# **Logo for Montana Department of Labor and Industry. The logo is several people hold hands around the center of a wheel.Division: Workforce Services Division**

**Category: Programs**

**Effective Date: 10/1/2021**

**Last Revised: 10/1/2021**

**Policy No.: 04-16**

Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Link

Policy – Supportive Services

Background

HELP-Link Supportive Services are payments for goods and services reasonable and necessary for an enrolled client to participate in HELP-Link activities or to obtain/maintain employment. Supportive services are available to HELP-Link clients enrolled in HELP-Link, Diversion Assistance, Training Support Scholarships, and the first 30 days of HELP-Link Follow-up. Supportive Services are not available to Workforce Development Grant clients.

Scope

This policy applies to all MTDLI HELP-Link contractors and MTDLI Central Office staff. This policy is effective October 1, 2021.

# Policy

* Supportive services must be paid directly to a vendor with the exception of allowable direct client payments. All vendors must be willing and able to submit a W-9 form to receive payment.
* All supportive services must adhere to the guidelines in Cost Principles, Allowable Costs and Unallowable Costs Policy.
* Supportive services are allowable when the client is actively participating in HELP-Link activities.
* Supportive Service requests must document the need for assistance and be completed prior to payment. The supportive service request must include:
  + A brief description of the expenditure;
  + Dollar amount requested; and
  + Signatures of both staff and client, as well as the date the request was signed.

Allowable Supportive Services

* **Health Care and Medical** expenses are of a one-time nature; expenses cannot be ongoing. Health insurance payments are not an allowable expense.
* **Childcare** expenses required to ensure proper care of children only while the parent or guardian is participating in employment and/or training activities. The parent or guardian must first apply for the Best Beginnings Childcare Scholarship before HELP-Link funds may be utilized. The childcare provider must be licensed or registered. If no licensed and/or registered provider of care is available or adequate, payment to a non-licensed or non-registered provider is allowable, however, the client’s file must contain documentation from the Best Beginnings program indicating no licensed and/or registered provider is available in the client’s area. Allowable childcare cost may be reimbursed up to the Statewide Best Beginnings Reimbursement Rates.
* **Transportation**. Public and private transportation is payable up to the current rate per state travel policy. HELP-Link contractors may set a lower rate but must be consistent for all clients. Mileage costs are only paid for the most direct route. Inter-community travel is payable round trip to account for traveling to and returning from training. Multiple round-trip travel expenses are not allowable unless lodging cost exceed travel cost to and from the training facility. Purchase of vehicles and car payments are not allowable.
* **Lodging**. Rates may be payable up to the current rate per state travel policy.
* **Automobile Liability Insurance**. No more than 3 months’ coverage may be paid at a time. The vehicle being insured must be owned by the client or family within the client’s documented household and the vehicle is the only vehicle available to the client. If the vehicle is owned by a family member, written documentation must be obtained from the vehicle owner granting permission to use and insure the vehicle as well as a statement that the vehicle is the only means of transportation for the client. Valid driver’s license and vehicle registration must be obtained and included as part of the supportive service request. Liability coverage does not include optional coverage such as medical payment coverage, uninsured motor vehicle coverage, underinsured motor vehicle coverage, comprehensive coverage, collision coverage, emergency road service or membership fees to insurance companies.
* **Automobile Repair**. The vehicle being repaired must be owned by the client or family within the client’s documented household and the vehicle is the only vehicle available to the client. If the vehicle is owned by a family member, written documentation must be obtained from the vehicle owner granting permission to use and repair the vehicle as well as a statement that the vehicle is the only means of transportation for the client. Valid driver’s license, vehicle registration, proof of liability insurance, documentation of the vehicle value, and at least 2 repair quotes must be obtained and included as part of the supportive service request. Payment is allowable for the lesser of the two quotes. Repair costs which exceed the value of the vehicle are not allowed.
* **Employment and Training Related Expenses, Tools, Equipment, and Attire**. Expenses for self-employment is also allowable.
* **Housing** expenses for rent payments only. Mortgage payments, rental deposits (including last month’s rent), insurance, and property taxes are not allowable. Documentation of rental or lease agreement must be in the clients file. Payments must be made directly to the landlord. The landlord must be willing and able to submit a W-9 form to receive payment.
* **Out of Area Job Search** assistance includes expenses related to travel and lodging when a verified interview is provided prior to authorization.
* **Employment Relocation** assistance includes expenses related to travel and lodging when relocating for a verified job offer which is presented prior to authorization. Assistance may continue until employment begins. Relocation must be greater than 50 miles from the client’s community.
* **Internet Services**. Payments may only be made on a monthly basis.
* **Computers and Technology Devices** are allowable in limited cases where the item is necessary to reach employment and training plan goals.
* **Supportive Services Paid Directly to Clients** are only allowable for mileage, meals, and lodging during travel. Payments made to a client must be paid prior to or during training and may only be paid for a maximum of two (2) weeks at a time. Rates are payable up to the current rate per state travel policy. HELP-Link contractors may set a lower rate but must be consistent for all clients.
* **Other Supportive Services** may be provided when reasonable and necessary for the client to continue participation in HELP-Link activities or obtain/maintain employment. Examples of these goods and services may include:
  + Personal grooming and hygiene needs
  + Financial literacy
  + Testing or re-instatement fees
  + Current utilities: power, water/sewer, gas/propane, telephone bills/phone cards

Unallowable Supportive Services

* Payments for titled or deeded items
* When recovery of the expense is anticipated
* Fines, restitution, probation/parole fees, or other court ordered obligations
* Business start-up costs

# Administrative Requirements

* Feedback to and from both DPHHS and MTDLI to communicate client involvement in HELP-Link and services provided.
* Provide data and information to legislative subcommittees regarding program participation, expenditures, and outcomes.
* Provide data and reports to DPHHS as needed.

# Oversight and Evaluation

* Oversight and evaluation will be conducted by the Program Manager and/or designee(s).

# References

* [2015 Montana Legislature Senate Bill 405](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billhtml/SB0405.htm)
* [2019 Montana Legislature House Bill 658](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/2019/billhtml/HB0658.htm)
* 2021 Montana Legislature House Bill 614
* [Montana Code Annotated (MCA), 39-12](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0390/chapter_0120/part_0010/sections_index.html)