

VI WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD POLICY DOCUMENT

Workforce Program Guidance WIOA 310-17

TO: Virgin Islands Single State Workforce Development Area

SUBJECT: SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AND NEEDS RELATED PAYMENTS

DATE: March 2017

Purpose: To establish procedures for the application of Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments to eligible participants of the VI Workforce Development System.

References: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 Section 3(59) and 134(d) (2) and (3); WIOA Section 129 (c)(2)(G); 20 CFR Part 680.900 – 680.970; 20 CFR Part 681.570

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act make available supportive services for **adults and dislocated workers** through the One-Stop system.

Supportive services for adults and dislocated workers are services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA sec. 134(c) (2) and (3). These services include but are not limited to:

- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-related payments;
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- Legal aid services;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, 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

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are:

- (1) Participating in career or training services; and
- (2) Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.

Supportive Services may only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in career service or training activities.

Supportive services for **Youth**, as defined in WIOA Section 3(59), include but are not limited to the following:

- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs related payments;
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- Legal aid services
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, 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

Supportive services for youth are among the fourteen (14) program elements that local programs must make available to youth participants.

Policy: The Workforce Development Unit and the Fiscal Unit will implement Supportive Services and Needs-related Payments as outlined in Sections (1) through (4) of the attached document.

Inquiries: Questions should be addressed to the:

Chairman of the Workforce Development Board at Sunny Isle Professional Building, Suite 7,
Christiansted, VI 00820; (340) 773-5237

or

Commissioner of Labor, 4401 Sion Farm, Christiansted, VI 00820; (340) 773-1994

Section I POLICY STATEMENT

The Virgin Islands Single Local Workforce Area will implement a Supportive Service and Needs Based Payment System for the purpose of reducing economic barriers that may prevent an eligible participant from fully participating in WIOA activities.

Adults and dislocated workers are eligible to receive supportive services under WIOA if they are participating in career or training services, and are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Youth are eligible to receive support services as part of the program elements available as an active participant in WIOA youth program. Services available are based on a participants individual need and may include transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing and needs-related payments.

NEEDS RELATED PAYMENTS

Needs-related payments provide financial assistance to participants for the purpose of enabling them to participate in training and are a supportive service authorized by WIOA sec. 134 (d) (3). In order to qualify for needs-related payments a participant must be enrolled in training.

Adults must:

- (a) Be unemployed;
- (b) Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for unemployment compensation; and
- (c) Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA sec. 134 (c) (3)

Dislocated Workers must:

- (a) Be unemployed, and
 - (i) Have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation; and
 - (ii) Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA sec. 134 (c) (3) 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 the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed (6) months; or
- (b) Be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation and be enrolled in a program of remaining services under WIOA sec 134 (c) (3).

Needs-related payments may be provided if the participant has been accepted in a training program that will begin within (30) calendar days.

LEVEL OF PAYMENTS

All Needs Based Payments to participants will be based on daily attendance records as documented by vendors/service providers. No payment will be made to the participant who fails to attend without "good cause". The Virgin Islands Single Local Workforce Area defines good cause as:

- Local and Federal Holidays;
- Death of immediate family member;

- Sick days as defined by the Governor’s directives;
- Proof of medical, UI and public assistance appointments;
- Verifiable job seeking efforts as approved by the respective training sites.

The level of a needs-related payment made to an **adult** participant shall reflect a weekly payment amount that covers items necessary for participation in WIOA training programs. These items shall include personal support needs not covered under specified supportive services. Payments shall not exceed \$75.00 per week.

The level of a needs-related payment made to a **dislocated worker** shall not exceed the greater of:

- i) The applicable weekly level of unemployment compensation benefit, for participants who were eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation; or
- ii) 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.

Section II ALLOTMENTS

The specific conditions which enable a participant to receive transportation and/or child care payments are identified in subsections A and B.

- A. **Transportation** – Specifies whether a participant is entitled to receive a travel allowance or not.
 - (1) Out of District – Participants living in the country or outlying areas on St. Croix may receive \$6.00 per day, and on St. Thomas may receive \$5.00 per day.*
 - (2) Same district – Participants living in the same area as the training site will not be eligible to receive a transportation allowance.
 - (3) District to District (town to town) – Participants living in one town and traveling to another for WIOA activities may receive \$6.00 per day on St. Croix and on St. Thomas may receive \$5.00 per day.*

*Transportation allowances vary between islands due to differences in public transportation available. Dollar amounts are subject to change based on recommendation by the Workforce Director and approval by the Workforce Development Board.

- B. **Child-Care** – Determines a participant’s eligibility to receive child-care services. Child-care providers may receive \$75.00 per week and not to exceed \$400.00 per month for the care of each dependent child up to five (5) years of age. Children not in household during the income determination period (with the exception of newborns) will be exempted from these services.

Section III REQUEST FOR APPROVAL

A. Purpose

In order to activate Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments, each case manager will complete an eligibility assessment for participants officially enrolled in a WIOA activity. During the eligibility assessment, all other sources of payment from partner agencies must be identified and exhausted prior to making a needs-related payment determination.

B. Request Process

The *Individual Training Account* form is the document which details the participant's WIOA program activity. The information on this form will cover all support services.

Specific instructions for completion of this form are part of the attachment. The child-care allotment however, requires additional documentation.

Each potential child-care provider will complete the child-care affidavit. Participants will provide counselors with appropriate copies of birth certificates for each child to be served.

The original child-care affidavit and birth certificate(s) must be transmitted to the Program Administrator(s) or a designee.

C. Approval

Upon receipt of the enrollment paperwork and affidavit and birth certificate(s), Program Administrator will review documents and make recommendations for payment. Original documents will be transmitted to the Fiscal Unit and copies maintained for participant files.

Section IV. PAYMENT MECHANISM

Participants will complete a time sheet reflecting daily attendance. The participant and the Service Provider representative will sign the time sheet(s) as verification that the information stated is correct.

The Business and Administration Unit will process all payment information. Checks will be prepared and distributed to the WD Unit for disbursement to Service Providers and participants as required.