

Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA YOUTH Incentive Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for incentives for youth participating in WIOA activities.

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 20 CFR 681.650 allows for the awarding of incentive payments for recognition and achievement in WIOA related activities. Incentives are allowable to youth enrolled into the WIOA Title I Youth program. They are intended to encourage and motivate WIOA youth to reach specific goals and obtain positive outcomes. This policy shall only apply to youth participants as the WIOA regulations do not specifically provide for incentives for adult and dislocated worker participants.

Reasonable incentives are allowable only if the local workforce board has written policies and procedures governing incentive payments, and the provision of an incentive is included in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). This document provides the policy of the Tompkins Workforce Development Board (TCWDB) for granting incentive awards to youth enrolled in the WIOA Title I youth program.

Policy

It is the policy of the TCWDB to offer reasonable incentives to youth participants to encourage the youth to participate in and complete WIOA Title I activities. Any incentive shall be limited to WIOA youth programs, **including youth who are enrolled in Follow-Up Services**. The justification and strategy for providing and/or awarding incentives must be clearly defined in the youth's ISS.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "incentive" shall mean an inducement intended to motivate achievement and is communicated to the participant prior to participation in an activity. Goals and/or training outcomes eligible for an incentive must be linked to an achievement related to training, employment, work readiness skills, occupational skills, and/or basic skills attainment goals as stated in the participants' ISS and documented in accordance with applicable WIOA regulations.

All incentive awards are subject to the availability of WIOA funds and are not an entitlement. TCWDB may suspend or withdraw authorization for incentive payments at any time and at the sole discretion of TCWDB.

Youth incentive award payments are limited to a lifetime amount of \$2,500 maximum per eligible youth. Youth incentive award payments may not include entertainment, such as movie or sporting events tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment and may not include gift cards with activation fees (such as Visa, Mastercard or AMEX cards). **Incentives should only be grocery, superstore, or convenient store gift cards/gas cards.**

As per TEGL 21-16, incentives paid for with WIOA funds must be connected to recognition of achievement of milestones in the program tied to work experience, education, or training. Incentives must be tied to the goal of a specific planned activity, outlined in writing in the youth's ISS prior to the commencement of the activity. Specifically, TCWDB approves of the following methods of incentive use:

1.) SKILLS GAIN

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
TABE Post-Test Without Recognized Gain	\$10
TABE Post-Test WITH Recognized Gain (increased by at least one (1) EFL)	\$20
Increase in functioning level on any TCWDB approved basic skills assessment	\$20
Submitted Recognized Postsecondary Transcripts	\$20
Submitted Recognized Progress Report, rated at Satisfactory or better	\$50
Obtained Recognized Occupational Skills Certificate	\$30

2.) CREDENTIALS

Completed 15 hours of recognized TASC/HSE Classes and/or Tutoring	\$30
Completion of semester in college	\$300
Obtained Recognized Credential	\$50

3.) WORK READINESS ACTIVITIES (i.e. soft skills, financial literacy, resume, interviewing, job shadowing, etc.)

Completion of work readiness training	\$25 per completed workshop session; maximum \$400 awarded
Improvement demonstrated on Work Experience participant evaluation by Work Experience supervisor, based on average of overall scores	\$20

4.) UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT

Submitted 1 st Paystub	\$10
Submitted 3 rd Paystub	\$20
Verified Recognized Employment, Education, or Training Enrollment – 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$30
Verified Recognized Employment, Education, or Training – 4 th Quarter after Exit	\$30

Procedure

The TCWDB shall require all WIOA service providers and grantees receiving funds from a grant or contract administered by TCWDB to comply with this policy and applicable procedures. It is the responsibility of each service provider to become aware of all applicable regulations and to monitor personnel and client activities to ensure compliance. TCWDB shall review grantee compliance with this policy during the annual monitoring process.

At a minimum, service providers shall:

- 1.) document the need for the incentive and justify issuance of the award in the participant's ISS and in OSOS (describing what was awarded and why)
- 2.) maintain records of documentation that activity was completed (i.e. sign-in sheets, certificates of completion, paystubs, etc.) as well as records verifying the client received the award through an original signature on a receipt form
- 3.) provide a copy of the receipt form with signature to the administrative coordinator of the WDB
- 4.) maintain a running record of the "lifetime" expenditures per youth to ensure provided incentives does not exceed the maximum allowable \$2,500.00 per youth; youth shall remain on this record until they have aged out of the WIOA youth program, as exited youth may re-enroll in program if they were exited for reasons other than completion.