



# Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

Division: Workforce Services Division  
Category: WIOA  
Original Effective Date: 08/24/2017  
Last Revised: 04/01/2025  
Policy No.: 08-16

## Supportive Services Policy

**Background:** Supportive Services are services and resources that are necessary to enable a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participant to participate in WIOA activities when a participant is unable to obtain those services and resources through other sources or programs. Providers must ensure service and resource coordination at the local level.

Eligibility or enrollment in WIOA does not constitute entitlement to any supportive service. Supportive Services funding is based on availability of program funds. Supportive Services are not intended to meet every need of the participant. Rather, they provide temporary assistance.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all service providers operating WIOA Title I or National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) programs; WIOA and National Dislocated Worker Grants program managers; WIOA fiscal officers; and the WIOA monitoring team. This policy is effective April 1, 2025.

## Policy:

### Supportive Services:

- Supportive service funds may only be used to pay for services that are reasonable and necessary for participation in the program. The participants must be enrolled and actively participating in the program to receive supportive services. The individual determination of need and the amount of assistance will be based upon the results of the comprehensive or objective assessments and a financial assessment. A detailed case note must be completed prior to providing services and assisting with any payments.
- The case manager must consider and document the following justification:
  - The specific WIOA activity;
  - Barrier/need;
  - A description of how the expense helps the participant achieve their goal;
  - A description of how the expense amount was determined; and
  - Estimated length of assistance.
- Supportive services documentation must be maintained in the participant file and must include the following information:
  - The amount requested;
  - Supportive services are unavailable through other programs providing such services; and
  - The dated signatures of the case manager and the participant; an electronic request from the participant will be accepted as a signature.

- All supportive services must be requested and approved by the case manager prior to the participant receiving or obtaining the goods or services. Backdated expenditures are not allowed. Funds may not be used to pay for charges incurred prior to the participant's enrollment or participation in career or training services or after program participation ends.
- Service providers must record expenditures within 7 working days of payment.

#### Allowable Supportive Services:

- Supportive services may include but are not limited to the following (with additional details provided in the WIOA Operations Manual):
  - Community-based services and resources;
  - Assistance with transportation;
    - Travel costs, such as mileage, must be consistent with the Service Provider's travel policy and payments may not exceed the IRS mileage rate or GSA per diem rates. Travel costs paid in advance may not be paid for more than two (2) weeks of travel at a time. Verification and documentation that gas was utilized for the intended purpose is required. For verification examples, please refer to the WIOA Operations Manual.
    - The most economical public or private transportation is allowable if it will reasonably meet the participant's need to participate in program activities.
    - Assistance with travel costs from the participant's residence to the training for the beginning of training and for the return trip at the completion of the training is allowable. Payment for return trips home during breaks or weekends are allowed if they are less expensive than the lodging expense during those breaks or weekends.
    - Mileage will not be paid for a distance greater than the number of miles in the most direct route from participant residence to training location.
    - Out-of-Area assistance – out of area is defined as more than 50 miles from the participant's community. The participant may be assisted with costs for out of area activities, including job search, relocation, lodging, mileage, plane ticket, rental vehicle, per diem, and other reasonable costs that fits with the participant's employment plan. Prior to case manager approval, the participant must be able to provide documentation of at least one interview if assisting with job search or a verified job offer if assisting with relocating to a job.
    - Auto repair for immediate need and if the vehicle is the only one available to the participant. Purchasing tires is an allowable cost if the vehicle is needed for participation in employment and training activities or for the participant to seek, accept, or retain employment. A description of repairs needed must be maintained in the participant file. Auto repair will not exceed the value of the automobile. Documentation of the vehicle value must be in the participant file as determined by vehicle valuation source such as Kelly Blue Book, NADA, or a similar resource. If the vehicle is owned by another individual, written documentation must be obtained from the owner stating that the participant has permission to use and repair the vehicle and that the vehicle is the only means of transportation. Vehicle registration and proof of liability insurance must be obtained and included in participant file as documentation.
    - Automobile liability insurance coverage will be authorized only if the vehicle is needed for the participant to accept or retain employment or to participate in employment and training activities.
      - Automobile liability insurance (property damage and bodily injury) may be covered for three (3) months with an additional extension of three (3) months with verification of need.
      - If the vehicle is owned by another individual other than the participant, written documentation must be obtained from the owner stating that the participant has permission to insure the vehicle and that the vehicle is the only means of

transportation. Vehicle registration must be obtained and included in the participant's file as documentation.

- Assistance with childcare and dependent care:
  - Child and dependent care costs may be paid at the local documented rate. The child or dependent care provider must be licensed and/or registered. If no licensed and/or registered provider of care is available or adequate, the case manager will make a case note indicating the situation prior to providing payment to the non-licensed or non-registered provider.
- Assistance with housing;
  - Housing assistance allows participants to maintain or obtain adequate or temporary shelter while participating in the program. A signed rental or lease agreement must be obtained and included in the participant file prior to issuance of payment;
  - If a signed rental agreement is not available, then a Verification of Rent Form (WIOA.39) must be completed. Once the case manager receives the form, they must:
    - Call the landlord to verify that the participant is their renter and there is an understanding in place; or
    - Request a rental receipt to attach to the verification form
- Assistance with educational testing;
  - Funds may be used for application fees and HiSET or State Approved High School Equivalency program fees or tests.
  - Funds may be used for occupational testing.
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities for participants attending training or for securing or obtaining employment
- Legal aid services;
  - Legal aid services may only be provided when the service is not available through other agencies or organization and the service is necessary for the individual to participate in WIOA activities. Assistance may only be provided in civil, non-criminal legal problems.
- Health-related services;
  - This includes assisting the participant to find a healthcare provider who will accept the participant's health insurance; or referrals to a health insurance provider. If a participant applies for health insurance coverage and is unable to obtain coverage through any other source, WIOA funds may be used to pay insurance premiums while the participant is attending training.
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools and equipment;
  - Clothing includes clothing for interviews and/or clothing required as personal protective equipment not otherwise supplied by the business.
  - Tools that are required to obtain or continue employment are an allowable cost. The case manager must first determine that the requested tools cannot be provided by any other source such as the prospective employer or participant.
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies and other necessary items for students enrolled in training;
  - Tools that are required to begin or continue a training program are an allowable cost. The case manager must first determine that the requested tools cannot be provided by any other source such as the training provider or participant.
  - Tools become the property of the participant upon satisfactory completion of the WIOA training outlined in the participant's IEP, ISS or upon employment.
  - Computer purchases, in limited cases, are approved expenses. This is most typically, but not exclusively, in distance learning situations. Case Managers must obtain documentation from the participant to justify the computer request and supervisor approval prior to purchase.

- Internet services are considered an allowable expense for participants attending training.

- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests and certifications;
  - Allowable costs include union dues or initiation fees; business license fees; bonding and liability insurance for employment; drug testing; background checks; an assessment, course, and court-order treatment; and/or tools and equipment needed for self-employment.
- Other supportive services may be provided as determined by the service provider. Such goods and services will be reasonable and necessary for the participant to remain in training and/or obtain or retain employment. These services may include but are not limited to:
  - Haircuts, personal grooming and hygiene needs;
  - Financial counseling or assistance;
  - Utilities, may include power, water, propane or phone bills; and
  - Cell phone purchases and phone cards.

#### Unallowable Supportive Services:

- Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated. Such items include but are not limited to:
  - Rent deposits or housing deposits;
  - Mortgage payments, homeowner's insurance, and property taxes;
  - Car payments; and
  - Purchase of vehicles.
- Other unallowable expenses include:
  - Business start-up costs
  - Booth Rental
  - Gift Cards (except gas cards)
  - Fines
  - Late fees
  - Household items
  - Groceries
  - Meals for participants when not in a travel status; and
  - Foreign travel expenses.

#### Supportive Services Paid Directly to Participants:

- Supportive services paid directly to participants are only allowable for mileage and per diem which includes meals and lodging.
- Any single payment paid directly to a participant that is more than \$1,000 must have a written request approved by the service provider supervisor prior to issuing the payment. All payments paid directly to the participant that are less than \$1,000 must be tracked by a running cumulative total and documented in the participant file. When the cumulative total of multiple payments to the participant will exceed \$1,000, written approval must be obtained from the service provider supervisor.

#### Supportive Services During Follow-Up:

- Supportive service payments may not be paid to, or on behalf of, Adult, Dislocated Worker or NDWG participants while enrolled in follow-up.
- Limited supportive services may be paid for a Youth participant during follow-up as appropriate to retain or obtain employment.

#### Monitoring and Technical Assistance:

- A formal monitoring will be conducted by the entity designated by SWIB.

- 185       • The WIOA Title I program managers and/or WIOA fiscal officer will provide technical assistance to case  
186 managers.  
187

188   References:

- 189       • [20 CFR 680 Part G Supportive Services](#)  
190       • [WIOA Section 3 \(59\) and Section 134 \(d\) 2-3](#)  
191       • [TEGL 19-16 Adult and Dislocated Worker Services](#)  
192       • [20 CFR 681 Subpart C Youth Program Design, Elements, and Parameters](#)  
193       • [Quick Fact: Supportive Services and Training Completion](#)