

**Cape Fear Local Policy No. P-WDB-006-2022**

**Subject:** CFWDB Supportive Services Policy

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines for the reimbursement of supportive services expenses to eligible participants in the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board's local area.

**Reference:** North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) Operational Guidance Number OG 18-2021

**Policy:** Cape Fear Workforce Development Board supportive services are meant to help Workforce Investment Opportunity Act Title I (WIOA) customers participate in WIOA services that will help them obtain self-sufficient employment. All supportive service payments are provided on an "as needed" basis and must be tied to a participant's education, training, employment search activities or employment retention. However, participants are not automatically entitled to supportive services. All supportive services may be administered in-person or virtually\* and must be documented in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), Individual Service Strategy (ISS), Objective Assessment, and NCWorks.gov case notes. Cape Fear Workforce Development Board supportive services payment policies cover the costs of transportation, dependent care, health care, and emergency aid. Service Providers must first try to obtain these services at no cost to WIOA. The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board supportive services policy **does not** include or allow for needs-related payments.

**\*When administering supportive services virtually, Contractors must place special emphasis on employing additional strategies to eliminate the possibility of fraud.**

The following services are covered under this policy:

**SUPPORTIVE SERVICES DEFINED**

Supportive services are services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA. These services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Linkages to community services;
- (b) Assistance with transportation;

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*Equal Opportunity Employer/Program  
Auxiliary Aids and Services are Available Upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities*

- (c) Assistance with child-care and dependent care;
- (d) Assistance with housing;
- (e) Assistance with educational testing;
- (f) Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- (g) Legal aid services;
- (h) Referrals to health care;
- (i) Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear;
- (j) Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, cap, gown, and other necessary items for students enrolled in secondary and post-secondary education classes; and
- (k) Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

**\*The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board supportive services policy does not include or allow for needs-related payments.**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides that supportive services should be readily available for the unemployed/underemployed who are in need of support services during their participation in WIOA activities. WIOA funds may be used to provide supportive services to participants who are:

1. Determined eligible and enrolled in NCWorks with the proper verifications and activity code(s); and
2. Participating in career or training services (including follow-up for Youth); and
3. Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services as documented in case notes; and
4. In need of supportive services to enable the individual to participate in WIOA Title I activities.

### **TYPES OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AVAILABLE**

#### **1. Transportation Assistance**

Transportation services may be provided through public transportation, car-pooling, public agency transportation or through the purchase of services contract arrangement. Transportation services will be coordinated with each county's transportation development plan.

Reimbursement will be for actual miles driven only. Mileage will be documented on a travel voucher. Program funds expended for transportation will be for costs incurred.

Different methods of incurring costs and payment procedures are:

- If a participant drives his/her own vehicle to the training site, the service provider will verify this action including the mileage from home to the training center and document it in the participant's file. The participant can then be reimbursed on a per mile basis utilizing the current IRS travel reimbursement rate.
- If a participant arranges to carpool with other participants, the driver can be reimbursed for actual miles driven. The service provider must verify the driver's mileage from home to the training center with the driver certifying the additional mileage on the travel voucher.
- If a participant arranges a car with a non-program participant, the service provider will verify and document the arrangement. The driver will be reimbursed for actual miles driven at the same rate as participants. The payment will be made to the driver.
- Participants can be reimbursed for public transportation expenses. For internal control, the service provider will purchase the bus tickets and disburse to participants as appropriate. The provider will document the purchase of tickets and keep a record of the participants who receive tickets and the date's tickets were received.
- Program funds may be used for transportation services provided by agency owned vehicles. If trips are made to transport only program participants, a log must be maintained showing the miles per trip and the charges for gas, oil and general maintenance associated. The log and vendor invoices will be the source documents supporting the costs.
- If the service provided uses agency-owned vehicles to transport both program participants, the actual costs of operation must be allocated to all funding sources that benefit. A log must be maintained along with vendor invoices for other costs.
- Transportation services may be secured through contract with a private transportation system. The contract must be procured through an open procurement process and costs must be reasonable. If the contract is based on a rate per mile, the provider must maintain logs documenting trips and miles per trip. If the contract is for a fixed amount, the provider will pay for services in installments at agreed upon intervals after services have been rendered.
- The operator may secure other methods of travel, which are not described in the WDB policy. These methods must be submitted to the Board for approval.

## 2. Training/Work-Related Items

WIOA funds may be used to provide training/work-related items when such is required for the customer's participation in training or to succeed in his or her employment. These items may include:

- A. Work clothing, such as uniforms, boots and business attire while participating in WIOA activities. Career Advisor's may request a clothing allowance for the actual costs of the items needed by the participant. All clothing purchased must be job appropriate.

***This amount does not include clothing required by training programs with an eligible training provider, such as CNA, LPN, etc. Clothing required for training must be included on the eligible training provider's list of training requirements as detailed on the Eligible Training Providers List in NCWorks Online. The Contractor will need to submit the requirements list from the training provider as support documentation for purchasing clothing for training programs.***

- B. Tools and equipment, such as stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, helmet, gloves, protective eyewear, etc. The Career Advisor may request a tools and equipment allowance not to exceed the actual cost of the tools and equipment required for the customer's particular training or occupation. A list of the required tools and equipment must be provided by the customer's eligible training provider or specified on the applicable position description.
- C. WIOA funds may be used to pay for testing fees when such is required for the customer's selected training program and is not included in the tuition costs. The eligible training provider must provide documentation listing the required tests and fees. Such fees shall be provided only after the participant has completed the applicable training program and a voucher has been issued.
- D. WIOA funds may be used to pay for internet hot spot cards for participants to use to access the internet to work on schoolwork at home.

## 3. Childcare and Dependent Care

Childcare costs are allowable. The costs will be paid directly to the service provider unless other arrangements are documented. However, certain situations may indicate a need to allow participants to pay the daycare provider and apply to the operator for reimbursement. In rural areas, it may be difficult or impossible to find actual childcare centers and private individuals may require payment on a frequency insistent with the operator's payment schedule.

In other cases, paying the service provider directly may actually be more expensive than reimbursing the participant. In cases such as this, the contractor is required to verify

that services will be provided and that adequate documentation will be maintained. The contractor is required to document the visit. Regardless of whether payment is made directly to the childcare provider or reimbursed to the participant, all necessary documentation and/or invoices must be secured and maintained on file with the program operator.

Program funds will not be used to reserve a block of childcare slots against the possibility that a participant might be enrolled that needs childcare services. Some childcare providers do require payment, even if the child is absent. This is an allowable payment. It is emphasized; however, that if childcare providers can be found who do not require payment for time when the child is absent, such providers will be used.

Service providers who keep more than one child must be licensed by or registered with the North Carolina Office of Child Day Care Licensing. It is the responsibility of the program operator to determine before incurring childcare costs that the provider is properly licensed or registered. If the proposed childcare provider is unable to provide an identification number assigned by the Office of Child Day Care Licensing, the program operator should call that office to determine the provider's status.

- To pay childcare costs, the contractor must secure from the provider an itemized invoice showing the name(s) of the child or children, name of parent, time period and dates covered, rate per hour, day, week, as appropriate and total charges. The invoice must also show the ID number assigned to the provider by the Office of Child Care Licensing. A separate invoice will be completed and submitted for each week or month as appropriate. A provider who cares for only one child will not have an ID number. Childcare payments may only be paid for the days the participant was in class or on the job or as noted in an earlier paragraph. All invoices for childcare services must be retained, along with other cost documentation for the same project for audit. The contractor must document that a birth certificate or other identification has been checked to prove that the children for whom childcare costs are paid do exist. Reimbursement will be at a rate, which is considered usual, reasonable and customary in the geographical area. Attendance sheet showing proof of the child's attendance to the childcare or daycare facility should be uploaded and scanned into NCWorks.

As with all supportive services, the contractor should first attempt to arrange childcare at no cost to the program. Childcare can be provided at no cost if the contractor is able to make these arrangements:

- Acquire without cost openings for participants in existing childcare facilities
- With the assistance of other community agencies, set up a childcare facility located in the same place as a program's centralized training
- Adjust hours of training or employment to coincide with school hour in the area, and
- Establish contact with those social service agencies that provide subsidized childcare.

**4. Temporary Shelter**

Temporary shelter may be required for individuals who find it necessary to leave their present home situations and be placed in a temporary living arrangement. According to document individual needs, program funds may be used to secure a safe, clean and comfortable place to eat, sleep and study. Permanent arrangements must be secured. This service is provided on a case-by-case basis.

**5. Emergency Aid**

Emergency Aid may be provided, usually on a one-time basis to cover unforeseen expenses. Such services include shelter, food, medication, clothes, etc. WIOA funds are provided to participants to cover specific needs that can be tracked via invoice or receipt for payment. No other aid may be provided under emergency aid.

**6. Health Care**

Health Care will be provided to individuals for whom a documented need exists or is required for employment or schooling. Among medical services which may be provided are physical exams, treatments and services such as eyeglasses and dentures which will improve the participant's employability, information and non-financial assistance in preventive medicine, in the acquisition of medical insurance, and referrals to other agencies for more extensive or specialized help. Look at if we can pay for COVID testing to assist customers with employment and schooling.

A physical may be provided if the individual has not had a physical within the past year and the employer requires a physical examination before the participant can work or attend school. All routine physicals and routine lab tests should be conducted at the county health department if possible. Contact must be made with other programs/agencies to obtain services at no cost to the program where possible.

Agencies providing health care services must invoice service providers for services rendered. Participant files must be updated with information on the date and healthcare services received.

**7. Job Search Expenses**

Reimbursement for travel and other expenses associated with job search activities may be approved for participants enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program when it is necessary for them to pursue employment opportunities beyond normal commuting distances (more than 50 miles from their regular place of residence). Reimbursement expenses to participants must be documented. Subsistence may only be reimbursed in conjunction with overnight travel.

Authorization for reimbursement of travel and other costs must be approved prior to the incurrance of costs and may only be approved for travel associated with interviews for bona fide job opening which offers a reasonable level of expectation for employment. Participants traveling to the same destination are expected to travel together to keep

mileage costs to a minimum. Costs associated with job search activity may not be authorized retroactively.

Cash register receipts, credit card receipts, motel/hotel statements, receipts for public transportation fares (bus, train, and plane) and/or other appropriate documentation must be transmitted with the request for reimbursement.

**Additional Services, which will be provided on a referral basis only, include Financial Counseling and Legal Counseling.**

- 1. Financial Counseling** will be designed to assist participants in handling their resources. Many individuals will face problems with basic needs provisions (shelter, food and clothing) as well as responsibilities to creditors for loans, time payments and credit extensions. Coordination with community organizations should occur to assist participants in organizing their financial resources.
- 2. Legal Counseling** is designed to assist participants in dealing with legal matters and the judicial system. If financial legal assistance is necessary, referrals to agencies that do provide such assistance must be made. Legal counseling may be provided through sponsored workshops, referrals to other agencies or by other methods to meet the needs of the individuals.

**LIMITATIONS**

Supportive services for participants must be viewed in a manner that underscores collaboration. WIOA resources are limited and must be administered with the knowledge that some supportive service needs may be met through linkages with other NCWorks Career Center and community partners. Every effort must be made on the part of Contractor staff to ensure participants have been provided Community Resource information on low cost and/or free services available locally.

These services should be utilized prior to program support whenever possible. Contractor staff must establish internal controls that result in equitable treatment, maximize the allocations, and ensure coordination with, and referral of participants and applicants to other community resources.

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board does **NOT** offer supportive services for Adults and Dislocated workers during follow-up or after exit. Only “**non-monetary**” services are allowed for Adults and Dislocated workers after exit.

Supportive services may **NOT** be used to pay for:

- purchase, improvement, or maintenance of any asset (e.g., car payments or mortgage payments, etc.);
- taxes;

- past due fees, penalties, interest, or other such expenses;
- child support payments in arrears or otherwise;
- parking or moving violation tickets;
- bail or restitution;
- settlement of an insurance claim or;
- consumer debt.

**Effective Date:** June 1, 2022

**Expiration Date:** Indefinite

**Contact:** Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Director

**Distribution:** CFWDB WIOA Providers  
CFWDB Staff  
NC Division of Workforce Solutions

**Attachments:** A: DWS Operational Guidance Number OG 18-2021