

WIOA Youth Program Support Services Guide



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

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Overview

This guide provides information on the provision of support services to youth program participants. Support services are not an entitlement and are used when a need exists and are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title IB Youth Program.

A participant must be registered and assessed for support service needs. Participants receiving support services should demonstrate a **need** and **require support** to complete their plan. Other readily available funding sources must be used before WIOA funds and should be included in the Individualized Service Strategy (ISS).

The examples contained in this document are intended as guidance only. Career planners should adjust figures and forms based on participant need and circumstance. Career planners are discouraged from providing the maximum benefit without clear evidence of need.

It is the responsibility of the career planner to discuss what is expected when support services are requested during the development of the ISS and the steps that will be taken when an funds are misused. The participant needs to understand and acknowledge authorizations are for specific support items. In the event of an inappropriate purchase by the participant, the recovery of misappropriated funds remains at the subrecipient level and is the responsibility of the career planner. Reimbursement will need to be made in the form of a check or money order payable to the State of Alaska.

Documentation

Participant Case File - Career planners should document support services in the participant's case file and describe the participant need, support service(s) necessary to fulfill the need, resources available (if any), and fairness of cost.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS) - Support services must be tied to the participant's ISS and show that each service supports the training and employment goal. The ISS is a planning document and not a binding agreement. As such, both the participant and career planner may edit services and goals or discontinue participation in the plan at any time. Justifiable cause must be established to discontinue services and the participant shall be given information on how to file a grievance if they disagree the decision to discontinue services.

Satisfactory Progress – To receive support services, satisfactory progress must be achieved in completing the services and goals identified in the ISS. Satisfactory progress is the minimum standard of performance in a training program necessary to earn or be awarded a credential, certificate, or degree. Satisfactory progress is determined through regular review of a participant's efforts in completing program goals. This can be documented through transcripts, progress reports from the trainer, grades, or any objective assessment of a student's progress.

If the participant is in danger of not earning a credential from the program of training, the course instructor or career planner may outline appropriate steps to improve the participant's performance. If the participant's progress does not improve, the training program or career planner may take further remedial action or corrective action up to and including withdrawal from the course and discontinuance of support services. Each step in this process should be carefully documented.

Individual Case Management System (ICM) - Information pertinent to the participant's involvement in the program should be entered timely into the ICM. Information to be entered in the ICM includes support service costs and any other sources of funding.

Verification/Compliance - The participant file and/or ICM case notes should reflect that appropriate procedures were followed, the participant was referred to another agency for support services, eligibility was determined, the participant progressed, and the service was provided. Items such as invoices, receipts, grades, and progress notes should all be included in the case file.

Coordination and Linkages

Dual Enrollment - Support services should be provided when no other resources are readily available. Participants enrolled in multiple programs such as WIOA Adult should develop a plan that details the services to be funded by each program.

Support Services from Other Agencies - WIOA requires the non-duplication of services and establishes, before support services are provided, a thorough assessment of resources must be conducted. If another agency can provide the services requested, then the participant should be assisted in accessing those services. For example, Public Assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Child Care Assistance, Food Stamps and Medicaid are a few of the programs where participants may be referred for assistance. In many instances, other agencies will require their own plan of service be developed. To the maximum extent possible, it is important to try and coordinate services and in some cases develop a single plan of service.

During the period that a participant awaits an eligibility determination by another agency for services it may be appropriate to fund the necessary support services until the new agency can begin providing services. Once services are available from another source WIOA should discontinue provision of any duplicative support services.

Support Service Limits

Specific Service Limits - The overall maximum funding limit per ISS is subject to annual review and modification by the DETS Director. These limits apply to all participants who are enrolled during the time period the memo is in effect. Support Service limits can be found here: <http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/advisories.htm>

The limits for the support service types listed in this guide are intended to be the maximum levels of service for a total ISS period not per year. The career planner may exceed these limits with approval from the Youth Program Coordinator.

Reasonable and Adequate Cost (per AAM 81.210) - Individuals authorizing support services are expected to select the most cost-effective and efficient method available to address the identified participant need. The participant's ISS and/or case notes should provide clear and comprehensive justification if the most obvious and least expensive option is not selected. Alaskan vendors should receive preference prior to purchasing services from outside the state.

Support Service Chart

Support Service	Definition	Limits- per ISS
Clothing	Clothes needed for training or employment	\$1,500
Combined Room and Board	Combined Meals and Housing	\$5,000
Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	Professional Counseling Services	\$1,000
Dental Care	Dental	\$2,500
Energy Assistance	Oil/Fuel, Electricity, propane, etc	\$1,500
Eye Care	Examinations, frames, or lenses	\$1,000
Family Care	Childcare, elder care, respite care	\$2,500
Health Care	Medical care Health Insurance	\$2,500
Housing/Lodging	Housing/Lodging Expenses	\$2,500
Housing Maintenance Emergency	Minor emergency repairs	\$1,000
ID's and Licenses	State ID Card, Alaska Driver's License, Occupational Credential	\$2,000
Incentive	An inducement or reward made to a youth participant to encourage achievement of workforce development activities. It must be tied to training and education, work readiness skills and/or an occupational skills attainment.	\$1,000
Interpretation Service	Communication assistance	\$500
Laundry/dry cleaning	Laundry Services	\$250

Legal Services	Legal services to access driver's licenses, expunging criminal records, and resolving issues with debt, credit, and housing.	\$2,500
Meals/Food	Fixed daily or weekly rate	\$2,500
Other Support Services	Special needs devices or services	\$1,000
Personal Care	Supplies or services including personal hygiene	\$1,000
Prevocational Activities	Prevocational Activities	\$2,500
Relocation Assistance	Relocation for employment	\$2,500
Stipend	A fixed regular small payment made to a youth participant to encourage the participant in certain activities such as regularly attending classroom instruction.	\$1,000
Training Related Tools, Books, Supplies, Software	Tools or supplies needed for training	\$2,500
Transportation (Local)	Actual cost or fixed rates Mileage, Auto repair, Auto Insurance	\$1,500
Transportation (Out of Area) Job Search/Placement	Costs for transportation out of local area for job search/placement activities	\$1,500
Transportation (Out-of-Area) Training	Transportation for training	\$2,500
Transportation – (Out of Area) Prevocational Activities	Transportation for prevocational activities	\$2,500
Work Related Supplies	Tools or supplies needed to get a job or maintain a job	\$2,500
Work Experience Wages	Wages for work experience. Work experience may happen multiple times throughout an ISS.	\$5,000

Support Service Descriptions

Clothing: (maximum \$1,500)

If a participant does not have the means to provide the basic clothing necessary for a program activity or to obtain and/or retain employment, financial assistance for clothing may be provided. This may include clothing essential for job interviewing or clothes deemed to be “essential” necessary items for the program/activity and can include items such as arctic gear for employment on the North Slope. The need should be appropriately documented in the participant file.

Combined Room and Board: (maximum \$5,000)

Combined room and board is used for a training program where the housing and food costs are combined into one set amount. An example of this would be AVTEC or other training providers where training lasts longer than 30 days and both meals and lodging are being paid by the program.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: (maximum \$1,000)

Counseling centered on individual, family, financial, drug or alcohol abuse, etc. This may also be provided for limited non-residential services when appropriate as part of a participant’s ISS. Career planners may seek not-for-profit services that use a sliding-fee scale.

Dental Care: (maximum \$2,000)

The services should be necessary for a person to participate successfully in training or to obtain and/or retain employment consistent with their ISS. An example might include repair of an abscessed tooth. Cosmetic or elective procedures may not be provided unless there is a direct relationship to training or employment requirements.

Energy Assistance (maximum \$1,500)

Reasonable heating oil/fuel, electricity, propane, natural gas or wood costs necessary for a participant to successfully participate in program activities.

Eye care: (maximum \$1,000)

This includes examinations, frames, and prescription lenses. This should be necessary for successful participation in training and employment. Effort should be made to fund these services through non-WIOA sources first. Example: Lions Joint Sight Committee (ANCH), nonprofit agency will vary by region.

Family Care: (maximum \$2,500)

This may include childcare, elder care, or respite care assistance needed by an enrolled participant during assessment, job search or during any training activity. Dependent care may also be provided for a participant placed in unsubsidized employment; however, whenever possible, efforts should be made to fund these services through non-WIOA sources first. These may include, but are not limited to the Parents Achieving Self-Sufficiency Program (PASS). Such efforts shall be described in the participant’s ISS and/or case notes.

Payment for dependent care should not exceed the average market rate for these services in the area. A sample telephone survey of rates in that area should be recorded in the case notes to justify the rate.

The decision regarding who will provide the dependent care will be left to the participant. Care

providers must be licensed in order for the state to support them. Family members of the participant must not be paid to provide dependent care under WIOA unless they are currently operating a licensed care facility. "Family member" includes spouse, child, parent, grandparent, in-law parent, stepparent, sibling, sibling-in-law, stepsibling, child-in-law, stepchild, aunt, uncle, nephew and first cousin.

Health Care: (maximum \$2,500)

The medical services should be necessary for a person to participate successfully in training or to obtain and/or retain employment consistent with their ISS. Examples might include a physical exam required for employment. Cosmetic or elective procedures may not be provided unless there is a direct relationship to training or employment requirements.

Housing/Lodging Expenses: (maximum \$2,500)

The Housing and Lodging Expenses may include daily, weekly or monthly rent or mortgage payments and the total cannot exceed the \$2,500 maximum per ISS.

Lodging types and rates fall under the purview of the [Alaska Administrative Manual 60.240](#), lodging types and rates. Lodging is defined as a temporary place to stay while conducting program activities and are broken out into short term lodging (30 days or less) and long term lodging (longer than 30 days).

The actual costs of the accommodation may be paid for short term lodging (30 days or less) however the total amount may not exceed the maximum allowed.

The state policy for long-term lodging expenses (longer than 30 consecutive days) is \$45 per day. The long-term rate outside Alaska is 55 percent of the federal maximum lodging amount for short-term. The federal maximum lodging amount may be obtained by contacting the Division of Finance, Department of Administration, at 465-2240. This may include reasonable costs of lodging for participants while en-route to or attending a program activity, or while en-route to employment. Lodging may be reimbursed for the participant only. Additional charges for family members, or persons other than the participant, are not allowable. The participant must provide original receipts regardless of the payment computation method.

Housing is defined as long term place to live. The methodology used to determine the fixed housing costs must be documented in the file or case noted. Mortgage or rental agreements must also be collected as back up documentation for the expense. If more than one adult is in the household the cost should be allocated appropriately between the adults in the household. In situations where spouses/partners are sharing a residence where one individual does not work due to childcare or medical issues and the household is dependent solely on the sponsored participants support, the entire monthly housing amount may be approved.

Housing/Lodging Expenses may also assist the participant to maintain housing needs such as fuel, electricity, cooking fuel, telephone, and internet and is to be documented in their ISS.

Housing Maintenance Emergencies: (maximum \$1,000)

Housing emergencies may prevent a participant from attending training or securing employment. Such services might include repair of a heating system, broken windows or doors that create an unsafe residence, or faulty mechanical systems that create a serious threat to safety as determined by a professional. This does not include routine maintenance or defects that do not place a participant

in danger or services that should be provided by a landlord.

ID's and Licenses: (maximum \$2,000)

Many occupations require certification by Federal, State, and industry standards and support services may be used to obtain appropriate documentation in support of employment. This may include TWIC, professional licensing fees, background checks, fingerprinting, and photos required for applications for licensing. This code includes the testing fee when the participant is not receiving a training service but needs to test to obtain the state certification.

Incentive: (maximum \$1,000)

An incentive is a payment to a youth participant for the successful participation and achievement of goals identified in the ISS. It must be tied to training and education, work readiness skills and/or an occupational skills attainment. Incentives need to be documented in the ICM and in a log for incentives for audit purposes. It is essential the incentive information is entered in the Case Notes and how it relates to the ISS. Incentives can be gas cards, cash cards or other items as deemed appropriate per Division of Employment and Training Services [Youth Incentive Policy #07-522](#). Incentives may not be spent on entertainment, such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment.

Interpretation Services: (maximum \$500)

Communication and interpretations services are for non-English speaking participants.

Laundry/Dry Cleaning: (maximum \$250)

In certain employment and training settings the employer or industry sets the standard for attire. To ensure a participant's attendance in training and compliance with the standard it may be necessary to fund appropriate laundry services. These services include the purchase of laundry supplies and coin operated laundry facilities or dry cleaning services depending on the cleaning requirements of the uniform or clothing.

Legal Services: (maximum \$2,500)

Legal aid can address certain barriers to employment, including access to driver's licenses, expunging criminal records, and resolving issues with debt, credit, and housing. Legal services does not include paying actual fines relating to driving, expungement of records, debt, credit etc.

Meals/Food: (maximum \$2,500)

Participants have two options for reimbursement of meal expenses: (1) they may receive a fixed daily/weekly meal-rate, or (2) they may be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals (as documented by approved, original receipts), not to exceed \$60 per day.

The most updated meal cost information based on geographical area can be found on DOL's Research & Analysis Division webpage:

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/col/col.pdf>

The fixed daily/weekly meal reimbursement rate shall be calculated as follows:

- For periods of less than seven consecutive days, the fixed meals reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$60 per day. Partial days may be prorated as follows: Breakfast - \$15; Lunch - \$15; Dinner - \$30.

- For periods of seven consecutive days or more, the fixed meal reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$200 per week or \$600 per month. This may be prorated; however, documented substantiation should be noted on the ISS and/or case notes.

Other Support Services: (maximum \$1,000)

Services and devices for people with disabilities are provided under other services. This may include personal devices or services for disabled individuals that cannot be obtained through other sources such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The Assistive Technology Program in the DVR should be contacted (1-800-770-0138) prior to providing such services.

Personal Care: (maximum \$1,000)

Proper hygiene and grooming are necessary for participation in most, if not all, training and employment settings. As such, items necessary to maintain a high level of hygiene and grooming are appropriate support services. This includes toothpaste, soap, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, haircuts, manicures, and other grooming service and products as required for training and employment.

Pre-Vocational Activities: (maximum \$2,500)

Short-term prevocational activities include the development of include the development of learning skills, communication skills (ESL), interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. *Short-term* is defined as generally six (6) months or less in length.

Relocation Assistance: (maximum \$2,500)

If a participant has obtained employment consistent with their ISS and the employment has been verified, WIOA funds may be used to transport the participant to the job-site.

The state may pay for any additional cost for immediate household family members. This means dependents living in the home such as a spouse and children under 18 (or older, if disabled). The State may also pay costs related to transporting household goods.

Stipend: (maximum \$1,000)

A stipend is a fixed regular small payment made to a youth participant during enrollment to encourage the youth participate in certain activities such as class room instruction. Stipends may be paid based on actual hours of attendance and attendance in the activity must be documented as the basis of stipend payments.

Training Related Tools/Supplies/ Books/Software: (maximum \$2,500)

Assistance with the purchase of books, fees, supplies primarily necessary for participation in training rather than employment.

1. **Tools:** May be purchased in support of training, however clear justification in the case notes and ISS is required. Any tool package purchase over \$1,000/\$1,500 will require two estimates when multiple vendors are available unless a specific tool package has been identified by the training provider. This includes safety equipment and/or supplies such as head, ear and eye protection, as well as any other type of safety devices required and not normally provided by the training entity. Items that may be required for training

will not be given to the participant unless he/she successfully completes the training and there is clear documentation that the need for tools is necessary for employment, only then can the tools be released to the participant. Until that time those items will be considered the possession of the state.

2. **Computer:** WIOA funds cannot be used to purchase computers for participants unless it is a required aid for participation in a course of study (such as a computer maintenance course). If the participant successfully completes the training the computer will be returned to the career planner to log into the tool inventory so that another participant can use it, unless there is clear documentation that the need for a computer is necessary for employment only then can the computer be released to the participant. Until that time those items will be considered the possession of the state. Computer and software cost can be broken down separately or as a package, however not to exceed established training cost limits.

Transportation – (Local) Job Search/Placement/Training: (maximum \$1,500)

If a participant does not have a safe, dependable, affordable means of transportation to/from program activities, or to start a job, an adequate amount for providing such transportation may be provided. Direct vendor payments, reimbursement or fixed-rate advances to a participant for local commuting area transportation needs that will allow a participant to participate in program activities.

Fixed transportation reimbursement rate:

A fixed transportation rate (up to a set maximum) may be provided in situations where a participant is within commuting distance of a regularly scheduled program and related activities. The steps in providing the fixed rate are as follows:

1. Determine the appropriate daily rate based on the transportation options available in the applicable community. This determination may be made utilizing many different resources and/or methods as long as there is proper documentation for the determination in the participant file. The following are examples of some methods of determination, however, they are not intended to be an exhaustive list:

If the participant is in an area without public transportation and has access to a ride or a vehicle for a ten-mile trip (one-way) to training, various methods can be utilized with proper documentation such as per mile, or mileage with estimated miles/gallon. Some resources for documentation and justification can be found on the following websites:

www.google.maps.com

www.mapquest.com

www.mpgomatic.com/gas-mileage-by-car/

www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/findacar.htm

In a second example, the participant is in a community with public transportation. A transit pass may cost \$60 a month, or approximately \$2 per day. Assuming the transit system could meet the participant's necessary transportation needs, the reimbursement should be set at \$2 per day. Although the participant may still choose to use other means of transportation, the fixed rate would not exceed \$2 per day.

2. Determine whether the transportation rate would also be paid on non-training days, since the service might be necessary for special appointments or necessary grocery shopping, for

additional guidance contact the program manager.

3. Describe the process above on the participant's support service authorization, ISS and/or case notes to justify the decision to provide a fixed transportation rate in the amount specified.
4. Auto repair maybe entered under this category but the total of all repairs to car should only be for safety type of repairs. Repairs should not exceed 50% of the value of the vehicle. Verification of insurance, registration and of the vehicle's value should be kept in the participant's file.
5. Auto insurance premiums can also be entered under this category and includes **SR-22** or high-risk auto insurance.
6. No penalties or fines can be paid.

Transportation – (Out of Area) Job Search/Placement: (maximum \$1,500)

Direct vendor payments, reimbursement or fixed-rate advances to the participant for out of area transportation needs that will allow a youth to participate in program activities. If paying for travel to a job interview, the career planner must confirm the interview with the employer and document it in the ICM and/or case file.

Transportation – (Out of Area) Training: (maximum \$2,500)

Occasionally, it may be necessary to assist a participant moving from their place of residence in order to participate in training. This is different from relocation assistance in that the service is tied to a participant's training activities. If a participant is enrolled in a training program occurring outside his or her home community, standard commuter air, ground and/or water transportation to and from the site may be provided.

Other Transportation Related Costs: Costs specifically identified with non-participants or activities not directly associated with training participation (e.g. ferry tickets for family members) will not be provided, regardless of the total cost. Additional transportation costs (including shipping or excess baggage charges) for goods other than those necessary to participate in the program activity, are the responsibility of the participant.

Transportation – (Out of Area) Prevocational Activities: (maximum \$2,500)

Direct vendor payments, reimbursement or fixed-rate advances to the participant for out of area transportation needs that will allow a youth to participate in pre-vocational activities.

Work Related Supplies (maximum \$2,500)

Assistance with the purchase of work related supplies may be provided when necessary to obtain and/or retain employment. **Tools:** May be purchased in support of job placement; however, clear justification in the case notes is required. Any tool package purchase over \$1,000/\$1,500 will require two estimates when multiple vendors are available unless a specific tool package has been identified by the employer. This includes safety equipment and/or supplies such as head, ear and eye protection, as well as any other type of safety devices required for employment and not normally provided by the employer.

Work Experience Wages: (maximum \$5,000)

Work experience wages can be utilized multiple times during the ISS period. Total work experience amount is limited to \$5,000.