



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

1
2 **Division: Workforce Services Division**
3 **Category: Program Operations**
4 **Effective Date: 07/01/2017**
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6 **Policy No.: 11-17**

7 Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Link PLUS Policy

8 **Background:** The 2015 Montana Legislature established the Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership
9 (HELP) Act through a collaborative effort between Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)
10 and Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) in Senate Bill 405. This Act will provide Medicaid coverage and
11 workforce development opportunities for adults ages 19-64 with income less than 138% of the federal poverty
12 rate. Through SB 405, DLI is required to identify workforce development opportunities for program clients;
13 gather information from state agencies on existing workforce development programs and opportunities; and
14 establish a comprehensive plan for coordinating efforts and resources to provide workforce development
15 opportunities. Under the guidance of SB 405, DLI implemented a workforce development program, referred to
16 as HELP Link, that focuses on specific labor force needs within the state of Montana; established the goal of
17 reducing the number of people depending on social programs, including the HELP Act; and created a model to
18 increase the earning capacity, economic stability, and self-sufficiency of program clients so that, among other
19 benefits, the clients are able to purchase their own health insurance coverage. A client is not required to receive
20 services from DLI. However, if a client meets two of six criteria, one of which is being enrolled in the HELP Link
21 program, and fails to pay monthly premiums they will not be subject to voluntary disenrollment.

22 In May of 2016, DPHHS and DLI entered an additional agreement to further support HELP Link clients. This
23 agreement will utilize Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds; the enhancement funds will
24 provide additional supports and opportunities that will increase clients' earning capacity and provide for
25 economic self-sufficiency.

26 **Scope:** This policy applies to all Job Service workforce consultants assisting clients with HELP Link PLUS, Job
27 Service office managers and supervisors and HELP Link PLUS program manager. Additionally, Registered
28 Apprenticeship and HealthCARE MT who assist in case management for clients are subject to this policy. This
29 policy is effective July 1, 2017.

30 **Policy:**

- 31 • A client is eligible for HELP Link PLUS when they are enrolled in HELP Link and are eligible for TANF.
32 DPHHS will provide a list of eligible program clients.

33 **Supportive Service Delivery:**

- 34 • Supportive services shall only be used to pay for specific necessary services and shall be limited to
35 payments that are necessary for participation in the program. Documentation must be maintained in
36 the client's files. Source documentation includes but is not limited to actual bills and receipts for goods
37 and services purchased. Accepting a client's self-disclosure or declaration of expenses as
38 documentation is not allowable. Additionally, source documentation must be current and not incurred
39 prior to the individual's enrollment in a HELP Link PLUS program. The provider is responsible for

1 documenting in the case notes that the service is not available from any other source (including the
2 client's own resources).

- 3 • A supportive service request form documenting the need for the supportive service must be completed
4 prior to receipt of the supportive service. The supportive services request must include:
 - 5 ○ A brief description of the expenditure;
 - 6 ○ The amount requested; and
 - 7 ○ The signatures of the case manager and client, as well as the date the request was signed.
- 8 • Providers may use the MWorks Payment Authorization form or a form of their own if the supportive
9 service request has the required elements as described above.
- 10 • All supportive services must have been approved prior to the client receiving or obtaining the goods or
11 services. Backdated requests for services will not be approved.
- 12 • A client may waive HELP Link PLUS payments (except for a paid Work Experience) if accepting payment
13 would mean the loss of the benefits. The client may request the payment to start at a later date, but
14 may not claim retroactive payments. Advances against future payments are not allowed.
- 15 • Supportive services cannot be used to pay for charges that were incurred prior to the client's
16 enrollment. Therefore, to be eligible, a client must have been determined HELP Link PLUS eligible and
17 are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.
- 18 • Service providers shall provide no further payments to clients that fail to participate without good cause.

19 Supportive Services Paid Directly to Clients:

- 20 • Supportive service payments shall only be paid for mileage and per diem for intercommunity travel. All
21 other supportive services must be paid directly to a vendor.
- 22 • Mileage and per diem payments made to a client must be paid prior to or during training. Mileage and
23 per diem may not be reimbursed. Mileage and per diem client payments may be paid for a maximum of
24 2 weeks at a time.
- 25 • Payments paid directly to a client that are \$500 or more, must have prior approval from the Program
26 Manager and must be requested by using the direct payment form. The \$500 limit is a cumulative total
27 from any and all programs the client is enrolled in.

28 Allowable Supportive Services Include but are not Limited to:

- 29 • Transportation – Providing transportation for a client enables him/her to get to and from HELP Link
30 PLUS activities.
 - 31 ○ Public and private transportation is payable if it will reasonably meet the clients need. Not to
32 exceed IRS rate.
 - 33 ○ Inter-community travel (beginning and ending transportation to a training facility). Clients will be
34 paid a transportation allowance for the trip from his/her residence to the training facility at the
35 beginning of training and on the return to his/her regular place of residence after completion of
36 the scheduled training course. Clients cannot be reimbursed for travel to and from the training
37 facility and their place of residence on the weekends or for breaks.
 - 38 ▪ **Exception:** Service providers should consider what is most economical in this situation.
39 In other words, if it is more cost efficient for the client to drive home than stay in the
40 motel over the weekend or break the service provider may reimburse the client for the
41 travel. Inter-community transportation will be at the cost of the most economical public
42 transportation or, if the client uses a private automobile, mileage shown on the State
43 Highway Department map as the distance between the two points. Whenever possible, a
44 client receiving an inter-community transportation payment under this section is
45 expected to relocate within a reasonable radius of the out-of-area training facility.
 - 46 ○ Auto repair payment will be authorized only if the vehicle is needed for the client to seek, accept
47 or retain employment or to participate in employment and training activities.
 - 48 ▪ Auto repair shall not exceed the value of the automobile. Documentation must be
49 retained in client file verifying the repair did not exceed the value of the automobile.

- 1 ▪ The vehicle being repaired must be under the ownership of the client. This shall be
2 documented by obtaining a copy of the vehicle registration. Exceptions may be made if
3 the vehicle belongs to another family member and is the only means of transportation
4 available to the client. Exception must be documented in client file.
- 5 ▪ A description of the repairs needed and provided must be maintained in the client file.
- 6 ○ Liability insurance coverage will be authorized only if the vehicle is needed for the client to seek,
7 accept or retain employment or to participate in employment and training activities.
 - 8 ▪ Automobile insurance may be covered for a maximum of two quarters of annual liability
9 coverage for a 12-month period. No more than three months coverage may be paid for
10 at one time.
 - 11 ▪ Liability coverage may not include optional coverage such as medical payment coverage,
12 uninsured motor vehicle coverage, underinsured motor vehicle coverage,
13 comprehensive coverage, collision coverage, emergency road service or membership
14 fees to insurance companies.
 - 15 ▪ The vehicle being insured must be under the ownership of the client. This shall be
16 documented by obtaining a copy of the vehicle registration. Exceptions may be made if
17 the vehicle belongs to another family member and is the only means of transportation
18 available to the client. Exception must be documented in client file.
 - 19 ▪ Insurance documentation must include a detailed description of liability coverage and
20 be maintained in the client's file.
- 21 ● Tools – tools may be purchased for clients, if the tools are required to continue a training program or
22 obtain employment. The service provider must determine that the tools are required and that they
23 cannot be provided by any other source such as the prospective employer, or the client. No item may
24 exceed \$5000. Tools become the property of the client upon satisfactory completion of the HELP Link
25 PLUS training or employment. If the client fails to complete the prescribed HELP Link PLUS training, the
26 tools remain the property of HELP Link PLUS and are to be returned to the service provider. An
27 agreement attesting to the above must be signed by the client and maintained in the client file. Tools
28 purchased for training or work-related purposes shall be categorized as Training or Employment Related
29 Supplies for Supportive Services.
 - 30 ○ Computer purchases may be approved as a required tool in limited cases. Case managers must
31 request approval from the Program Manager prior to a computer purchase. The Computer
32 Purchase Request Questionnaire (form WIOA.52) is required for the computer request.
 - 33 ○ Tool and Computer Return – Service providers are to maintain an inventory list of all return tools
34 and computers. The inventory list must include the month and year the item was purchased; a
35 description of the item; the general condition of the item; the month and year the item is
36 removed from inventory, the funding source used to originally purchase the item and the status
37 of the item's disposal.
 - 38 ○ Disposal of Inventory – Providers shall retain returned inventory for a reasonable period of time
39 based on the condition and usefulness of the item. If an item has been kept in inventory for a
40 reasonable period and has not been able to pass on to another program client, then the item
41 can be donated to a non-profit organization. Inventory items cannot be passed on to staff of the
42 service provider or to any individual where a conflict of interest might be perceived.
- 43 ● Out of Area Job Search and Relocation Assistance - a client may be provided assistance with travel
44 related costs for out of area job search such as mileage, plane ticket, per diem, and lodging. Prior to
45 approval, the client must be able to provide documentation of at least one interview for an existing
46 opening that fits with the client's employment plan. Out of area is defined as outside a reasonable
47 commuting distance from the client's community.
 - 48 ○ A client may be provided assistance with costs incurred during out of area training or other
49 activities (such as a licensing test) that are part of their employment plan. Lodging, per diem,
50 mileage and other reasonable and necessary costs may be covered. When calculating the level
51 of assistance, providers may opt to cover actual costs or use Federal mileage, lodging and per

- 1 diem rates and cover any amount up to that level based on available budget and other sources
2 of assistance.
- 3 o Relocation assistance may be provided to a client who obtains suitable employment that
4 requires relocation from the client's community. Assistance can be provided for costs such as
5 payment for a rental moving truck, mileage, per diem, and lodging for the period of the move.
6 Relocation shall not be provided without documentation of a job offer.
- 7 • Payment of internet services is allowable for a client enrolled in online training or if it enables the client to
8 seek, accept or retain employment.
- 9 • Other supportive services may be provided as determined by the service provider. The cost cannot be
10 for goods or services that meet an ongoing basic need. These services may include, but are not limited
11 to:
- 12 o Haircuts, personal grooming and hygiene needs;
13 o Bonding and liability insurance for employment;
14 o Clothing includes clothing for interviews and depending on circumstances may be paid out of
15 Training Related fees/Materials/Supplies or Work-Related Materials/Supplies under other
16 supportive services;
17 o Financial counseling or assistance only if not available free of charge from another provider in
18 the area;
19 o Application fees and GED or State approved high school equivalency program fees only if not
20 available free of charge from another provider in the area;
21 o Union dues or initiation fees;
22 o Auxiliary aides and services for clients with disabilities;
23 o Business licenses;
24 o Cell phone purchases and phone cards;
25 o Drug testing – only for CDL training programs or for other job-related training or employment;
26 o Background checks (depending on circumstances this may be paid out of Training Related
27 fees/Materials/Supplies or Work-related materials/Supplies under other supportive services);
28 o Supplies, tools and equipment needed to begin self-employment (must have prior approval from
29 Program Manager). For example, products needed to begin work as a nail technician or
30 cosmetologist may be approved but booth rental would not. No item may exceed \$5000; or
31 o Reinstatement of license fees.

32 Unallowable Supportive Services:

- 33 • Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated.
34 Such items include:
- 35 o Rent deposits or housing deposits;
36 o Mortgage payments; homeowner's insurance; property taxes;
37 o Car payments;
38 o Purchase of vehicles;
39 o Fines; and
40 o Late fees
- 41 • Payments are not allowed for expenses incurred prior to enrollment in HELP Link PLUS.
- 42 • Business startup costs that would be considered capitalization or the acquisition of business assets
43 are not allowed. The purchase of equipment (with prior approval from the Program Manager) is
44 allowable.
- 45 • Medical Services.
- 46 • Services that meet a basic need and can be considered "Assistance" under 45 CFR 260.31.
47 Housing and utilities are not allowable, but individuals can be referred to the Office of Public
48 Assistance for Emergency Assistance if needed.
- 49 • Child care may not be paid for with HELP Link PLUS funds, however an individual may be referred to
50 the Child Care Resource and Referral contractor in their area.

- 1 • No item with a cost of more than \$5000 may be purchased.

2 Administrative Requirements:

- 3 • Feedback to and from both DPHHS and DLI to communicate client involvement in HELP Link PLUS and
- 4 services provided.
- 5 • Provide data and reports as needed.

6 Funding:

- 7 • DPHHS will fund up to \$250,000 in workforce development activities to DLI through June 30, 2018.

8 References:

- 9 • [CFR 45 260.31 Definition of Assistance](#)