

Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board

WIOA Policy 103

DATE: June 21, 2016
REVISED: October 6, 2021
SUBJECT: WIOA Supportive Services

I. Purpose

Policies for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded supportive services are established and continuously evaluated based on the availability of funds, customer need, and potential benefit to customers. According to the WIOA law, supportive services may be provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers who are participating in career (excluding follow-up) or training services and who are unable to obtain such supportive services through other programs providing such services. This policy addresses WIOA-funded supportive services and procedures for referral to supportive services available through one-stop partners and other community service providers. Supportive services will be funded by the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs only when not available through other programs or providers.

II. Definitions

- A. Career Services:** “Career Services” are those services described in WIOA 134(c)(2).
- B. Follow-up Services:** “Follow-up Services” are defined in TEGLs 16-16 and 19-16.
- C. Individuals With Barriers to Employment:** The term “Individual With a Barrier to Employment” is defined at WIOA 3(24).
- D. Low-Income Individual:** The term “Low-Income Individual” is defined at WIOA 3(36).
- E. Supportive Services:** The term “Supportive Services” is defined at WIOA 3(59).
- F. Training Services:** The term “Training Services” is defined at WIOA 3(60).

III. Supportive Services Available to Participants Receiving Career Services

Limited-use bus passes may be made available to participants receiving career services in emergency situations. Eligible participants must meet the definition of low income *after exclusion of payments for unemployment compensation and/or child support payments*. They must also be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Bus passes will only be issued if necessary to enable the individual to participate in career services (other than follow-up). An individual who is only receiving follow-up services may not receive supportive services. Individuals identified as needing ongoing supportive services must still be participating in career services (other than follow-up) to continue to receive such services. When supportive services are issued to an eligible participant, the appropriate activity and a comment documenting need and eligibility must be entered into the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS).

Exam and licensing fees may be reimbursed to eligible participants as a supportive service, whether or not they are approved for ITA training, and subject to a maximum total reimbursement of \$750 per participant. Eligible participants must meet the definition of low income *after exclusion of payments for unemployment compensation and/or child support payments*. They must also be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. In the event that a participant fails an exam, RochesterWorks, Inc. may cover the cost of one retake, subject to the maximum total reimbursement. An individual who is only receiving follow-up services may not receive supportive services. Individuals identified as needing ongoing supportive services must still be participating in career services (other than follow-up) to continue to receive such services. When supportive services are issued to an eligible participant, the appropriate activity and a comment documenting need and eligibility must be entered into the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS).

IV. Supportive Services Available to Participants in the Experience Counts Initiative for Security Guard Training

According to New York State Workforce Development System Technical Advisory (TA) #13-7.10, if local policy allows, and the individual qualifies, fingerprinting and/or the application fee for a security guard license for veterans covered by the Experience Counts initiative may be covered by supportive services funds. The Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Board will consider requests made through Veterans program or other career center staff who work with veterans to use local WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker supportive services funds to reimburse such fees.

A Request for Supportive Services form may be submitted to the Technical Assistance and Training Assistant at RochesterWorks! who will review the request, eligibility, and OSOS documentation. If the request meets the guidelines outlined in this policy document, the request for payment may be approved. Back-up documentation (either a receipt, bank statement, or a photocopy of the check or money order) as proof of payment must also be submitted with the Request for Supportive Services form. The supportive service(s) will be issued as a reimbursement and mailed to the customer.

To be eligible a veteran must be covered by the Experience Counts Initiative and must be either

- 1) a Dislocated Worker or
- 2) an Adult who meets the definition of low income *after exclusion of payments for unemployment compensation and/or child support payments*.

For a request to be approved, the following data entry must be completed in OSOS.

- Customer must be an active, staff-assisted WIOA participant
- Data Element Validation and OSOS data entry must be complete and in compliance with New York State Workforce Development System Technical Advisories #10-3.1 and 11-12.2
- Completion of the Legal Powers and Limitations training course must be documented in OSOS compliance with TA #13-7.10, Attachment B

RochesterWorks, Inc. (RWI) has the authority to reject any supportive service request that does not meet the stated criteria or conform with the intended purpose of this policy.

V. Supportive Services Available to Participants Receiving Transitional Jobs Services

Under WIOA, transitional jobs must be combined with supportive services. Such supportive services will be funded by the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs only when not available through other programs or providers.

WIOA supportive services for participants receiving transitional jobs services are limited to transportation needs and uniforms and required safety equipment. Eligible participants must meet the definition of low income after exclusion of payments for unemployment compensation and/or child support payments. They must also be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Supportive services will only be issued if necessary to enable the individual to participate in the transitional job. Individuals identified as needing ongoing supportive services must still be participating in the transitional job to continue to receive such services.

A. Bus Passes. Participants in need of transportation to participate in a transitional job may request a bus pass to travel back and forth to the service location. Bus passes are for use of the participant only and may not be shared, sold, or transferred to another individual. One 31-day, unlimited pas may be issued for each month in which the participant is in the transitional job.

Bus passes should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. Participants receiving a bus pass must submit proof of attendance on the Supportive Services Attendance Form each month. If a participant shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit the monthly attendance form, no further bus passes should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance. Supportive Services Attendance Forms should be kept in the participant file.

Replacements will not be issued for lost bus passes.

At the time that an initial bus pass is issued and each subsequent month that bus pass(es) are issued the service Transportation Assistance, Offering ID 43019 with Rochester Works as provider, should be entered in OSOS. The start and end dates should reflect the date that the bus passes are issued and the anticipated last date of use during the month. The Program Service Type is "Individualized Career Services." The service should be funded with \$1 under the appropriate WIOA (Adult or Dislocated Worker) Local funding source.

An OSOS comment should also be entered for each Transportation Assistance service. The comment should include the date the bus pass(es) were issued and the amount and type of bus passes issued.

B. Gas Cards. Participants in need of transportation to participate in a transitional job with a valid NYS Driver License and access to an automobile may request a \$25 gas card instead of a bus pass to travel back and forth to the service location. Gas cards are for use of the participant only and may not be shared, sold, or transferred to another individual. If a participant receives a gas card, staff must ensure that there is a photocopy of an unexpired NYS Driver License in the participant file.

Gas cards should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. To be eligible, projected travel to and from the service location(s) must total at least 200 miles

during a 31-day period. Generally, only one gas card may be issued for each 31-day service period. However, staff may, at their discretion, issue one additional gas card for each additional 200 miles of projected travel to and from the service location(s) during the 31-day period. The maximum number of gas cards that may be issued to a participant for any given 31-day period is four.

Participants receiving a gas card must submit proof of attendance on the Supportive Services Attendance Form each month. If a participant shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit the monthly attendance form, no further gas cards should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance. Supportive Services Attendance Forms should be kept in the participant file.

Replacements will not be issued for lost gas cards. A participant will be issued either a gas card or a bus pass, not both, during a given 31-day period.

At the time that an initial gas card is issued and each subsequent month that a gas card is issued the service Transportation Assistance, Offering ID 43019 with Rochester Works as provider, should be entered in OSOS. The start and end dates should reflect the dates that the gas card(s) is issued and the anticipated last date of use during the service period. The Program Service Type is "Individualized Career Services." The service should be funded with \$1 under the appropriate WIOA (Adult or Dislocated Worker) Local funding source.

An OSOS comment should also be entered for each Transportation Assistance service. The comment should include the date the gas card was issued and the quantity and dollar amount of the gas cards issued.

C. Uniforms and Required Safety Equipment. Participants in need of uniforms and/or required safety equipment to participate in a transitional job may have such costs reimbursed or paid through a voucher sent by a WIOA staff member to a participating vendor. Documentation will be required as evidence that 1) the uniform or equipment cannot be provided by the employer and 2) the uniform or equipment is required of all employees who have the same job duties. Receipts will be required for reimbursement. The maximum amount of funding available is \$150 per participant.

At the time that a Uniform and Required Safety Equipment service is provided the service Work Uniform/Equipment/Tools Assistance, Offering ID 137759 with Rochester Works as provider, should be entered in OSOS. The start and end dates should reflect the date that the voucher or payment is issued. The Program Service Type is "Individualized Career Services." The service should be funded with \$1 under the appropriate WIOA (Adult or Dislocated Worker) Local funding source.

An OSOS comment should also be entered for each Work Uniform/Equipment/Tools Assistance service. The comment should include the date the voucher or payment was issued, the participating vendor, if applicable, a description of the uniforms and/or equipment purchased, and the dollar amount.

Please note that tools may not be purchased with WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker Supportive Services funds.

The following supportive services should be provided to participants receiving transitional jobs services when available through other one-stop partners and community service providers.

- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-Related Payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and must be consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970)
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes;
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; and
- Legal aid services.

VI. Supportive Services Available to Participants Receiving Training Services

WIOA supportive services for participants receiving training services are limited to transportation needs and are only available to participants in Individual Training Account (ITA) training (i.e. supportive services are not available to participants in other forms of training such as OJT or customized training). Eligible participants must meet the definition of low income *after exclusion of payments for unemployment compensation and/or child support payments*. They must also be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Supportive services will only be issued if necessary to enable the individual to participate in training services. Individuals identified as needing ongoing supportive services must still be participating in training services to continue to receive such services.

A. Bus Passes. Participants in need of transportation to participate in an ITA training service may request a bus pass to travel back and forth to the service location. Bus passes are for use of the participant only and may not be shared, sold, or transferred to another individual. One 31-day, unlimited pas may be issued for each month in which the participant is in classroom training.

Bus passes should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. Participants receiving a bus pass must submit proof of attendance on the Supportive Services Attendance Form each month. If a participant shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit the monthly attendance form, no further bus passes should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance. Supportive Services Attendance Forms should be kept in the participant file.

Replacements will not be issued for lost bus passes.

At the time that an initial bus pass is issued and each subsequent month that bus pass(es) are issued the service Transportation Assistance, Offering ID 43019 with Rochester Works as provider, should be entered in OSOS. The start and end dates should reflect the date that the bus passes are issued and the anticipated last date of use during the month. The Program Service Type is “Individualized Career Services.” The service should be funded with \$1 under the appropriate WIOA (Adult or Dislocated Worker) Local funding source.

An OSOS comment should also be entered for each Transportation Assistance service. The comment should include the date the bus pass(es) were issued and the amount and type of bus passes issued.

B. Gas Cards. Participants in need of transportation to participate in an ITA training service with a valid NYS Driver License and access to an automobile may request a \$25 gas card instead of a bus pass to travel back and forth to the service location. Gas cards are for use of the participant only and may not be shared, sold, or transferred to another individual. If a participant receives a gas card, staff must ensure that there is a photocopy of an unexpired NYS Driver License in the participant file.

Gas cards should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. To be eligible, projected travel to and from the service location(s) must total at least 200 miles during a 31-day period. Generally, only one gas card may be issued for each 31-day service period. However, staff may, at their discretion, issue one additional gas card for each additional 200 miles of projected travel to and from the service location(s) during the 31-day period. The maximum number of gas cards that may be issued to a participant for any given 31-day period is four.

Participants receiving a gas card must submit proof of attendance on the Supportive Services Attendance Form each month. If a participant shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit the monthly attendance form, no further gas cards should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance. Supportive Services Attendance Forms should be kept in the participant file.

Replacements will not be issued for lost gas cards. A participant will be issued either a gas card or a bus pass, not both, during a given 31-day period.

At the time that an initial gas card is issued and each subsequent month that a gas card is issued the service Transportation Assistance, Offering ID 43019 with Rochester Works as provider, should be entered in OSOS. The start and end dates should reflect the dates that the gas card(s) is issued and the anticipated last date of use during the service period. The Program Service Type is “Individualized Career Services.” The service should be funded with \$1 under the appropriate WIOA (Adult or Dislocated Worker) Local funding source.

An OSOS comment should also be entered for each Transportation Assistance service. The comment should include the date the gas card was issued and the quantity and dollar amount of the gas cards issued.

VI. Needs Related Payments for Training Customers

Needs related payments are not available at this time.

VII. Availability of Funding and Exceptions

Supportive services will be offered as long as funds are available and may be suspended with little or no notice once funds are exhausted. RWI has the authority to make exceptions to this policy in cases where a documented need is justified.

VIII. Referral to Supportive Services Available Through Other One-stop Partners and Community Service Providers

Supportive services are a key component of the employment plan for individuals who receive services through the one-stop system, especially individuals with barriers to employment. The WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker budget is not sufficient to meet the supportive services needs of system customers. Therefore, it is essential that all one-stop partners collaborate to adequately provide for this need.

Supportive services available to individuals that receive services through the local one-stop system may include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-Related Payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and must be consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970)
- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes;
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; and
- Legal aid services.

As part of the One-stop operator's implementation role under the local one-stop partners' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), one-stop partners must cooperate with the one-stop operator on three activities related to the provision of supportive services to one-stop participants.

- A. Services Inventory and Gap Analysis.** One-stop partners, under the direction of the one-stop operator, must create an inventory of supportive services available in the local area. The inventory should include all services in the above list. The inventory should include an analysis of gaps in available services that should be addressed through either WIOA or outside funding sources.

- B. Referral Process.** One-stop partners, under the direction of the one-stop operator, must develop a written process for referral of individuals served by the one-stop system to supportive services available through all partner programs and other community service providers. The process must include 1) a description of supportive services available through each partner program; 2) eligibility criteria for the supportive services available through each partner program; 3) a description of the referral mechanism, including a link to or printable copy of any referral or service application forms, and any timeframes associated with the referral process; 4) identification of a partner referral liaison for each partner program; 4) a description of the means of providing feedback to referring partners for each referral made; 5) to the extent available, similar information about referrals to other community service providers; and 5) a timeline for updating the process with the goals of improved customer service and increased access to services.
- C. Cross-Training.** One-stop partners, under the direction of the one-stop operator, must develop a plan to cross-train all front-line one-stop partner staff in the referral process. Refresher training for existing staff and training for newly hired staff should be included in the training plan. The one-stop operator should evaluate the effectiveness of the cross-training program annually and make recommendations for continuous improvement.

One-stop system staff are encouraged to contact 2-1-1 Life Line (<https://211.lifeline.org/> or by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-877-356-9211) when seeking information on supportive services available through other community service providers.

IX. Availability of Supportive Services Through National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs)

At times, pass-through National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) funds are made available to RochesterWorks, Inc. to serve eligible participants through the local one-stop system. When such funds are available, the following DWG-funded supportive services may be provided to eligible participants, to the extent that such services are allowed by the specific Dislocated Worker Grant.

A. Bus Passes. *If transportation is needed to participate in career or training services, or during the first 31 days of a new job, the participant may be issued a quantity of two-ride bus passes sufficient to take them to the service location and back. If the number of service days over any 31-day period would require the use of more than 27 two-ride passes, a 31-day, unlimited pass will be issued instead. This would most likely be the case during a month in which the participant is in training.*

Bus passes should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. Participants receiving a bus pass for transportation to and from training must submit proof of attendance each month. If a participant who has received two-ride pass(es) fails to attend the scheduled service, then no bus pass should be issued for the next scheduled service. If a participant in training shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit proof of attendance, no further bus passes should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance.

B. Gas Cards. *Participants with a valid NYS Driver License and access to an automobile may request a \$25 gas card instead of a bus pass while receiving career or training services, or during the first 31 days of a new job.*

Gas cards should only be issued for services occurring within the next 45 days. To be eligible, projected travel to and from the service location(s) must total at least 200 miles during a 31-day period. If a participant who has received a gas card fails to attend the scheduled service(s), then no gas card should be issued for the next 31-day service period. Participants receiving a gas card for transportation to and from training must submit proof of attendance each month.

If a participant in classroom training shows a pattern of poor attendance or fails to submit proof of attendance, no further gas cards should be issued until the participant demonstrates satisfactory attendance.

C. Exam and Licensing Fees. *RochesterWorks, Inc. may cover the cost of associated exam and licensing fees for low-income WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers approved for ITA training. Additionally, exam and licensing fees can be reimbursed to eligible DWG participants as a supportive service, whether or not they are approved for ITA training, and subject to a maximum total reimbursement of \$750 per participant. In the event that a participant fails an exam, RochesterWorks, Inc. may cover the cost of one retake, subject to the maximum total reimbursement.*

D. Other Supportive Services. *Direct payments may be made to vendors to cover the following costs when necessary for participation in career services, training, and/or employment. All direct vendor payments are subject to the RochesterWorks, Inc. procurement policy.*

Payments may be made to vendors for the following services. All costs must be reasonable and necessary and conform to any maximum amounts specified below.

- *Birth Certificate*
- *NYSDMV ID*
- *NYS Class D Driver License or Renewal (we will not cover fines or the cost of an Enhanced Driver License)*
- *Clothing and personal hygiene services (\$250 maximum)*
- *Uniforms and/or Required Safety Equipment (\$150 maximum)*
- *Tools (\$250 maximum)*
- *RAP Sheets*
- *MVR*
- *School Transcripts*

All DWG supportive services, including documentation of eligibility and need, must be entered into OSOS.

X. Effective Date

This policy is effective immediately upon approval by the Workforce Development Board. Individual sections of this policy are subject to the availability of funds.

XI. Revision

RochesterWorks, Inc. has the authority to make technical revisions to this policy. Technical revisions may be made to better align this policy with federal or state laws, statutes, regulations, or policy guidance; to better align this policy with other local policies; to respond to changes in the

WIOA budget that impact this policy; or to revise references to source documents cited in this policy. Any revision to this policy that could have a substantial impact on participants must be approved by the Workforce Development Board. The Executive Director has the authority to temporarily approve policy changes until the next Workforce Development Board meeting.

XII. Questions

Questions on this policy may be directed to Lee Koslow, Technical Assistance and Training Manager, RochesterWorks Inc., (585) 258-3500, x-3516 or Lkoslow@rochesterworks.org.

Date Approved by Workforce Development Board: March 20, 2018

Technical Revisions Made: 10/6/2021