

DRAFT SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for allowable supportive services, general limitations, and documentation necessary for supportive services.

BACKGROUND

Support Services are available for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. Support Services are one of the 14 Title I Youth elements that must be made available to participants.

DEFINITIONS AND LIMITS OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The term “supportive services” refers to those financial-based or physical accommodations that are reasonable and necessary and/or required for a customer to participate in activities authorized under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Supportive services are designed to provide a participant with the resources necessary to enable their participation in career and training services.

Any participant who is enrolled, may be eligible for supportive services if they are unable to obtain assistance from other agencies providing such services. In general, supportive services may include training-related and employment-related expenses necessary to obtain or retain employment.

Needs-related payments can help individuals who may not have the resources available to participate in training meet their non-training expense to complete training successfully. A participant must be enrolled in a WIOA-funded training program to receive needs-related payments and must meet eligibility criteria set by the WIOA.

A participant’s need for supportive services must be noted when developing and updating the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Therefore, a thorough understanding of the resources and services available from other state, federal, or local agencies is pivotal in providing services with funds.

A Support Service should be reasonable and necessary to enable a participant to take part in other services and activities related to the Employment Plan. A Support Service should not duplicate a service a participant receives from another program. In assessing appropriateness for a Support Service, GuilfordWorks will utilize and refer participants to partner agencies and community resources first. If possible, it may be applicable to cost share with other service providers.

Support Services are not intended to meet every need of the participant. Rather, they provide temporary assistance. For this reason, staff should assist the participant in developing a plan to cover the supported costs once WIOA Title I funds are no longer appropriate for the individual. This plan must be

documented in case notes in NCWORKS.

The use of a Support Service is determined on an individual basis. Fund distribution is determined at the job service office with guidance from a Labor Program Specialist as needed. Eligibility or enrollment in WIOA does not constitute entitlement to any Support Service. Support Service funding is based on availability of program funds.

FUNDING

Supportive Services shall be provided individually for specific needs. Because WIOA funded programs are not entitlements, Supportive Services payments may be made on a case-by-case basis only when determined necessary and reasonable.

Due to funding limitations, GuilfordWorks customers are allowed minimal Supportive Services. All Supportive Services will be based on the individual need of the customer and the availability of funding. The availability of and referral to supportive services is one of the career services that must be made available to participants. All efforts to secure supportive services from other sources must be first exhausted and documented in the proper form before expending funds.

WIOA Supportive Services funding is to be used as the last resort and all other sources of funding must be sought first. All attempts to find other Supportive Services funding and the reasons WIOA funding is needed must be documented in the participant's case file, as required by the service provider's contract with GuilfordWorks and in compliance with the Fiscal and Program Reporting procedures.

The amount of Supportive Services per eligible participant would not exceed \$1,000.00 annually and is subject to the availability of GuilfordWorks service provider grant funding. Annually is defined as 365 days from when the Supportive Services request was approved.

GuilfordWorks service providers shall develop policies and procedures for Supportive Services that embody the following elements:

- Service provider staff are knowledgeable of other support resource entities that are accessible within the local area.
- Supportive Services provided are allowable, necessary, and reasonable for the individual to participate in GuilfordWorks workforce-funded programs and activities.
- Coordination and referral processes with other service providing entities are in place to prevent duplication of services.
- Supportive Services cannot be provided as stand-alone services, and can only be provided in support of GuilfordWorks funded workforce programs and activities.
- Supportive Services must be documented using the GuilfordWorks Supportive Services Payments Determination/Certification Record form, maintained with the IEP/ISS in each participant's file, or case notes.
- Participants may be eligible for Supportive Services only while enrolled and actively engaged in GuilfordWorks workforce-funded programs and activities.

NON WIOA FUNDING

A separate budget will establish the funding available for non WIOA funding such as grants from private and public entities, WIOA applicants with an FLG designation can access this funding. The maximum amount allowed annually for these sources is \$4,000.

PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Supportive services may only be provided to enrolled individuals, who are participants in career and/or training services. Staff must establish need by verifying that customers are enrolled in career and/or training services and determine that requested services provided are reasonable and necessary.
2. Staff are responsible for ensuring that participants are informed of the available services and procedural requirements and notified that they are not automatically entitled to supportive services. Supportive services are not entitlements and are subject to funding availability.
3. Supportive services may only be provided to individuals, who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs that provide such services. An attempt to identify alternative resources for any service requested by the customer must be documented. Referrals to community resources shall be documented in case notes including item or service requested and name of community resource that the customer was referred to.
4. Participants shall prepare a personal budget verifying they do not have the financial resources to obtain the service. The most current budget must be included in the participant record.
5. Supportive services provided must be reasonable, necessary, and allowable based on established local, State and Federal guidelines and regulations.
6. All supportive service payments must be relevant to the results of the objective assessment of each participant's IEP/ISS. The need for supportive services must be listed in the participant's IEP/ISS.
7. Supportive services cannot be provided retroactively. All supportive services must be pre- approved as outlined in this policy.
8. The cost of supportive services must demonstrate a direct connection in placement of a participant in employment activities or education and training programs, which will eventually lead to unsubsidized employment, and assist in building skills needed to succeed in the workplace.
9. Supportive services require the submission of a Supportive Services Request Form (example in Attachment I). The form must be completed in its entirety and signed by the participant and applicable program staff. Failure to properly complete the supportive services forms may result in a delay/denial of the request for supportive services. If a Service Provider already has a form in use, it must include all the elements from Attachment I.

10. Each request for supportive services must be clearly documented in the NCWorks.gov case notes. The case note must include the participant's individual needs and how these needs relate to the supportive services request. For example:

Supportive service assistance for (insert type of supportive service) was requested by (insert participant name). All practical alternatives have been exhausted (name attempted resources) to obtain these supportive services through other resources. (Insert participant's name) requires this assistance to complete (his/her) (insert type of activity). The cost for this supportive service is (insert actual amount). Supportive service funds will be used to pay for this supportive service, and the participant has received a total of (\$000.00) in supportive services year-to-date, not including this service. This request is approved by (insert approving Manager name.)

11. Input appropriate service code in NCWorks.gov with the actual date of receipt as the start and end date. Each supportive service activity must be opened as a new activity in NCWorks.gov. If participants receive supportive services in the period of follow-up, designated activity codes for follow-up services shall be used and entered in NCWorks.
12. A copy of the supportive service (card, check, etc.) shall be made and placed in the participant's file. The participant shall sign and date the copy upon receipt. This copy must be placed in the participant's file.
13. Special situations may exceed individual line item limits but must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable. The authorized Program Manager or designee must approve all requests.
14. Groceries and on-site meals for program participants are beyond the scope of WIOA.
15. Invoices, statements, and receipts necessary to verify that a supportive service has been provided must be returned to staff. It is the responsibility of the staff that distributed the supportive service to ensure that all support services documentation is collected and added to the participant file.
16. Returned receipts must indicate that the supportive service was used for its intended purpose. For example, the receipts for a \$50.00 gas card should display that \$50.00 of gasoline was purchased. If the supportive service was not used for its intended purpose, no additional supportive services will be provided for the participant unless the participant reimburses the difference.
17. If a participant receives a supportive service and fails to return the appropriate documentation/receipts, **no additional supportive services will be provided until such receipts are provided**. Supportive services may continue to be provided should the participant return the value of the supportive service in which the receipt was lost.

Supportive Service	Limit	Parameters
Academic Materials		Must be required for training or employment. A copy of a syllabus or employer documentation that lists required textbooks or supplies must be provided. May include other items necessary for the participant to complete training or to become employed.
Automotive (Repair, tires, insurance, DMV, etc.)		<p>Provider is authorized to approve payment for automobile insurance policies, for up to six consecutive months, directly related to the motor vehicle that the participant is using for transportation to and from classroom training, on-the-job training or job search.</p> <p>The participant's name must be on the vehicle registration and be insured for liability and property damage with minimum policy limits as required by the State of North Carolina. Also, the participant must be properly licensed to operate a vehicle in the State of North Carolina.</p> <p>Two estimates are required per repair, not to exceed \$1,000. Multiple repairs per year are allowed. However, total cost of repairs in a 12-month cycle cannot exceed \$2,000.</p>
Bus Passes		Bus passes (or their equivalent) can be made available to participants to engage in enrolled training and/or employment activities. It is the responsibility of the staff to determine if a participant needs transportation assistance to enable access to, or return from the training or employment facility initially, or for subsequent visits.
Cell Phones / Mobile Phones		To provide low-cost mobile phone service assistance for participants to use for job search assistance or participant in employment services required for participation in programs.
Child Care / Dependent Care		Two estimates are required. If a participant is receiving assistance from another agency, only pay for the allowed costs after subtracting the received assistance amount. Service is only allowed while the participant is completing activities outlined in the IEP/ISS. If a provider will not accept a part time or hourly rate, therefore a full-time rate is paid, the participant is responsible for paying for the remaining hours of care above and beyond the time spent working towards the goals and objectives identified in the IEP/ISS.

Supportive Service	Limit	Parameters
Clothing		Clothing shall be done in conjunction with in-person job searches, interviews, employment, or schooling where appropriate attire is required, and supported with documentation (i.e. planned interviews, in-person job search activities, employer letter, required for training). These services will be followed-up and recorded in NCWorks.gov. Clothing purchased must be reasonable and necessary (not from a high-end boutique store), and appropriate for the activity. Clothing may also be purchased with a voucher or other mechanisms established by the subrecipient. Clothing includes shoes and uniforms. No clothing shall display inappropriate content, political statements or team logos.
Counseling		Mental health or substance abuse counseling. An estimate is required.
Dry Cleaning		For clothing needed for interviews, work, or school.
Educational Testing		Any single or combination service needed to gain employment or to obtain a living wage.
Gas Card		Receipts must show that gas cards were used for gas only. The participant's name must be insured for liability and property damage with minimum policy limits as required by the State of North Carolina. The participant must be properly licensed to operate a vehicle in the State of North Carolina. Also, participants must provide documentation of estimated mileage to interviews, school, work, etc.
Health Services		An estimate is required for any health service. The participant may receive more than one health service with written justification, but cumulative may not exceed the maximum amount. Allowable items include: drug screenings, hearing exams, optical, tattoo removal, and dental work. Other health services may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Haircuts		To prepare for professional interviews, school, or work and present themselves properly groomed for interviews/job.
Housing/Rental Assistance		Rent/mortgage payments are permitted if a late notice for rent/mortgage was issued by the landlord and must be at least one (1) month behind in rent/mortgage. To qualify, the participant must have lived at the residence for 6 months or more and paid at least the first 6 months of rent/mortgage. The participant's name must be on the rental agreement, lease, etc. or show documentation that they live at the residence.

Supportive Service	Limit	Parameters
Rideshare or App-Based Ride Services		Rideshares may only be used for interviews, work, or school. Participants must provide documentation of actual mileage to interviews, school, work, etc.
Tools		Tools must coincide with occupation or trade and must be required for participation in training or employment. Must show documentation requiring the tools from the employer.
Utilities		Approved utilities include: electricity, gas, water, and internet. Participant's name must be on the bill(s) or match the address listed on rental/mortgage agreement that includes the participant's name.
Other		Other supportive services that will remove a barrier and positively impact the participant. Must be reasonable, necessary, and cannot be categorized under line items in this matrix. Must be approved by a Program Manager or designee and documented appropriately.