

PARTNER WORK

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES POLICY

Purpose

Partner4Work, through PA CareerLink® Pittsburgh/Allegheny County and a network of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth providers, ensures the availability of appropriate and necessary supportive services to assist program participants. This policy is in full compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its associated regulations.

Affected Parties

This policy applies to all Pittsburgh/Allegheny County WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants.

WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth staff in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County are responsible for implementing this policy.

References

- WIOA Section 3(59)
- 20 CFR §680.900
- Dislocated Worker Near Completer Demonstration Project – Notice of Grant Availability (March 19, 2021)

Definition of Key Terms

“Supportive Services” means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA.

“Needs related payments” provide financial assistance to enable individuals to participate in training activities. Partner4Work is currently not providing needs related payments or services to WIOA participants.

Eligibility Requirements

The following are supportive service eligibility requirements for adult and dislocated workers:

- Participant must be a WIOA eligible adult or dislocated worker.
- Participant must be participating in WIOA career services or training services.
- Participant must be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.

The following are supportive service eligibility requirements for youth participants:

- Participant must be a WIOA eligible youth participant.
- Participant must be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.

PARTNER WORK

Policy

The WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and/or Youth program staff should meet with each participant to assess the need for supportive services. Each participant should be given individualized case management services and plan development in order to eliminate possible dependency on supportive services. Supportive services awards should be based on individual participant needs and plan development. This information should be properly documented in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and case notes in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). Supportive services may only be awarded when necessary to enable participation in WIOA career services or training activities. P4W funds must be used in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Uniform Guidance and all other guidance and regulations applicable to the funding source.

Because WIOA funds should only be used to provide supportive services when they are unavailable through other resources and service providers, WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program staff are responsible for coordinating services and providing referrals to other state and local agencies offering supportive services. WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program staff must ensure that all other avenues and resources have been exhausted prior to expending WIOA funds for supportive services. Staff must provide documented proof of the service being unavailable in the area through other resources including PA 211 Southwest (<http://pa211sw.org/>).

Partner4Work WIOA Supportive Services Availability:

Partner4Work will only provide funding for the below list of supportive services to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth customers. WIOA Title I program staff will determine the need for supportive services and monitor the customer's progress and status to assess ongoing need.

1. **Transportation** – Supportive services funds may be used to cover certain transportation costs, including
 - a. Bus passes, not exceeding Port Authority of Allegheny County's monthly fare;
 - b. Gas cards, not exceeding \$60 per week;
 - c. Ridesharing (Uber, Lyft, etc.) vouchers, not exceeding \$60 per week. For a ridesharing voucher to be issued to a participant, one or more of the criteria below must be met. Service providers may refer to Port Authority of Allegheny County public transportation schedules or other services (e.g. Google Maps) to verify and document that these criteria are met.
 - i. The overall travel time to/from the destination by public transit would be 1 hour or more in either direction;
 - ii. The public transit route to/from the destination would require more than one transfer in either direction;
 - iii. The final bus stop on the route (to/from) is more than ½ of a mile from the destination or does not have a clear pedestrian route to the destination (e.g. lack of sidewalks); or
 - iv. The bus schedule for the route (to/from) the destination would require a wait time of 30 minutes or more at a bus stop or shows no buses running during the required travel time.
2. **Driver's license or state identification card:** A WIOA participant may receive supportive services funds for one (1) instance of the cost of obtaining a state driver's license or identification card. Supportive

PARTNER WORK

service funds may not be used to pay for the costs of fines, penalties, or legal fees associated with obtaining or reinstating a driver's license.

3. **Non-employer paid licensing/certification or educational testing fees-** A WIOA participant may receive funding for a maximum of two (2) instances of the same license/certification or test utilizing WIOA supportive services dollars. WIOA Title I program staff will determine the need for licensing or testing through employer demand. The staff will make the necessary arrangements with the vendor for payment. The cost of GED testing and/or obtaining GED transcripts may be covered under this supportive services category.
4. **Drug Testing and/or TB Testing:** A WIOA participant may have one (1) instance of a drug test and/or TB test paid for through WIOA supportive services dollars.
5. **Criminal Background Checks and/or Clearances—** A WIOA participant may have one (1) instance of obtaining a criminal background check and/or clearances necessary to begin employment and/or education paid through WIOA supportive services dollars. This includes one (1) instance of each of the following: Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Checks, and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Criminal History Background Check.
6. **Clothing and/or uniform:** A WIOA participant may receive one (1) voucher for up to \$100 to purchase clothing and/or a uniform(s) necessary for participation in training, a job interview, or the first week of employment if these items are not provided by the training provider or employer.
7. **Equipment/tools:** A WIOA participant may receive one (1) voucher for up to \$250 to cover the costs of tools and/or equipment necessary for participation in training or the first week of employment if these items are not provided by the training provider or employer.
8. **Unions and Registered Apprenticeships Fees:** A WIOA participant applying to a union and/or registered apprenticeship may receive assistance for non-employer paid, non-refundable costs required for initial admittance or participation in the program. These costs may include application fees, initial dues (one month only), and/or required clothing/shoes. Supportive services funds may only be used if the expenses are a requirement for participation in training and/or a reasonable condition of employment.
9. **Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities —**WIOA supportive services dollars may only be used as the funding of last resort for these accommodations.

Additional allowances for the Near Completers Demonstration Project (NCDP) are described in Attachment 1 of this policy.

Policy Exceptions:

Under limited circumstances, Partner4Work may grant exceptions to requirements within this policy. Requests for exceptions may be submitted to policy@partner4work.org. Requests should include the following:

- The specific policy requirement for which an exception is being requested;
- A clear summary of the exception being requested and the reason for the exception; and
- For WIOA programs, the Participant ID of the participant(s) for which an exception is being requested. For non-WIOA programs, the full name of the participant(s) for which an exception is being requested; or
- The name and FEIN of the business customer for which an exception is being requested.

PARTNER WORK

Exception requests will be reviewed based on their allowability under WIOA and any other applicable legislation, regulation, and policy/guidance. Partner4Work will also consider funding availability, how an exception will lead to improved outcomes for the customer(s) being served, and other relevant factors.

Effective Date: December 16, 2022

Summary of Policy Changes

Date	Policy Change
9/11/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set a \$750.00 cap on the total amount of WIOA supportive services funding an individual participant may receive. ● Combined the Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth supportive services sections into one (1) list of supportive services that may be funded through WIOA funds. ● Added gas cards to the transportation supportive services category. ● Added driver’s license and/or state identification card as a supportive service for all WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth participants. This was previously allowed for re-entry programs only. ● Added language to clarify that supportive service funding may be used for the cost of an occupational license or certification. Clarified that GED testing or transcript costs are included in this category. ● Added TB testing to the drug testing supportive services category. ● Added language clarifying the types of criminal backgrounds and clearances that may be funded with WIOA supportive services funds. ● Added Clothing/Uniforms and Equipment/Tools as supportive services categories. ● Updated process for requesting exceptions to policy requirements.
10/08/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revised to remove \$750 cap.
9/17/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added attachment describing additional allowances for the Near Completers Demonstration Project.
04/01/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added ridesharing as an allowable supportive service cost and requirements that must be met prior to providing vouchers for ridesharing.
12/16/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased weekly amount for gas cards and ridesharing to \$60.00 per week. ● Clarified the specific subsidized child care program being referenced in Attachment 1: Near Completers Demonstration Project.

PARTNER WORK

Attachment 1: Near Completers Demonstration Project

NCDP participants are limited to **\$1,500** in supportive services over the course of their participation in the program. In addition to the allowable supportive services outlined in the Partner4Work Supportive Services Policy above, participants in the Near Completers Demonstration Project (NCDP) in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County may be eligible to receive additional NCDP-funded supportive services. These include the following:

- Child care reimbursement, when necessary for participation in NCDP-funded education/training activities. To qualify, participants must first apply and be approved for support from PA Department of Human Services (DHS) [subsidized child care programming](#) available to eligible individuals in Allegheny County. NCDP funds may be used to cover the participant's share of the child care cost when participating in the PA DHS subsidized child care program.
- Purchase of transcripts or other documents to aid in the (re)enrollment process.

Personal Computer Purchase Support

- Personal computer purchase support may not exceed **\$500.00** per participant.
- Once purchased the device belongs to the participant and they are responsible for all costs associated with maintenance.
- Personal computer purchase support is not included in the \$7,500.00 total per person maximum (training and supportive services) allowed under the NCDP grant.
- Personal computer purchase support may only be considered if the participant has no other existing device available. The participant must sign a self-attestation form and the form must be available to Partner4Work upon request.
- PA CareerLink will be responsible for purchasing personal computers for participants and appropriately accounting for these purchases in accordance with the Federal Uniform Guidance and all other requirements applicable to the NCDP.
- Failure to adhere to these internal controls will result in disallowed costs.

Personal Internet Service Support

- Personal internet service support may not exceed **\$30.00** per month.
- Personal internet service support may only be provided during the months the customer is enrolled and actively engaged in the program.
- Personal internet service support reimbursement may not exceed **12 months**.
- Personal internet service support is not included in the \$7,500.00 total per person maximum (training and supportive services) allowed under the NCDP grant.
- Personal internet service support may only be considered if the participant has no other existing internet service available. The participant must sign a self-attestation form and the form must be available to the Partner4Work upon request.
- Failure to adhere to these internal controls will result in disallowed costs.