

YOUTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

September 16, 2021

8:30 A.M.

Zoom Platform

PRESENT: K. Shanks-Booth, V. Zeppelin, T. Watts, C. Malcolm, J. Clemons

EXCUSED:

GUEST: J. Harriott

STAFF: R. Avila, S. Alvord, Diane Achilles

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Shanks-Booth called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Ms. Shanks-Booth updated the Committee on changes to committee membership. Ms. Shanks-Booth had all Committee members introduce themselves to guest Mr. Harriott, Director of Community Development at William George Agency.

Ms. Shanks-Booth reported to the Committee that Ms. Kittel will be stepping down due to other commitments with the Park Foundation; Mr. Watts will also be stepping down and Mr. Harriott will be added to the Committee in Mr. Watts role to represent the William George Agency.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 15, 2021

It was moved by Mr. Malcom and seconded by Mr. Watts and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of July 15, 2021.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Ms. Avila reported that Ms. Branosky is no longer with the Workforce Development Board and Ms. Avila is now the Interim Director.

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

Ms. Alvord reported to the Youth Oversight Committee that the Summer Youth Employment Program partners have spent down all the OTDA funding from the State and now are using the donation funds that were received from the Park Foundation, Community Foundation (Lane Family) and United Way. The programs have more flexibility in using these funds to move forward with program marketing plans for 2022 SYEP.

Ms. Alvord reported that both partners, Ms. Callahan, Office of Employment and Training and Mx. Stokes, Ithaca Youth Bureau will be at the next Committee meeting to present on their respective Summer Youth Employment Programs.

Ms. Alvord reported that the Summer Youth Employment Program is in the final stages and will be wrapping up at the end of September. Ms. Alvord will be completing final reports to the OTDA in mid-October.

SUMMER YOUTH RFP TIMELINE DISCUSSION

Ms. Alvord reported to the Committee that she is in the process of developing a timeline for a release of the RFP for 2022's Summer Youth Employment Program. Ms. Alvord would like to have RFP ready to go to County Finance in December 2021, which means it would need to be approved by YOC at the November 18, 2021 meeting to be passed through the full Board in their December 14, 2021 meeting.

WIOA YOUTH RFP TIMELINE DISCUSSION

Ms. Alvord reported that the WIOA Youth RFP was last completed in 2019 and needs to be reviewed every 2 years. The Committee decides whether to extend the current contract with Office of Employment and Training for an additional year or to release a new bid for proposals.

WIOA YOUTH POLICY REVIEW: SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Ms. Alvord reviewed the Supportive Services Policy with the Committee. This policy is guidelines for the use of WIOA funds spent on supportive service needs for Youth. The goal of the Supportive Services policy is to minimize barriers for Youth to participate in employment activities and help to progress along their career pathways. The Committee expressed that they would like to have more time to review and will be added to the next meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Shanks-Booth adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2021.

Tompkins County Workforce Development Board

WIOA YOUTH Supportive Services Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds in the provision of supportive services to enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities.

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 20 CFR 681.570 allows for the provision of supportive services that enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities. This policy shall only apply to youth participants enrolled in the WIOA Title I youth program. Under WIOA law, the term “supportive services” means services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the WIOA Act.

The goal of Supportive Services is to minimize barriers for youth to enable them to fully participate in workforce development and/or employment activities and opportunities to help them progress along their career pathway.

Policy

It is the policy of the TCWDB to offer reasonable supportive services to youth participants to encourage the youth to participate in and complete WIOA Title I activities. The services shall be limited to WIOA youth programs, **including youth who are enrolled in Follow-Up Services**. If supportive services are provided as a follow-up service, they do not extend the date of exit.

The justification and strategy for providing supportive services must be clearly defined in the youth’s Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). Actively engaged WIOA youth, or youth enrolled in Follow-up, in good standing may receive Supportive Services if funding is available and each youth has met criteria and guidelines set forth in local county policies. There are no specific requirements for when to provide supportive services. They may be provided based on the needs of the participant as identified in the youth’s ISS.

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

Allowable Supportive Services are defined in TEGL 21-16. Services that enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities include, but not limited to:

- Linkages to community services
- Assistance with housing
- Needs-related payments
- Assistance with educational testing

- Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities
- Legal Aid services
- Referrals to health care
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear
- Assistance with book fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications

Supportive services may only be provided to Youth who are participating in WIOA enrolled services and who are unable to obtain such supportive services through other programs providing such services and cannot receive supportive services through referrals to partner agencies and other community service providers (e.g, ACCES-VR). Supportive Services must be tied to job search/employment/training activities.

Reimbursement costs:

If an enrolled youth pre-pays a cost that can qualify as a supportive service cost, the youth may be reimbursed those costs.

- a) Stipulation for reimbursement is that the youth must be employed or in training for 30 days before reimbursement can be processed
- b) No reimbursements can be processed without supporting receipts
- c) Must be WIOA enrolled and costs must occur after WIOA youth enrollment.

Housing/Child Care costs:

All community and local agencies that could provide this supportive service should be contacted prior to utilizing WIOA youth funding (i.e. “all other options exhausted”).

- a) Child care costs can only be paid at a licensed/certified day care provider (not relative/friend, etc.)
- b) Housing can only be paid to commercial hotels/established landlords (not relatives/friend, etc.)

Maximum funds: services provided under child care support will not exceed \$500

Transportation:

Gas cards, bus passes, cab fare: may be given to youth to assist in youth being able to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment.

- a) Gas cards/ bus passes are to be utilized as a supplement to overall transportation costs, not to totally subsidize transportation costs of a youth. Youth is to understand that this is a supplement to assist with transportation costs.
- b) **Gas cards** are distributed at a rate of **\$0.25/mile**. Youth shall receive **no more than \$25 (100 miles)** in gas cards **per day**, covering only one full round trip to and from

training or placement. Youth will not receive gas cards for days not in programs or training. Training provider signed attendance sheets are required as supporting documentation.

- c) Youth must return gas receipt after using the gas card. **No** additional cards will be issued if the youth does not return the receipt (which will include the gas card # on the receipt).
- d) **Bus Passes** are purchased on a monthly basis, unless the training is for a shorter length of time. Rate of bus pass purchase will vary depending on the travel needs of that youth, to be determined with the Youth Staff.
- e) **Uber/Lyft/Taxi expenses** are approved for instances where bus passes are not sufficient for covering transportation needs. (For example, when someone can take a bus to a class but there are no bus options for the ride home due to location and/or time of day.) Total expense cannot exceed the \$25/day cap.
- f) Youth who become employed may receive gas cards/ bus pass until their first paycheck. Employment and pay schedule will be verified with employer.

Other Transportation Supportive Services:

- a) Supportive services can include driver training course to assist youth in gaining driver's license to enable youth to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment. ITA to be completed for training.
- b) For rural areas and other areas where transportation is limited or non-existent, purchase of a new or used bicycle may be as a means of viable transportation to enable youth to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment. For rural distances, bike purchase to cover a radius of 25 miles is reasonable. Cost of the bicycle can't exceed \$120 and will be purchased by the Youth Program.
- c) Other transportation modes or repairs can be funded but requires prior approval by the Workforce Administrator of that youth contract
 - All repairs must have an invoice in order to be paid
 - All repairs must be conducted at a state approved repair shop
 - Repairs are only done on vehicles registered to the participating youth. No repairs will be made on family or friend vehicles, even if that vehicle is the youth's mode of transportation.

Maximum funds: services provided under transportation support will not exceed \$1500

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.

Youth Counselors should first contact MOA/MOU (Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding) partners or other community agencies in their area who may offer free services before utilizing WIOA Supportive Services funding, and the attempts made should be documented in OSOS comments. A list of Supportive Services resources can be found online at:

<https://youth.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/01/24/16/00/Supportive-Services>

Each youth is eligible for a maximum of **\$1500 transportation supportive services and \$500 non-transportation supportive services.** Youth Counselors may request to increase the maximum amount for either on an individual basis by sending a written request with explanation to the Youth Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will respond with a decision within 5 business days. Once youth start a paid work experience or obtain unsubsidized employment, the goal would be to assist them with budgeting their income to pay for their own expenses.

At a minimum, service providers shall:

- 1.) document the need for the supportive service and justify issuance of the service in the participant's ISS and in OSOS (including a Comment describing what was provided and why, Achievement Objective and Service)
- 2.) maintain records of documentation that verify the client received the service through an original signature on a receipt form