropriate. Case notes in the file shall include information on all efforts made to identify alternative funding sources, what referrals were made and what services are not available locally. When referral to partners and community services are made, documentation **of availability and/or denial from all referrals shall be maintained in the file**. To prevent the duplication of costs and efforts, participants first must exhaust all related available services before WIOA services will be authorized.

(5) New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers and One Stop Service Providers shall periodically review the need for, and the receipt of, supportive services. Changes in supportive service needs are to be reflected in the assessment and ISS or IEP and noted in the counseling record as appropriate. Sound case management and timely participant contact are essential to ensuring completion of activities, and in meeting ISS/IEP goals and objectives.

(6) Prior approval for use of supportive services is required. Authorization for supportive services shall be made via the WIOA SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REQUEST AND APPROVAL FORMAT/GUIDELINES issued by the EAWDB or its replacement document(s) and approved by the WIOA contract manager or his/her designee. To request approval of supportive services for groups of participants, the board may also use or modify the SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REQUEST AND APPROVAL form or develop similar authorization forms. All required documents should be uploaded to the New Mexico Workforce Connection Center Online System (NMWCOS) and be submitted for processing and the appropriate service activity created in the NMWCOS. When the NMWCOS voucher system is utilized the voucher shall be created at that time. When the voucher system is utilized the contract manager or his/her designee is required to approve the voucher in the system and is the only services personnel with security access to do so. Approval of the voucher fulfills the contract manager's signature requirement on documents. Youth payment of supportive services will be made directly by the youth provider in agreement with the youth contract scope of work (SOW). Payments issued should have copies of the checks uploaded to participant files. For payments issued directly to participants, proof of receipt of payment, such as signed copy of the check, should be uploaded to the electronic record.

(7) A SUPPORTIVE SERVICES MODIFICATION or a similar form is necessary when there are changes in payment amounts or duration.

(8) Provision of paid WIOA supportive services shall be limited to twelve months after the date of WIOA exit.

(9) Supportive services requests and payment forms will be the EAWDB supportive services forms or their subsequent replacements. EAWDB forms shall not be modified without prior authorization from EAWDB board staff.

(10) Service Providers are responsible for tracking participant attendance, time keeping and related duties as appropriate. Educational/training institutions receiving ITAs must perform time keeping, participant activity tracking and related duties for participants receiving supportive services. For OJT employers, the reimbursement negotiated in each contract includes time keeping, reporting and other related duties as specified in the OJT contract. These timesheets will be used for reimbursement for supportive services.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Supportive services available to adult and dislocated workers include but are not limited to services such as linkages to community services, legal aid services, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, needs related payments, work clothing, tools and other reasonable expenses approved by contract manager or his/her designee that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training and employment activities authorized under WIOA Title I. NOTE: Stipends and incentives are not allowable supportive services for adults and dislocated workers. The Career Development Specialist (CDS) must establish the need for the supportive service, include the need in the individual's employment plan. The CDS must verify and document that the individual is not receiving assistance nor is eligible to receive assistance for support from any other source and include documentation in the electronic file and counseling record as detailed in sections 3 & 4 above.

The EAWDB requires adult/DW service providers to utilize the NMWCOS Voucher System for generation and approval of obligations as well as document transmittal and review of contracts. Therefore, in keeping with sound accounting principles, security access for voucher approval in the system is limited solely to the contract manager, his/her designee and the board's NMWCOS administrator (for corrections). The approval of the voucher by the contract manager or his/her designee shall therefore constitute approval of the service and obligation. The service provider contract manager may institute a more restrictive funding limit for this service.

(1) Transportation, Commuting Assistance and Temporary Shelter

The EAWDB has established the following procedures for determining transportation, temporary shelter and commuting assistance consistent with state policy.

(a) Transportation assistance and commuting assistance

Transportation and commuting cost calculations will be based on the distance the participant is required to travel round trip from their residence to the training location.

Participants may be reimbursed at a rate of up to \$0.25 per mile based on map miles and payment must be supported by participant's attendance report. The service provider contract manager may institute a funding limit to this service.

This will be the EAWDB's primary transportation supportive service for participants not receiving any assistance from any other source. A Transportation and Child care support request form or its subsequent replacement must be completed and uploaded to the NMWCOS and the appropriate supportive service activity and voucher created.

(b) Temporary Housing Assistance

i. Emergency Short Term Housing Assistance

WIOA allows for supportive services payments in emergency situations related to housing or rental assistance so long as the participant's name is on the lease and not providing assistance would hinder the individual's participation or completion of authorized WIOA activities.

ii. Training Related Short term housing assistance

Short term housing assistance may be provided to individuals that are attending training more than 60 miles from their permanent residence. The amount paid to the participant shall not exceed the participant's balance of unmet need as reflected on the ITA cost sharing document.

Housing assistance requests must be submitted on the EAWDB Housing Supportive Service Request Form or its subsequent replacement form and the appropriate NMWCOS activity and voucher created.

(c) Exclusions

Housing assistance is subject to funding availability and shall not be provided to adults and dislocated workers when limited funding priority is in effect.

(2) Child Care

(a) Child Care reimbursement eligibility: Childcare assistance may be provided to eligible participants who require such assistance in order to participate in a WIOA activity and whose need has been documented in their ISS. Need is defined as total family income at or below 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) for the program year. To qualify, participants must have legal responsibility or custody of the child(ren) twelve (12) years of age or younger (documentation of custody must be provided and maintained in the file), and documentation that other resources are not available (including family members) must be supplied. Child care assistance must be submitted on the EAWDB Transportation and Child Care support form or its subsequent replacement and the appropriate NMWCOS supportive service activity and voucher created.

Child Care assistance is subject to funding availability and shall not be provided to adults and dislocated workers when limited funding priority is in effect.

(b) Exclusion:

Child care payment shall not be authorized when the Individual:

- i. Is receiving 100% of needed child care payments from another Source (e.g. Children, Youth and Families or other local service provider, etc.), or
- ii. Is absent entirely or in part from his/her regularly scheduled training activity. This includes holidays, except in instances in which partial days of attendance in observance of a holiday or related events are approved or scheduled by the training provider.

(c) Child care reimbursements levels

Child care assistance is available for up to three (3) children. A maximum payment of up to ten dollars (\$10.00) per day per child and up to thirty dollars per day of attendance per household

is allowable. The total cost shall not exceed one hundred fifty dollars (150.00) per week. For all child care reimbursements, the participant must submit a paid receipt either bi-weekly or monthly or there must be a written agreement by the child care provider to bill WIOA directly for services. In the presence of partial funding from another source such as CYFD, WIOA will only pay the remaining balance. The service provider contract manager may institute a more restrictive funding limit for this service or a total prohibition of this service in the presence of limited funding.

CDS's must verify and track the age and time limitations of the participant's child(ren).

Child care reimbursement shall be calculated based on the following:

i. Home child care

Individuals providing child care (other than family members) shall be eligible for a maximum payment of five dollars (\$5.00) per day per child up to fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per day and seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per week.

ii Certified day care providers (certified home day care)

For children placed with a certified day care provider reimbursement will be paid seven dollars (\$7.00) per day per child up to a maximum of twenty-one dollars (\$21.00) per day and one hundred five dollars (\$105.00) per week.

iii Licensed Day Care Providers

For children placed with a certified day care provider the reimbursement amount will be up to ten dollars (\$10.00) per day up to a maximum of thirty dollars (\$30.00) per day and one hundred fifty (\$150.00) per week.

**A copy of the day care's certification or license shall be provided to the CDS and maintained in the participant's file.

(3) Medical and Health Care Supportive Services. Minor medical and health care services that may be provided include but are not limited to:

- Physical examinations;
- Eye and/or ear examinations;
- Filling of eyeglass prescriptions;
- Purchase of hearing aids;
- Purchase of orthopedic devices; and
- Other minor medical or health care services not listed herein that are necessary in order for the individual to participate in the program. Contingent upon available funding, a one-time maximum of three hundred fifty (\$350.00) for minor health or medical-care service may be provided to participants enrolled in a WIOA funded training activity that requires such assistance in order to participate in the program. The participant must provide proof of need (statement from health care provider, medical practitioner or training provider). The participant shall only be eligible for this assistance if he/she cannot obtain such services from other available resources (i.e. One-Stop partners, local community health care programs, etc.). The participant's inability to obtain the service from other sources must be provided and maintained in the participant's file by the CDS *as outlined above*. The provider must agree

to bill and accept payment for services from WIOA once services have been completed. The agreement must be documented in the participant file. Payment for services shall be made directly to the vendor or provider upon receipt of billing. In order for a participant to receive reimbursement for these services he/she must submit a paid invoice/receipt from the medical provider and the receipt must be submitted.

Medical assistance requests must be submitted on the EAWDB Housing and Medical Health Care form or its subsequent replacement and the appropriate NMWCOS supportive service activity and voucher created.

(4) Group Supportive Services. Group supportive services may supplement supportive services provided to the individual, but such services must not be duplicative of services already provided (either paid through WIOA or other sources). Group supportive services are limited to transportation, meals and lodging for the target groups to be served in a specially designed program or project as approved by the local board, consistent with the local plan and in accordance with applicable Procurement procedures. The cost for such services must be reasonable and necessary as verified by the Service Provider. The participant file must contain documentation to substantiate the need in the participant file.

(5) Needs–Related Payments. Needs-related payments provide financial assistance for the purpose of enabling individuals to participate in training and are one of the supportive services authorized by WIOA and are subject to funding availability. Needs Related Payment assistance is subject to funding availability and shall not be provided to adults and dislocated workers when limited funding priority is in effect. Eligibility requirements for adults and dislocated workers to receive needs-related assistance are as follows [§CFR 680.950-680.990];

(a) Adults must:

(i) Be unemployed and;

- Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation and
- Be enrolled in a program of training services as specified under WIOA

(b) Dislocated Workers must;

(i) Be unemployed, **and**

- have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment allowance under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA) or the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)-TAA due to no fault of their own; **and**:
 - be enrolled in a program of training services as specified under WIOA by the end of the 13th week after 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,**

(ii) Or be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade adjustment assistance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA.

(iii) Additional eligibility requirements – In addition to the requirements above a dislocated worker who has ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation may be

eligible to receive assistance under needs-related payments only if the worker was enrolled in the training services;

- by the end of the 13th week after the most recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the eligibility for dislocated worker employment and training activities; or
- if later, by the end of the 8th week after the worker was informed that a short-term layoff will exceed 6 months.

Note: Needs-related payments may be provided to a participant waiting to start training classes if the participant has been accepted to a training program that will begin within 30 calendar days. Documentation of acceptance and start date must be contained in the file.

(c) Determination of the level of needs-related payments §680.970

The level of needs related payments shall be determined as follows:

(i) WIOA states that for adults local boards shall establish the level of needs related payments. The EAWDB has established that the needs related payment level for adults and dislocated workers will be the same.

(ii) For dislocated workers, payments must not exceed the greater of either of the following levels:

- The applicable weekly level of the unemployment compensation benefit, for participants who were eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation; or
- The poverty level 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 income, as determined by Local WDB policies. [WIOA sec. 134(e)(3)(C)] [CFR 680.970]. The EAWDB has determined that the adjustment will follow the UI guidelines of an additional \$25.00 per child per week for up to two children with maximum weekly adjustment of \$50.00.

(iii) Calculation

(a) Adults – For unemployed adults in need of and approved for needs related payments the HHS poverty guidelines for a family of 1 as published by NMDWS in the applicable program year (PY) Income table will be the base line. This figure will be divided by 52 weeks and adjusted by \$25.00 per week per child up to two dependent children under the age of 18. Documentation of dependent status and age must be obtained. The applicable income table must be maintained in the file.

Sample calculation from PY 16 income table: Jane is a single mother of 4 in training to be a nurse and is experiencing difficulty paying her rent while in school and will receive a needs related payment during PY 16.

HHS Poverty Guideline = $\$11,880 / 52 \text{ weeks} = \$ 228.46 + \50.00 (2 children) = \$278.46 for the eligible needs related payment amount.

(b) Dislocated Workers – Dislocated worker needs related payment amounts must not exceed the greater of either the weekly unemployment compensation amount or the HHS poverty level amount adjusted for family

size as stated above. Therefore, CDSs must obtain verification of UI payment amounts and calculate the eligible amount based on the applicable HHS poverty guideline following the instructions for the calculations for adults. The individual is eligible for up to the amount of the greater value of the two. The appropriate income table, the calculation and the UI verification must all be uploaded and maintained in the file.

Needs related Payments assistance must be submitted on the EAWDB Training and Employment Needs Related payment support form or its subsequent replacement and the appropriate NMWCOS supportive service activity and voucher created.

(6) Other Supportive Services: Supportive services not listed above may be paid to allow a participant to participate in training or employment services. Such items include but are not limited to:

- Uniforms, tools or work attire for employment related activities
- Legal aid services
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities
- Safety equipment for employment related activities
- Testing fees
- Licensing fees
- And training related needs not provided by the training provider including but not limited to: book rentals, tools not available through the training provider, book purchases through sources other than the training provider and prerequisite drug screening for individuals accepted into a training program requiring drug testing.

The request for approval of other supportive services must be submitted on the Request for Training and Employment related supportive services form or its subsequent replacement and the appropriate NMWCOS activity and voucher created.

(7) Supportive Service payment process: The local board has adopted, as is, the supportive procedures referenced herein.

(1) Direct Payment to Participants.

The appropriate Supportive Services Request and Approval forms shall be used to authorize supportive services payments for participants enrolled in training. Documents are to be uploaded to NMWCOS and reviewed as part of the voucher approval process by the contract manager or designee. Supporting payment documentation e.g. timesheets, receipts, etc. must be uploaded prior to submitting a request for payment. Requests for payment are to be submitted to the board's Fiscal Agent (FA) through the NMWCOS with a notification email sent to payments@nmwcc.com. The FA will review the documents and process them for payment, then enter the payment along with the check number and date into the NMWCOS. Checks will then be sent to the offices for distribution to the customer. Documentation of receipt of payment by the participant such as a signed copy of the check shall be obtained, uploaded and maintained in the participant's electronic record.

(2) Payment to Vendors and Service Providers. For payment to supply vendors and providers of medical care, and other health care services, the vendor must agree to accept WIOA as payment. A letter or other appropriate document verifying acceptance will be submitted to the

FA via the NMWCOS with the receipt or invoice from the provider of the service and submitted to the FA via the payment email request at payment@nmwcc.com. The check will be processed and returned to the office for payment to the vendor. Documentation of proof of receipt should be obtained, uploaded and maintained as part of the record.

For certain types of supportive services such as testing fees etc., the information on the type of fee, amount and date required will be obtained and a request processed to the FA for issuance of a check payable to the vendor for those fees. The check will then be processed by the FA paid against the voucher and sent to the CDS for distribution to the customer. Documentation of receipt of the payment must be obtained from the vendor and uploaded to the NMWCOS. Otherwise these payments will be treated as reimbursements to the participant's and will follow the guidelines established in (1) above.

C. YOUTH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Supportive services available to youth are included below and must be reasonable expenses approved by contract manager or his/her designee that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training and employment activities authorized under WIOA Title I The Career Development Specialist (CDS) must establish the need for the supportive service and include the need in the individuals' employment plan.

To prevent the duplication of costs and efforts, participants first must exhaust all related available services before WIOA supportive services will be authorized. The CDS must verify and document that the individual is not receiving assistance nor eligible to receive assistance for support from any other source and include documentation in the electronic file and counseling record as detailed in sections [4(A)(3-4)]above. Case notes in the file shall include information on all efforts made to identify alternative funding sources, what referrals were made and what services are not available locally. All documents pertaining to supportive services must be maintained in the participant's file.

The EAWDB requires the youth services provider to utilize NMWCOS Voucher System for generation and approval of supportive service obligations as well as for document transmittal and review of contracts. Therefore, in keeping with sound accounting principles, security access for voucher approval in the system is limited solely to the contract manager, his/her designee and the board's NMWCOS administrator (for corrections purposes only). The approval of the voucher by the contract manager or his/her designee shall therefore constitute approval of the service and obligation.

Supportive Services for Youth are those services defined in WIOA, and may include but are not limited to services such as:

- linkages to community services;
- transportation;
- child care, dependent care;
- housing;
- Needs related payments for youth 18-24;
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- Legal aid services;
- Referrals to health care;

- Assistance with work attire, work related tool costs including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
- Payments and fees for employment and training related applications, tests and certifications.
- incentives, stipends and other reasonable expenses approved by the contract manager or his/her designee that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training and employment activities authorized under WIOA.

(1) Transportation, Commuting Assistance and Temporary Shelter

The EAWDB has established the following procedures for determining transportation, temporary shelter and commuting assistance consistent with state policy. The contract manager may institute a funding limit for this service.

(a) Transportation assistance and commuting assistance

Transportation and commuting cost calculations will be based on the distance the participant is required to travel round trip from their residence to the training location. Reimbursement will be based on map miles and must be supported by attendance records. The documentation of mileage must be maintained in the participant file

The career development specialists will calculate amount of support allowable based a reimbursement rate of \$0.25 per mile.

Bus passes can also be purchased on behalf of and issued to youth participating in training activities. Bus pass purchases must be supported by receipts for the purchase, signature by the youth for receipt of the pass and attendance records supporting usage.

This will be the EAWDB’s primary transportation and commuting assistance supportive service process for youth participants not receiving any assistance from any other source.

(b) Temporary Housing Assistance

i. Emergency Short Term Housing Assistance

WIOA allows for supportive services payments in emergency situations related to housing or rental assistance so long as the participant's name is on the lease and not providing assistance would hinder the individual’s participation in or completion of the authorized WIOA activities. The file must contain documentation of the need that substantiates how the situation would hinder the participant's ability to complete training and how the situation will be rectified and that resources are not available from another source. Housing assistance requests would be submitted on the EAWDB HOUSING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REQUEST FORM or its subsequent replacement or similar form.

ii Training Related Short term housing assistance

Short term housing assistance may be provided to individuals that are attending training more than 60 miles from their permanent residence. The amount paid to the participant shall not exceed the participant's balance of unmet need.

(2) Child Care

(a) Child Care reimbursement eligibility: Childcare assistance may be provided to eligible participants who require such assistance to participate in a WIOA activity and whose need has been documented in their ISS. To qualify, participants must have legal responsibility or custody of the child(ren) twelve (12) years of age or younger (documentation of custody must be provided and maintained in the file), and must furnish documentation that other resources are not available (including family members).

(b)Exclusion:

Child care payment shall not be authorized when the Individual:

- i. Is receiving 100% of needed child care payments from another Source (e.g. Children, Youth and Families or other local service provider, etc.), or
- ii. Is absent entirely or in part from his/her regularly scheduled training activity. This includes holidays, except in instances in which partial days of attendance in observance of a holiday or related events are approved or scheduled by the training provider.

(c) Child care reimbursements levels

Child care assistance is available for up to three (3) children. A maximum payment of up to ten dollars (\$10.00) per day per child and up to thirty dollars per day of attendance per household is allowable. The total cost shall not exceed one hundred fifty dollars (150.00) per week. **For all child care reimbursement, the participant must submit a paid receipt either bi-weekly or monthly or there must be a written agreement by the child care provider to bill WIOA directly for service. In the presence of partial funding from another source WIOA will only pay the remaining balance. The contract manager may institute more restrictive funding limits for this service.**

CDS's must verify and track the age and time limitations of the participant's child(ren).

Child care reimbursement shall be calculated based on the following:

i. Home child care

Individuals providing child care (other than family members) shall be eligible for a maximum payment of five dollars (\$5.00) per day per child up to fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per day and seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per week.

ii. Certified day care providers (certified home day care)

For children placed with a certified day care provider reimbursement will be paid seven dollars (\$7.00) per day per child up to a maximum of twenty-one dollars (\$21.00) per day and one hundred five dollars (\$105.00) per week.

**A copy of the day care's certification must be submitted to the CDS and maintained in the participant's file.

iii. Licensed Day Care Providers

For children placed with a certified day care provider the reimbursement amount will be up to ten dollars (\$10.00) per day up to a maximum of thirty dollars (\$30.00) per day and one hundred fifty (\$150.00) per week.

**A copy of the day care's license shall be provided to the CDS and maintained in the participant's file.

(3) Medical and Health Care Supportive Services. Minor medical and health care services that may be provided include but are not limited to:

- Physical examinations;
- Eye and/or ear examinations;
- Filling of eyeglass prescriptions;
- Purchase of hearing aids;
- Purchase of orthopedic devices; and
- Other minor medical or health care services not listed herein that are necessary for the individual to participate in the program. Contingent upon available funding, a one-time maximum of three hundred fifty dollars (\$350.00) for minor health or medical-care service may be provided to participants enrolled in a WIOA funded training activity that require such assistance to participate in the program. The participant must provide proof of need (statement from health care or medical practitioner). The participant shall only be eligible for this assistance if he/she cannot obtain such services from other available resources (i.e. One-Stop partners, local community health care programs, etc.). The participant's inability to obtain the service from other sources must be provided and maintained in the participant's file by the CDS. The provider must agree to bill and accept payment for services from WIOA once services have been completed. The agreement must be documented in the participant file. Payment for services shall be made directly to the vendor or provider upon receipt of billing. In order for a participant to receive reimbursement for these services he/she must submit a paid invoice/receipt from the medical provider must be submitted. The contract manager may institute a more restrictive funding limit for this service.

(4) Needs-Related Payments. Needs-related payments provide financial assistance for enabling individuals to participate in training and are one of the supportive services authorized by WIOA and are subject to funding availability. Needs Related Payment assistance is subject to funding availability and shall not be provided to adults and dislocated workers when funding is limited and priority of service is in effect. Eligibility requirements for adults and dislocated workers to receive needs-related assistance are as follows [**§CFR 680.950-680.990**];

(a) Youth *must* be 18-24 years old at participation, out of school and:

(i) Be unemployed and;

- Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation and
- Be enrolled in a program of training services as specified under WIOA

(b) Determination of the level of needs-related payments §680.970

The level of needs related payments shall be determined as follows:

(i) For youth participants, payments must not exceed the greater of either of the following levels:

- The applicable weekly level of the unemployment compensation benefit, for participants who were eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation; **or**
- The poverty level 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 income, as determined by Local WDB policies. [WIOA sec. 134(e)(3)(C)] [CFR 680.970]. The EAWDB has determined that the adjustment will follow the UI guidelines of an additional \$25.00 per child per week up to two children for a maximum adjustment of \$50.00 per week.

(ii) Calculation – the calculation for the allowable amount of needs related payments to youth will follow the guidelines established for adults and dislocated workers in section [4(B)(5)(c.iii)] above.

(5) Group Supportive Services. Group supportive services may supplement supportive services provided to the individual, but such services must not be duplicative of services already provided (either paid through WIOA or other sources). Group supportive services are limited to safety equipment, work/training attire, transportation, meals and lodging for the target groups to be served in a specially designed program or project as approved by the local board, consistent with the local plan and in accordance with applicable RFP/Procurement procedures. The cost for such services must be reasonable and necessary as verified by the Service Provider. The participant file must contain documentation to substantiate the need in the participant file.

(6) Stipends: A stipend is a fixed and regular small payment such as an allowance. Reasonable stipends are allowable expenditures for work experience for youth when the provision of stipend is included in the participant's individual service strategy. Only WIOA youth funds may be used to fund stipends. Such stipends are not considered income.

Service providers may pay stipends to participants for their successful participation in and completion of education or training services (except OJT). Stipends may not be less than the Federal or State minimum wage whichever is higher.

(a) Strategies that provide for the use of the stipend: Stipends can be beneficial in allowing youth to participate in work experience activities that gain work readiness skills, occupational skills and basic skills. This affords the youth the means of providing some self-support while gaining necessary skills for the workforce.

(b) Only WIOA youth participating in training are eligible for stipends. The Comprehensive Youth Provider must develop a process for CDSs to utilize, process and pay stipends. The process must be consistent and include direction on determining the appropriateness and need for the youth.

Stipends are paid based on time participating (hours worked/trained) in the activity and must include a time sheet signed by the employer/trainer, youth and CDS. Documents must be maintained in the file for documentation of amounts paid to the youth. The use of stipends must be approved by the youth contract manager or designee. The NMWCOS voucher approval will constitute the approval use of stipends.

(7) Incentives: Incentives are compensation in the form of cash, checks, gift cards, and nonmonetary gifts or vouchers provided to a customer in exchange for meeting specific goals and outcomes defined on the customer's ISS. Incentives give youth providers opportunities to improve employment, training, and education outcomes and must be tied directly to work experience, education or training. Incentives are a way to encourage workforce participants' participation or to reward participants for achieving specific elements defined in an ISS or IEP. Incentives cannot take the form of entertainment. Therefore WIOA funds cannot be expended on incentives such as movie tickets, sporting event tickets, or gift cards to places whose purpose is for entertainment. The provider may leverage funds for incentives that WIOA cannot fund.

Incentives are not considered income but bonuses for meeting or exceeding employability or training goals that are established in writing in the individual employment plan.

The youth program manager must develop a plan for the use of incentives that provides guidance for staff on the approval process for incentives and the equal availability for them.

(8) Other Supportive Services: Supportive services not listed above may be paid to allow a participant to participate in training or employment services. Such items include but are not limited to:

- Uniforms, tools or work attire for employment related activities
- Safety equipment for employment related activities
- Testing fees
- Licensing fees
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities
- Legal aid services
- And training related needs not provided by the training provider including but not limited to: book rentals, tools not available through the training provider, book purchases through sources other than the training provider and prerequisite drug screening for individuals accepted into a training program requiring drug testing.

(9) Payment of Supportive Services: For youth supportive services are paid directly by the youth provider and will follow the guidelines established below. All documents, payment and proof of receipt of payment as applicable must be maintained in the participant's electronic file.

(1) Direct Payment to Participants.

The appropriate Supportive Services Request and Approval forms shall be used to authorize supportive services payments for participants enrolled in the WIOA youth program. The Supportive Services Request and Approval form appropriate to the type of support being provided will be submitted to the Youth Contract Manager for approval. Supporting documentation e.g. timesheets, receipts etc. must accompany the payment information as part of the permanent file.

(2) Payment to Vendors and Service Providers.

For payment to vendors and providers of medical care, and services, the vendor must agree to accept WIOA as payment. A letter or other appropriate document verifying acceptance will be submitted to the youth contract manager with request for approval and maintained as part of the permanent record. The approval must take place prior to the receipt of goods or services.

The check copy, purchase order, receipts, invoice and any other pertinent documents will be maintained in the participants' case files.