



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF SOLANO COUNTY

POLICY ADDENDUM

Date: July 17, 2020

Number: 2020-04, Addendum 1

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AND INCENTIVE POLICY

COVID-19 ADDENDUM 1

INTRODUCTION

This policy addendum adds exceptions and changes to the WIOA Supportive Services and Incentive Policy for enrolled Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants under the Adult and Dislocated Worker grants during the period of the novel-coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). This policy change will be in effect until the policy change has been rescinded.

QUESTIONS

Questions relating to this addendum should be directed to Marion Aiken, Workforce Services Director, at maiken@solanowdb.org or at (707) 863-3594.

RESCISSIONS

This COVID-19 Addendum combines, replaces, and cancels the 2018-09 Supportive Services and Incentive Policy, Addendums 1 and 2.

POLICY CHANGES

COVID-19 has created a stronger need for supportive service delivery as a result of multiple layoffs and social distancing requirements. The unique nature of the virus and the country's response necessitates changes to the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County's Supportive Service delivery model.

Policy changes are made to the supportive service eligibility, provision of supportive services, allowable supportive services, and limitations and payments sections. All other stipulations of the Supportive Services and Incentive Policy not addressed in this Policy Change shall remain in effect.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICE ELIGIBILITY

WIOA requirements stipulate that staff must determine if supportive service assistance is available through other community service providers. In addition, WIOA requirements stipulate that staff must ensure that no other resource exists, that the resource is not readily available, or that the need is so urgent that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the support service and create a hardship to the participant.

During the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and declared State of Emergency, many service providers are closed to the public and unable to provide the resources normally provided. In other cases, the waitlist for community resources has increased dramatically. As such, COVID-19 and the Shelter in Place orders currently in effect are allowable justification that resources are not readily available or that the need is so urgent that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the support service.

PROVISION OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Supportive Services Assessment and Planning

During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff may use “Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a declared State of Emergency, and Shelter at Home Orders, a general lack of community resources exist and a hardship to the participant without immediate supportive services would be imminent” as their explanation of a lack of community resources/urgency of supportive services in CalJOBS and in the participant file.

Requesting Supportive Services

Given the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, many supportive service plans initiated during the Individual Employment Plan/Individual Service Strategies will have changed as a result of the pandemic. Staff may reach out to participants to assess if new supportive service plans are needed during COVID-19.

Many training providers are closed during the Shelter at Home orders during COVID-19. The requirement for participants in training to maintain good attendance in order to maintain supportive service delivery is waived if a participant’s training provider is closed due to COVID-19.

ALLOWABLE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Emergency Assistance

Emergency assistance parameters for participants are modified during COVID-19. Due to the State of Emergency and Shelter at Home Orders, any participant unable to work during the Shelter at Home is eligible for emergency assistance if determined necessary and reasonable during the supportive services assessment. The following requirements for emergency supportive services are waived during COVID-19:

- Reasonable expectation that emergency assistance supportive services will resolve the situation and is not accessible via other community means;
- Individuals must apply for government or community benefits, since the need is so urgent during COVID-19 that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the support service and create a hardship to the participant;
- Food assistance supportive service recipients must apply for CalFresh benefits before this emergency assistance is given; and
- Housing emergency assistance recipients must have a plan for how they will fund the following month’s housing.

Housing Assistance

Due to the stay-at-home order in Solano County lasting over one month and the inability for many individuals to obtain or retain work during this time, this policy is modified during

COVID-19 to allow housing assistance for up to two months for rent or mortgage assistance. Housing assistance may not exceed \$2,000 per month, for a total of \$4,000.

Utilities Assistance

Due to the stay-at-home order in Solano County lasting over one month and the inability for many individuals to obtain or retain work during this time, this policy is modified during COVID-19 to allow utilities assistance for up to two months. Utilities assistance may not exceed \$300 per month, for a total of \$600.

Employability and Training Assistance

WIOA requirements stipulate that there must be a reasonable expectation that the supportive service assistance will allow the participant to complete training and/or obtain employment. Under this Policy Change, participants enrolled in training before the Solano County Shelter at Home Order on March 18, 2020 can continue to receive supportive service assistance if needed to keep from dropping out of classes due to financial hardship. Dislocated Workers temporarily laid off from employment and who have a commitment from their employer to be rehired after the Shelter in Place orders are lifted may receive supportive services as part of employability and training assistance until two paychecks after their rehire date.

Additional changes:

- Alternative childcare arrangements will be considered for supportive service funding on a case-by-case basis determined by need and other factors.
- Work/Training Cost limits are increased to \$1,000 in order to include the cost of sanitation measures or remote service tools needed for work.
- Internet Service supportive services will be expanded to include internet or phone connectivity services in order to obtain or retain employment due to the remote nature of the community during COVID-19.

LIMITATIONS AND PAYMENTS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the limit of supportive services is increased from \$2,500 for the duration of the participants' enrollment to \$5,000. The Division Manager or Executive Director retains the authority to increase this limit on a case-by-case basis if additional supportive services allocation would significantly benefit the participant's ability to continue and complete the program. Authorization to increase the limit beyond \$5,000 must have management approval and be documented in case notes in the participant's file.

DISCLAIMER

This addendum is based on the current conditions relating to the COVID-19 virus and will remain in effect until further notice and will be reviewed and updated based on any additional federal or state guidance.

REFERENCES

Law

- [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014](#) (WIOA), Title 1, Section 170

Federal Guidance

- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 12-19 – [Guidance on National Dislocated Worker Grant Program](#)

Approved by

Workforce Development Board of Solano County, Executive Committee