
Supportive Services

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance when issuing supportive services to Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth participants enrolled in programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other grants and special projects administered by Pacific Gateway Workforce Innovation Network (Pacific Gateway).

BACKGROUND

Supportive services are services that are necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in authorized WIOA activities. The WIOA regulations allow Local Workforce Development Boards to establish limits on the provision of supportive services or provide the American Job Centers of California (AJCC) the authority to establish such limits, including a maximum funding limit and a maximum length of time that supportive services are available to participants. The WIOA provides supportive service program guidelines for WIOA eligible Adult and Dislocated Workers in WIOA Section 3(59) and 134(d)(2) and (3) and for WIOA eligible youth in WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G).

POLICY

1. Supportive services may be provided to participants while enrolled in a WIOA and/or special project when it is determined necessary to enable participation in career or training services. WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth may receive supportive services during follow-up.
2. Supportive services should be funded by the same grant/program the career or training service is being provided. In certain circumstances, the supportive service may be provided under another grant/program with Program Manager approval.
3. A supportive service must be provided concurrently with a staff-assisted basic career service, individualized career service, or training service.
4. Supportive services may only be provided when an individual does not have the financial resources to pay for such services on their own and are unable to obtain through other resources, programs, or partner agencies providing such services.
5. The Pacific Gateway Supportive Service Matrix (Attachment A) includes allowable supportive services, maximum amounts and guidelines that have been approved by the Workforce Development Board. The Supportive Service Matrix is not intended to be an exhaustive or exclusive list of allowable services.
6. Supportive services may be provided to participants enrolled in a special project if specified in the grant. The grant guidelines and requirements must be followed and, in some instances, may supersede the requirements outlined in this policy.

7. A Supportive Service Waiver Request (Attachment B) must be submitted for each item when the following applies:
 - The service is not on the Supportive Service Matrix;
 - The cost of service exceeds the maximum amount indicated on the Matrix; or
 - The length of time exceeds the maximum amount of time indicated on the Matrix.

The Waiver must include a justification for the request and be approved by Pacific Gateway's Workforce Services Officer prior to the issuance of the supportive service.

8. Participants are not entitled to receive supportive services. Supportive services are limited by the availability of funds.
9. Supportive services may not be utilized to pay for expenses incurred prior to the participant's enrollment into WIOA or any special project/grant, unless it is allowable under the grant. Payments may not be requested for bad debts (i.e., late service charges, penalties, tickets, and/or fines).
10. Need Related Payments (NRPs) which are a form of supportive services available to eligible WIOA participants in training are not authorized by Pacific Gateway.
11. Supportive service funds may not be used to pay for tuition for any training activity.
12. For participants enrolled in a training activity, certain supportive services may be included in a participant's Individual Training Account. This may include, but not limited to: parking fees; uniforms; tools; equipment; classroom supplies; and books. Supportive services included in the ITA may only be provided if they are not included as part of the training costs.
13. Supportive services may be terminated immediately based on the following reasons:
 - Failure to meet program requirements;
 - Purchase of unauthorized items;
 - Failure to submit receipts or correct back-up documentation;
 - Supportive service system is being abused;
 - Supportive service funding is not available;
 - Individual is making unsatisfactory progress; or
 - Re-determination of financial need reveals individual has other resources to meet needs or no longer needs the service.

PROCEDURE

1. The Career Specialist or service provider staff is responsible for assessing and determining the participant's need for supportive services. This determination is based on a review of the participant's financial circumstance and the availability of the service from other partners or resources. An email from the participant demonstrating his/her need for supportive services is considered sufficient documentation to support the request for services and initiate the process.
2. Prior to the approval of supportive services, the Career Specialists or service provider staff must assess the participant's financial resources and ensure that no other resources exist or that the need is so urgent that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the supportive service and create a hardship to the participant.
3. Participant files must adequately document that all supportive services are allowable, reasonable justified, and not otherwise available to the participant and show evidence of collaboration, when feasible. The CalJOBS Supportive Services Request (SSR) case note or Supportive Service Request form must be used to properly document these requirements and must be signed by the participant, program staff, and Program Manager.

DOCUMENTATION AND RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS

Supportive Services may be provided in the form of a pre-paid vendor gift card or reimbursement. No payment of supportive services, with the exception of reimbursements, will be made directly to the participant. Prior approval from the Program Manager is required for reimbursements.

Participant's signatures are required verifying the receipt of supportive services.

Receipts or proof of payment are required for each supportive service provided. Receipts must contain enough information to determine the validity of the purchase. At minimum, a receipt shall include:

- Name of the company/vendor
- Date of service
- Type of purchase or service provided
- Amount of the purchase or service
- Type of payment (e.g., cash, gift card, credit card)

Scanned receipts are acceptable if legible and contain the above information to validate the purchase.

Failure to return appropriate documentation and/or receipts may result in suspension of supportive services to the participant until such receipts and/or documentation is provided.

If the participant fails to return receipts within 30 days after supportive services are provided, the Career Specialist or service provider staff must:

- Inform the participant that no further supportive services will be provided until the receipts are received in full and verified to substantiate supportive services.
- Document in CalJOBS and/or in the participant file that no further supportive services will be processed until the receipts are submitted.

In the event that a participant loses a receipt, a written statement from the participant indicating the receipt was lost, the items purchased, and the amount spent must be obtained. Pacific Gateway's Workforce Services Officer shall have the authority to determine if the participant is eligible to continue to receive supportive services. The participant statement and the Supportive Service Waiver Request must be submitted to Pacific Gateway's Workforce Services Officer for approval.

Participants who receive a gift card and do not spend the full amount issued must return the gift card with the remaining balance to their Career Specialist or service provider. Gift cards with remaining balances must be submitted to Pacific Gateway's Fiscal Unit for tracking of unspent monies. The Fiscal Unit or the designated trustee will be responsible for reissuing the gift cards.

For previously enrolled participants who failed to submit the required receipts or documentation, a Supportive Service Waiver Request must be submitted to Pacific Gateway's Workforce Services Officer for the approval of supportive services.

REFERENCES

- WIOA Sections 3(59), 134(d)(2) and (3), 129(c)(2)(G)
- Title 20 CFR WIOA "Final Rules" 20 CFR 680.300, 680.900-970 and 681.570

INQUIRIES

For questions or assistance related to this policy, please contact Pacific Gateway Workforce Innovation Network staff at (562) 570-3748.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Supportive Service Matrix (Attachment A)
- Supportive Service Waiver Request (Attachment B)