

ALABAMA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Department of Commerce
401 Adams Avenue
Post Office 304103
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4103

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Supportive Services Guidelines

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2023-04

- 1. Purpose.** This directive transmits the State's guidelines for WIOA Supportive Services. These are the new guidelines for the administration of this program.
- 2. Discussion.** Supportive Services is a component of the WIOA program. WIOA will provide reimbursement for supportive services needed to complete training and/or attain employment. The guidelines provide the process for an individual to obtain reimbursement. These guidelines are effective immediately.
- 3. Action.** It is the responsibility of the local workforce development areas to review the attached guidelines. These guidelines will also be posted on the website, www.wioa-alabama.org, under the Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives.
- 4. Contact.** Any questions regarding WIOA Supportive Services should be addressed to supportiveservices@commerce.alabama.gov.

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Alabama Department of Commerce

WIOA Supportive Services Guidelines



Alabama Department of Commerce
Workforce Development Division

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Supportive Services Guidelines

General

These guidelines are designed to assist the local One-Stop Operators and Career Center staff in providing supportive services to those who are eligible for and seeking such services. These guidelines are effective immediately.

I. Authority

This project is funded 100% with Federal Funds made available to the State of Alabama Department of Commerce by the U.S. Department of Labor as the Grantor.

According to WIOA, to be eligible to receive supportive services as an adult, an individual must be 18 years of age or older, a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the U.S. Males 18 years or older born after December 31, 1959, must have registered for Selective Service.

WIOA Supportive Services is provided for participants in need of assistance to complete training and accept employment. It is intended to serve those eligible adults, youth and dislocated workers who are unable to obtain the necessary tools, uniforms, childcare assistance, or other supports needed. At a minimum, the supports should lead to the completion of training and attaining self-sufficient employment. This assistance is not a participant entitlement and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure the supports are reasonable and necessary for training completion and obtaining employment. Career Services will have resulted in the participant entering training or receiving case management services that will assist the participant in completing the training and attaining employment. WIOA Supportive Services will not pay for relocation assistance or transportation assistance.

The participant must be eligible and enrolled in WIOA and enrolled in training services. Services should be recorded in the AlabamaWorks case management system. Individuals should be encouraged to seek assistance from other sources (such as community-based organizations) before applying for Supportive Services assistance. This is especially encouraged for childcare services. Also, please note that transportation services are not eligible for reimbursement, so staff should refer participants to other organizations providing transportation assistance when available. The maximum assistance allowance for an individual is \$500.

The Fund will not pay any third-party entities for supportive services. The program participant will be reimbursed after applying and providing receipts and documentation to support their request. Services must be received and receipts must be dated on or after the date of eligibility. Receipts should have the provider's letterhead or name and address printed on the receipt.

II. Qualifications

To qualify for this supportive services assistance, the participant must meet all of the following criteria. Written documentation must be maintained and submitted by the enrolling agency:

Must be eligible for WIOA Title I - funded Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker services and be enrolled in WIOA as evidenced by registration in the AlabamaWorks system and receipt of services from the Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs.

Participant is participating in occupational skills training and needs the necessary tools or supportive services to continue and complete the training program. This program will also provide the required tools or needed supports in order to retain the employment. Documentation will be required to support the request. A service must be entered into the AlabamaWorks system to reflect the requested supports.

III. Assistance Request

The Career Center staff will submit the request form for assistance, (*Attachment B*) that will be accompanied by documentation of need. Documentation should also include enrollment in the training program or verification of employment.

There is no standard form for documentation of need since each individual situation will vary.

Examples of documentation include:

- a syllabus/curriculum from a trainer listing tools or other training materials necessary to complete the course;

- an email or letter from an employer that employees must obtain certain tools or uniforms to secure employment or remain employed; and
- a signed statement from a participant stating a need for assistance with childcare costs; in which an estimate of the cost should be included in the documentation.

For most services a participant may request assistance multiple times according to their needs until the \$500 maximum is met, but only one request will be accepted each month per participant. One exception to this is if the participant is receiving assistance for exams and licensing fees, only one exam and license fee will be reimbursed. For example, if a participant tests and applies for both a Licensed Practical Nurse license and a Registered Nurse license, only one of the exams and license fees is eligible for reimbursement.

Every effort will be made to provide an approval or disapproval of the request within ten (10) working days of submission of the request. A written response will be provided by email to the Career Center staff person.

IV. Payment Authorization

Once the participant has been determined eligible for the program and the assistance request has been approved, the following forms should be submitted to the Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division, State Programs section for the participant to receive reimbursement:

- Subrecipient's Invoice Form (Attachment C)
- Documentation of payment for tools, uniforms, or supportive services
- Federal W-9 Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification Form for the first request. The most current version of this form can be found at www.irs.gov.

Reimbursement will be mailed directly to the participant at the address listed on the forms. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

Forms can be scanned and emailed to supportiveservices@commerce.alabama.gov. Please include "WIOA Supportive Services" in the subject line.

General WIOA Eligibility Criteria for All Applicants

- ▶ **Citizenship/Eligible Non-Citizen** (U.S. national, lawfully admitted permanent resident alien or other immigrant authorized by the Department of Homeland Security to work in the U.S.) Identity and Employment Authorization must be verified.
- ▶ **Age/Date of Birth**
- ▶ **Selective Service Registration** - Males, age 18 through 25, must register with the Selective Service System. Register at the Selective Service website: www.sss.gov.

ADULTS

- ▶ Must meet the general eligibility criteria **and**
- ▶ Is an individual who is 18 years of age or older.

* NOTE: WIOA eligible Adults must meet income criteria to receive training services. Income criteria may vary by local area.

DISLOCATED WORKER (There are **five** categories of Dislocated Worker)

All categories (A-E) must meet the general eligibility criteria **and** is an individual who:

- A.** has been laid off, or who has received a notice of lay off from employment;
is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; **or**
has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate an attachment to the workforce but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services
for an employer not covered by the state unemployment compensation law **and**
is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation.

- B.** has been laid off, or has received a notice of layoff from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility, or enterprise; is employed at a facility where the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; **or**
- for purposes of eligibility to receive services other than training services in Section I 34(c)(3), career services described in section I 34(c)(2), or supportive services, is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close.
- C.** was **self-employed** (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is presently unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community where the individual resides or because of natural disasters.
- D.** is a **displaced homemaker** which means an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who:
- 1) has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; **or**
 - 2) is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty **and** whose family income is significantly reduced because of deployment; a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, **or** the service-connected death or disability of the member **and** is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
- E.** is the **spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty** (as defined in section 101(d)(1) of title 10, United States Code*), and who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; **or**
- is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Out-of-School Youth: (OSY) must provide documentation of basic eligibility criteria **and is**

- a) **Not attending any secondary or postsecondary school** at the time of enrollment; is **not younger than 16 or older than age 24 at the time of enrollment** (because age eligibility is based on age at enrollment, participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 24 once they are enrolled in the program); **and**

- b) **One or more of the following “barriers”:**
 - 1) A high school dropout
 - 2) A youth who is within the age of compulsory high school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter (Alabama defines quarters as the last 9 weeks of school)
 - 3) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is **low-income** **and** basic skills deficient (BSD) or an English language learner
 - 4) An offender
 - 5) A homeless individual or a runaway
 - 6) An individual in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.C.S. 677) or an individual who is in an out-of-home placement.
 - 7) An individual who is pregnant or parenting
 - 8) An individual with a disability
 - 9) A **low-income** individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. (See definition below)

➤ ***Low-income eligibility requirements apply to OSY in #3 and #9 only.***

State Policy for Out-of-School Youth Barrier “Requires Additional Assistance”

The State policy for the youth barrier “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” is a low-income individual who has at least one of the following criteria:

- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians
 - Individuals who are English language learners
 - Individuals with low levels of literacy
 - Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
 - Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined in section 167(i))
-
- Low academic performance (a grade point C or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of the class) if enrolled in school during the 6 months prior to date of WIOA application. (Rev. 10/23)
 - A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials if in school during the 6 months prior to date of WIOA application. (Rev. 10/23)
 - Suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school if in school during the 6 months prior to date of WIOA application. (Rev. 10/23)
 - Documented alcohol and/or substance abuse
 - Documented record of violent behavior
 - Limited English proficiency
 - Less than 6 months work experience
 - Lacks marketable, occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market
 - Resides in a non-traditional household setting such as single parent, grandparents, relatives, or unofficial guardian. (NEW 10/23)

- Documented emotional, medical, physical, cognitive, or psychological impairment which creates a significant impediment to employment or education. (Rev. 10/23)

In-School Youth: (ISY) must provide documentation of basic eligibility criteria **and is**

- a) **Attending any secondary or postsecondary school** at the time of enrollment. **Not younger than age 14 or older than age 21** (because age eligibility is based on age at enrollment, participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 21 once they are enrolled in the program)
- b) **Low-income individual and has one or more of the following “barriers”:**
 - 1) Basic skills deficient
 - 2) An English language learner
 - 3) An offender
 - 4) A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway
 - 5) An individual in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement
 - 6) Pregnant or parenting
 - 7) A youth who is an individual with a disability

NOTE: Individuals, ages 22 – 24 who are attending school at the time of enrollment, are not eligible as In-School youth due to their age. These individuals must be served by the WIOA Adult Program.

Low Income Criteria

Low-income means an individual who:

- Is currently receiving or is a member of a family that currently receives or received in the past 6 months Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program
- Is in a family whose total family income that does not exceed the higher of the Poverty Level or 70% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level.
- Is a homeless individual or runaway youth.
- Is a youth who receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Act. **NOTE:** *When a school does not use individual eligibility criteria to determine who is eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch, the whole school receipt of free or reduced-price lunch cannot be used to determine low-income status for ISY.*
- Is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made.
- Is an individual with a disability whose own income is the poverty line but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet the requirements.
- Is a youth living in a high-poverty area (at least 25%). These Alabama counties are:

Barbour County
Bullock County
Dallas County

Greene County
Lowndes County
Macon County

Perry County
Sumter County
Wilcox County

Additional Definitions

- **Homeless** individual, homeless children and youths, or Runaway youth is defined as an individual who:
 - Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; this includes an individual who (1) is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; (2) is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations; (3) is living in an emergency or transitional shelter; (4) is abandoned in a hospital; or (5) is awaiting foster care placement
 - Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground
 - Is a migratory child who in the preceding 36 months was required to move from one school district to another due to changes in the parent's or parent's spouse's seasonal employment in agriculture, dairy, or fishing work or
 - Is under 18 years of age and absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of his or her family (runaway youth).

This homeless definition does not include an individual who may be sleeping in a temporary accommodation while away from home should not be recorded as homeless.

- **English Language Learner** is a person who has limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and also meets at least one of the following two conditions:
 - His or her native language is a language other than English
 - He or she lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.
- **Low level of literacy** is a person who is unable to read, write and speak English; compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the participant, or in society. **This is not the same as basic skills deficient.**
- **Cultural barrier** is defined as if the participant perceives himself or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs, or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.
- **WIOA Family** means two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more of the following categories:
 - A married couple and dependent children
 - A parent or guardian and dependent children; or
 - A married couple.
- **WIOA Dependent Child** – a youth under age 19 (or under 24 and a full-time student*) living in a single residence, and who is being claimed as a dependent on a parent or guardian's tax return.
 - Related by blood or adoption
 - Shared the same principal residence for more than half of the tax year
 - Did not provide more than half of his/her own support during the year
 - A U.S. citizen or national, or a permanent resident alien
 - Totally and permanently disabled during any part of the year.

**(Fulltime for at least 5 months during the year & is enrolled for the number of hours or courses the school considers to be full-time attendance.)*

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Supportive Services
ASSISTANCE REQUEST FORM**

DATE _____

PROJECT NUMBER _____

SS# _____ / _____ / _____

PROGRAM*: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

SIGNED

Person Receiving Assistance

ENROLLING AGENCY:

I hereby certify that this participant meets the criteria listed below and that written documentation is being **submitted** to verify **each** eligibility criterion:

1. Meets all WIOA Title I eligibility criteria. Participant has received services from the Wagner- Peyser and WIOA Programs.
2. Documentation of participation in occupational skills training **or** employment.
3. Documentation of need for necessary tools, uniforms, childcare assistance or other supports needed. Receipts dated prior to participation will not be accepted.

SIGNED

Enrolling Agency Representative

Career Center

Date

APPROVAL

Division Director, WDD

Date

UPON APPROVAL, AN APPROVED COPY WILL BE RETURNED
TO THE ENROLLING AGENCY WITH PROJECT NUMBER

SUB-RECIPIENT'S INVOICE

Attachment C

1. Name and Address of Sub-recipient		3. Agreement No.	
		4. Invoice No.	
12. Fed. I.D.#		5. Reporting Period of Invoice	
6. Agreement Amount		17. Total Cash Requested through Previous Invoice	
		8. Balance Available	
		\$ -	
		Total Program Cost	
9. Total Expenditures of Prior Periods		\$ -	
10. Actual Expenditures This Period		\$ -	
11. Total Expenditures To Date		\$ -	
12. Total Cash Requested through Previous Invoice		\$ -	
13. Amount Requested			
<p>I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT (a) the Workforce Development Division has not been billed for the services covered by this invoice; (b) funds have not been received from the said WDD or expended for such services under any other agreement or grant; (c) the amount(s) claimed by this invoice constitute(s) allowable costs/expenditures under the terms of the agreement or grant; (d) all amounts for Federal Income, Unemployment, and FICA Taxes due through the end of the preceding quarter have been paid and; (e) that subcontractors have furnished evidence of attaining an Employer Identification (EI) number and are complying with applicable tax laws. Any advance of federal funds drawn down by either advance or a working capital advance and not disbursed with thirty days from the date of the advance must be refunded to the funding agency (State Policy).</p> <p align="center">Please use blue ink to sign.</p>			
14. Sub-recipient's Authorized Signature (Blue Ink Required)		15. Title	16. Date
17. Contact Person		18. Title	19. Telephone No.

Workforce Development Division/Date

Administrative Division/Date

SUBMIT IN DUPLICATE TO:

Accounting Use Only:

Alabama Department of Commerce
 Workforce Development Division
 State Programs and Divisional Budget Mgt Section
 Post Office Box 304103
 Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4103

Warrant No. _____
 Warrant Date _____
 Voucher No. _____

Posted to Computer:
 Initials: _____
 Date: _____