



MontcoWorks
Montgomery County Workforce Development Board
Support Services Policy

APPROVAL DATE: January 29, 2021

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 29, 2021

REFERENCES: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, (WIOA), DLR WIOA – Section 5, 5.34 – SUPPORT SERVICES, REV 1/2020, https://dlr.sd.gov/workforce_services/wioa/wioa_manual/5.34_supportservices.pdf

PURPOSE: To provide Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) staff with policy and procedures for the provision of support services funds for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the Montgomery County Workforce Development Board's (WDB), MontcoWorks Local Plan.

BACKGROUND: The PA CareerLink® is a system of resources and opportunities for employers and job seekers. The PA CareerLink® Montgomery County, EARN, and MontcoWorks*NOW staff have adequate resources, knowledge, and materials to accommodate Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth customers who are in need of the support services that are necessary to enable participation in activities authorized under WIOA Title I.

POLICY: This policy is applicable to Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth customers eligible for and enrolled in WIOA intensive and/or training services in the Montgomery County local workforce development area. A support service may only be provided to customers to enable their participation in WIOA services and must be tied to that specific service. Support services are not intended to meet every need of the customer. Rather, they provide temporary assistance. For this reason, staff should assist the customer in developing a plan to cover the supported costs once WIOA Title I funds are no longer appropriate for or available to the customer. This plan must be documented in the customer's case notes. Support services must be approved by WIOA Career Coaches or the Youth Coordinator before distribution.

This policy addresses:

- A. Eligibility requirements to receive support services
- B. Assessment, referral and approvals for support services
- C. Coordination of support services with partner organizations for community resources
- D. Allowable WIOA-funded support services
- E. Maximum limit and duration for receiving support services
- F. Documentation requirements
- G. Funding
- H. Facilitation



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A. ELIGIBILITY:

Support services are not an entitlement. Support services are based on the unique financial and employment and/or training needs of each customer.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth customers may be eligible for support services if the customer:

- 1) Is enrolled in WIOA intensive and/or training services designed to achieve their training and employment goals,
- 2) Has a demonstrated financial need, and
- 3) Is unable to access the support service(s) from other resources in the community.

Adults and Dislocated Workers are not eligible for support services after program completion or during follow-up. Youth may be eligible to receive WIOA-funded support services after program participation and during follow-up.

B. ASSESSMENT, REFERRAL AND APPROVALS FOR SUPPORT SERVICES:

When a PA CareerLink® staff member identifies that a customer has a barrier to participation in activities authorized under WIOA Title I, the staff member will conduct a consultation and determine if a referral and/or support service is necessary. If a referral and/or support service is necessary, the staff member will take the appropriate action(s). All customers who may be eligible for support services under this policy will complete an assessment to determine needs, and an Income/Expenses Reporting Form, as well as a plan for fund distribution or resource referral.

When possible, the need will be addressed through a community resource referral. In the event support service monies are needed, they will be distributed only as funding allows for actively engaged and compliant customers and only after all other options have been exhausted and documentation to support the need is obtained. Funds may only be approved for the specific support services described in this policy and for the specified increments. Approval by the WDB Executive Director is required.

C. COORDINATION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

The PA CareerLink®, EARN, and MontcoWorks*NOW staff maintain a current listing, including appropriate electronic contact information, of resources for services. These resources must be available to share electronically. The Computer Resource Area at the PA CareerLink® must, at a minimum, maintain up-to-date materials on resources and programs offered through partner organizations. Staff must be available to assist the customer with their initial research of community resources for services.

Resource and referral services that occur through case management referral include:

- **Child care** through the Early Learning Resource Center Region 17 subsidized child care program
- **Transportation** for areas not accessible by public transit, a referral is made to Partnership TMA and/or GVF
- **Housing** assistance referrals are made to the Montgomery County Housing Authority and/or Your Way Home Montgomery County
- **Clothing referrals** for an interview or job include a Clothing Resource Guide containing free and low cost clothing resources throughout the region and may, include a PA Workwear referral when appropriate



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- **Mental Health and Crisis Intervention** referrals are made to numerous agencies including the Montgomery County Department of Behavioral Health and Access Services
- **Legal** assistance referrals are made to Legal Aid of SE PA and/or SeniorLAW Center
- **Other Employment Barriers** that may occur throughout participation are referred to numerous Partner organizations, Community Connections and www.211SEPA.org /Dial 2-1-1, powered by United Way

The policy for support services provides case management, including offering information and connections to other County departments and agencies to customers receiving intensive, and/or training services.

In addition, further support is sourced through the County's Community Connections Navigate Program. It is their mission to provide compassionate assistance, by highly skilled staff who navigate and advocate for those in need of human services. Navigates foster partnerships with the community and providers to improve access to service. Community Connects utilizes regional offices located throughout Montgomery County to bring services closer to constituents. Navigates are trained to have an expansive knowledge of all County Human Service departments and the services they provide, including the employment services provided through the PA CareerLink® and Youth Programs.

The MontcoWorks Executive Director, Title I contractor, and the PA CareerLink® site administrator are active members of the Local Management Committee (LMC). The LMC provides oversight to the operation of welfare-funded programs in Montgomery County. With representation from MontcoWorks, the Montgomery County Assistance Office, PA CareerLink®, Early Learning Resource Center Region 17, Housing and Community Development, Work Ready, KEYS, Veteran's Services, Legal Aid, and local educational institutions. The LMC invites community and human service agencies that provide services to low income individuals to attend and share valuable resources. The LMC has been another vehicle through which to broaden connections to support services for County residents. The LMC has established itself as a group of partners coordinating support systems in order to best serve those in need in our community. The LMC seeks to continue adding partners that will ensure an ongoing coordination of services.

D. ALLOWABLE WIOA FUNDED SUPPORT SERVICES:

Support services are available to customers while they are participating in and completing intensive and/or training activities. Support services funds are available for:

- **Transportation** – Customers may be issued passes/SEPTA Key Cards/Ride Share Gift Cards for the actual cost of public transportation to and from training, internships or On-the-Job training sites. Customers may be issued gift cards to purchase gasoline. A log of passes/SEPTA Key Cards/Ride Share Gift Cards/Gift Cards distributed, including the eligibility category, reason for the need and amount is maintained for fiscal documentation with referral of and supporting documentation in program record. Funds for transportation services are intended to support customer's efforts in WIOA intensive or training services or to assist with job placement needs. These funds are not intended to fully cover all costs associated with transportation.
- **Any other items** – Items determined by program staff necessary for training and employment-related activities, with all available resources exhausted, would require approval by the MontcoWorks Executive Director and include thorough documentation. Needs-related payments are contingent upon available funding and would be available for a maximum of \$400.00 per month.



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E. MAXIMUM LIMIT AND DURATION FOR RECEIVING SUPPORT SERVICES:

The supportive services limit for each registered WIOA eligible customer is \$1,000 for the duration of the customer's enrollment in the WIOA program, which may include follow-up for Youth customers only. On a case-by-case basis and contingent upon available funding, support services may be increased in increments of \$500.00 if the additional supportive services allocation would significantly benefit the participant's ability to continue and complete the program, or benefit the participant in job retention or wage progression. Authorization to increase the support service limit must be documented in case notes in the customer's program record.

NOTE: Training related expenses that may be covered by an Individual Training Account (ITA) do not count against the supportive services limit for each customer. ITA related training expenses may include but are not limited to assistance with the purchase of tools required for a specific course, current school admission fees, computer and lab fees, and books and supplies.

F. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Customers' need for support services will be determined as part of the initial and on-going assessment.
 - The need for supportive services must be documented in case notes recorded in CWDS.
2. Participants must complete an Income/Expenses Reporting Form, provided by MontcoWorks, verifying they do not have the financial resources to obtain the service.
 - The Income/Expense Reporting Form must be included in the customer's record.
3. Other community resources must be researched and determined unavailable prior to authorizing WIOA funds to pay for the support service.
 - Evidence of referrals to partner organizations must be documented in the customers' case notes in CWDS.
4. Staff will submit a support services request form for approval.
 - A copy of the supportive service request form must be included in the customers' program record.
5. A support services tracking log must be maintained in the customers' program record.
 - The log must include the date of the supportive service, type of service, amount of the service disbursed to the participant/vendor, and a current total of supportive services spent to-date.
6. For all programs, a case note must be recorded in CWDS for each supportive service provided. The case note must include:
 - The justification for the supportive service which includes an explanation for how it is required for the participant to complete their training and employment plan.
 - The partner organization referral and outcome of the referral.
 - Financial resources available to the participant, if any.
 - A detailed description of what is being purchased.



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F. FUNDING:

The use of a support services funding is determined on an individual basis. Eligibility or enrollment in WIOA does not constitute entitlement to any support service. Support services funding is based on availability of program funds.

G. FACILITATION:

This policy is shared with the Montgomery County Workforce Development Board and is reviewed and distributed for posting within the PA CareerLink®, partner programs, and fiscal agent staff.

Authorized Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name and Title: _____