SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

I. Definition:
Supportive Services are defined as services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under Title IB.

WIA Sec. 101 (46)

II. Supportive Services
Supportive Services are services, which are reasonable and necessary to enable a WIA participant who cannot afford to pay for such services to participate in activities funded under WIA. The provision of Supportive Services must be determined on an individual basis. Limited Supportive Services may be provided to individuals receiving Core Services or Intensive Services; however such individuals must be registered as a WIA participant, are subject to performance outcomes and must receive prior approval from the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission.

A participant may waive WIA payments (except for Work Experience) if accepting payment would mean the loss of benefits. The participant may request the payment start at a later date, but may not claim retroactive payments. Advances against future payments are not allowed.

To be eligible for any WIA financial assistance payments, a participant must have been determined WIA eligible and:

A. Participating in core, intensive, and training services. Limited supportive services may be provided to eligible applicants (e.g., paying for a birth certificate) before they are enrolled as participants to permit participation in assessment activities;
B. Are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services; and
C. Must have complied with program regulations and policies during the period of training and/or enrollment.

Service providers should provide no further payments to participants that fail to participate without good cause. Participants must be attending classes on campus, be registered as full-time students, and attending all required hours. In order to receive support while in training, students must be in good standing and making satisfactory progress (a minimum of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or a minimum of “C” on an “A, B, C, D, F” scale or 70% on a 100% scale). Those in pre-vocational or other approved Core or intensive service must meet required attendance and made satisfactory progress as provided by signed agreement.

Except for extenuating circumstances (such as an approved exception for child care specified below), payments will not be made for days that the participant does not attend training (sick days, holidays).

The Career Adviser will use forms provided to document all support payments. These payments
shall be requested on a weekly basis. Registrants are expected to comply with these requirements. However, in the event that they do not, for extenuating circumstances such as illness, incapacity, etc., any support claims not submitted shall be limited to three months recovery of these payments and must have approval of the Career Adviser.

The use of supportive services is encouraged to enable the hard-to-serve population to participate in longer-term interventions. The provision of supportive services must be determined on an individual basis and requires proof of the expenditure in the participant’s file.

III. These policies are consistent with all applicable federal regulations and requirements mandated by the State Workforce Board and GOWD.

A. Eligibility and determination of need for supportive services

1. All participants will be determined eligible as WIA participants utilizing the Northwest Georgia Eligibility Manual. They will be enrolled in the system prior to the support service being provided.

2. Each support service provided will have justification in the file as to the need for the service. (See forms attached). These services must be necessary to enable the individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA, Title I.

3. The Career Adviser will conduct the needs assessment for support services on a case-by-case basis.

B. Documentation of eligibility and determination of need for supportive services

1. The career adviser will document the participant’s eligibility and determination of need in each participant’s case file and/or their Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal utilizing forms as provided by Northwest Georgia Regional Commission.

2. The documentation must cover:

   a. Financial/physical need:

      There must be documentation in the case file that participants are incapable of providing these services for themselves.

      Examples: low income status as documented by family/household income determination, receipt of federal or state public assistance, UI benefits, documentation of skill upgrading that would lead to employment in a local or state in-demand occupation, documentation of lack of employment or underemployment, separation notice, birth certificates for children receiving childcare, documentation of transportation distance to attend training, etc.
b. Resource Coordination:

There must be documentation supporting that these services or funds for these services were not available from any other state and/or federal grant/program/funding stream/agency. There should be an analysis of all federal/state/local resources available in the LWIAs and how they are being coordinated to promote the most efficient use of resources.

Examples: UI records, application for applicable state and federal funds (HOPE, Pell, etc.)

c. Type of supportive service requested and how the supportive service will assist their participation in WIA Title I activities. (See supportive service request form.)

d. Amount approved and justification for the amount being necessary and reasonable to enable participation in qualifying WIA activities. (See supportive service request form.) Case notes must be entered in the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal to document the justification. The supportive service request form and case notes in the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal will stipulate the time frame for support service.

3. This documentation should be collected and included in the participant’s case file and/or the participant’s Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal profile.

C. Process of how supportive services will be provided

NWGRC will reimburse participants for transportation and child care costs to the participant at specified limits through check issuance made every other week. Proper authorization and documentation is provided to NWGRC by the Career Adviser.

All other support costs will be paid by check to the vendor providing the support service with proper documentation directly.

Extenuating circumstances may necessitate payment to the participant. This will be upon recommendation of the Career Adviser and approved by NWGRC.

D. Allowable Supportive Services

1. The supportive services are primarily provided to qualifying participants in classroom training and to youth in out-of-school programs. Others included in core or intensive services such as pre-vocational training must receive prior
approval from Northwest Georgia Regional Commission.

2. Those enrolled in OJT where wages are paid will not qualify for supportive services except by special approval for protective work gear or other work-related needs.

3. In-school youth may receive support payments on a case-by-case basis.

4. Total support dollars reimbursed cannot exceed $75.00 per week.

5. Flat rate payments are made to qualifying adults, dislocated workers, and youth (who must attend a minimum of three hours per day to receive a payment for that day) for the following support services:

   a. Child care for children ages 12 and under who reside in the home of the registrant if other resources are not available—Reimbursement to the participant is limited to a maximum of $15.00 per day. Birth certificates are necessary to verify the age of the child if supportive service payments for child care are requested. There is currently a limit of payments to one child care payment per family. If a waiver is received from GOWD, this will be increased to two payments.

      Payments for child care may be required by the provider for a space to be maintained for the child even when the child is not in attendance for sickness or holidays. If this is the policy of the child care center, the provider must provide verification of that for the day(s) in question.

      Weekly receipts will be necessary to verify payments by the participant to the provider. The provider must be licensed or documentation of adequacy of alternative childcare must be maintained in the file.

   b. Transportation

      Providing transportation for a participant enables him/her to get to and from WIA activities approved or applicable by the WIB.

      Reimbursement is specified below and represents round trips:

      - 5—10 miles: $ 2.50 per day
      - 11—25 miles: $ 5.00 per day
      - 26-75 miles: $ 7.50 per day
      - 76+ miles: $10.00 per day

   c. Other supportive services
Allowable supportive services include but are not limited to (based upon the recommendations of the Career Adviser):

1. Health care and medical services—These services are of a one-time nature, such as a physical examination, prescription drugs, prescription eyeglasses, immediate dental care, and mental health care which are needed to enable an individual to participate in any reemployment activity.

2. Tools—Tools may be purchased for participants if the tools are required to continue a training program or obtain employment. The service provider must determine that the tools are required and that they cannot be provided by any other source, such as the prospective employer or the participant.

Tools become the property of the participant upon satisfactory completion of WIA training as outlined in the participant's IEP or upon employment. If the participant fails to complete the prescribed WIA training, the tools remain the property of WIA and are to be returned to the service provider*. An agreement attesting to the above must be signed by the participant and maintained in the participant file.

*Note: There may be some exceptions to the requirement to have the participant return tools. Program operators should contact the Local Workforce Areas for guidance.

3. Computer Purchases--In limited cases, the purchase of a computer may be approved as a required tool. This is most typically, but not exclusively, in distance learning situations. Per guidance from USDOL, case managers must request approval from their program manager prior to a computer purchase to ensure it meets the requirements. Factors that will be taken into consideration prior to computer purchase approval include but are not limited to: does the training program include distance learning and to what degree; does the participant have reasonable computer access through another source such as a computer lab on campus or at a public library; does the participant have a lengthy commute to obtain computer access. Providers requesting a computer purchase approval can include justification addressing these
factors in an e-mail or submit a request completed by the participant.

**Tool/Computer Return**: Service providers are to maintain an inventory list of all returned tools/computers. The inventory list must include the month/year the item was purchased, a description of the item, the general condition of the item; the month/year the item is removed from inventory and the status of the item's disposal.

**Disposal of Inventory**: Providers should retain returned inventory for a reasonable period of time based on the condition and usefulness of the item. If an item has been kept in inventory for a reasonable period and has not been able to pass on to another program participant, then the item can be donated to a non-profit organization. Inventory items cannot be passed on to staff of the service provider or to any individual where a conflict of interest might be perceived.

4. **Housing for Youth Service**—Housing assistance includes supportive service payments for rent. When supportive service funds are used to pay this expense, documentation must be in the participant's file that verifies the address and rental amount. Documentation may be a signed copy of the rental or lease agreement or when there is no rental or lease agreement between the participant and the landlord, service providers may use a signed Verification of Rent form that lists the rent amount, period of time, address, landlord's federal ID# or social security number.

   Documentation must be in the participant's file. Rent receipts shall be maintained in the participant's file with other lease or rental documentation. The provider shall pay the landlord directly, unless extenuating circumstances exist which requires the provider to reimburse the participant directly. Documentation of extenuating circumstances shall be maintained in the participant's file.

5. **Out-of-Area job Search and Relocation Assistance**

   **Out-of-Area Job Search**: A participant may be provided assistance with travel related costs for out-of-area job search such as mileage, plane ticket, per diem and lodging. Prior to
approval, the participant must be able to provide documentation of at least one interview for an existing opening that fits with the participant’s employment plan. Out-of-area is defined as outside a reasonable commuting distance from the participant’s community.

Other Out-of-Area Services: A participant may be provided assistance with costs incurred for out-of-area training or other activities (such as travel to take a licensing test) that are part of their Individual Employment Plan. Lodging, per diem, mileage and other reasonable and necessary costs may be covered. When calculating the level of assistance, providers may opt to cover actual costs or use Federal mileage, lodging and per diem rates and cover any amount up to that level based on available budget and other sources of assistance.

Relocation Assistance: Relocation assistance may be provided to a participant who obtains suitable employment that requires relocation from the participant’s community. Assistance can be provided for costs such as payment for a rental moving truck, mileage, per diem and lodging for the period of the move. Relocation should not be provided without documentation of a job offer.

6. Internet Services—Payment of internet services is considered an allowable expense for participants who must have internet access for distance learning. There may be other circumstances where internet payments are an allowable expense. In those circumstances case managers should request approval from their program manager prior to making internet payments. There is no maximum number of Internet payments that may be made on behalf of the participant while they are actively participating in distance learning however internet payments shall only be made on a month-to-month basis.

7. Supportive Services
Other supportive services may be provided as determined by the local workforce area. Such goods and services should 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:

a. Haircuts, personal grooming and hygiene needs;
b. Bonding and liability insurance for employment;
c. Work clothing (includes clothing for interviews);
d. Financial counseling or assistance;
e. Application fees and GED fees;
f. Union dues or initiation fees;
g. Auxiliary aides and services for participants with disabilities; and
h. Business licenses
i. Drug testing as required for employment (includes WEX)
j. Dependent Care

8. Unallowable Supportive Services

Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated. Such items include:
a. Rent deposits or housing deposits;
b. Mortgage payments;
c. Car payments;
d. Purchase of vehicles; and
e. Fines

E. Documentation of the provision for supportive services

a. All supportive service information for participants must be entered into the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (type of supportive service, amount, date of service, etc.). All supporting documentation for a participant’s supportive services can either be scanned into the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal or maintained in another system or physical case file (participant time sheets, income determination, UI records, supportive service request form, etc.).
b. Documentation of each supportive payment type and amount must be entered into the supportive service section of the participant’s Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal profile. This information should be updated and completed at the end of each fiscal quarter for all participants having received supportive services in the fiscal quarter.
c. Supporting documentation of the participants qualifying WIA activity, for which the participant is receiving supportive services, should be included in the case file and/or scanned into the participant’s Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal profile. Examples of this supporting documentation are but are not limited to: in-training participant time sheets signed by instructor/supervisor or documents proving participation in other types of intensive or training services.

F. Financial cap to be placed on supportive services

a. At a participant level, supportive services may not exceed $3,000 per participant per year (365 days after date of first service). There is also a limit on total supportive service expenditures for an LWIA by funding stream. No more than 25% of the allocation for a particular funding stream (i.e., adult, dislocated worker, or youth) will be spent on support. The 25% determination will be taken from that program year’s total allocation per funding stream. Separate caps will be determined for each funding stream.
b. Waivers to this policy will be requested from GOWD on a case-by-case basis.