



County of Mercer Workforce Development Board

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Mercer WDB Policy: Youth Supportive Services & Needs-Based Payments Adopted: January 26, 2021; Revised 4/27/2021 & 11/1/2022

Background: A Policy for Supportive Services & Needs-Based Payments for Youth is required under the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Section 129 Local Elements & Requirements; Program Elements (G) Support Services (USDOL TEGL No. 19-16 and as per NJ Workforce Innovation Notice (WIN) 10-16 (A).

Purpose: To help ensure that youth receive services (directly or by referral) that will assist them in successfully completing their training and/or work experience; and achieving their program goals by removing as many obstacles possible and allowed under WIOA.

Title I of WIOA outlines a broad youth vision that supports an integrated service delivery system and provides a framework through which states and local areas can leverage other federal, state, local and philanthropic resources to support in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY). It further affirms the Department of Labor's commitment to providing high-quality services for youth, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships, for in-demand industries and occupations, and culminating with employment, enrollment in postsecondary education, or a registered apprenticeship. *WIOA Section 129 Local Elements & Requirements; Program Elements (G) Support Services. [USDOL TEGL (Training & Employment Guidance Letter) No. 19-16]* Supportive Services is one of the 14 program elements for WIOA youth programs. These services are designed to enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities.

Policy: The Mercer WDB recognizes the following Supportive Services that MCOTES can provide based on individual need:

- Assistance with transportation
 - Bus transportation
 - Bus Tickets (travel to internship/work-related activities)
 - Assistance with personal vehicle transportation
 - Assistance with obtaining and/or restoring drivers licenses
 - Assistance with transportation/commuting
- Assistance with technology needs
 - Equipment – i.e. Chromebook or similar item
 - Wi-Fi hotspots
- Assistance with educational testing

- HSE testing fee
 - Referral to educational institution for HSE (High School Equivalency) testing
- Assistance with child care and dependent care
- Assistance with housing
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire i.e. steel-tip boots, work related tools, protective gear, etc.

- Provision of Stipends/Needs-Based to Offset Training expense

- Linkages to community services
 - Public Assistance (TANF/GA)
 - Child Care (Child Care Connection)
 - Child Support (NJ Child Support Enforcement)
 - Food/Nutrition (Food Banks, SNAP)
 - Homelessness (Housing counseling, Local resources)
 - Juvenile Justice (OJJDP, Reentry Resource Centers)
 - Legal Aid
 - Violence and Abuse (Counselors, Hotlines)
 - Health, Mental, and Substance Abuse (Local clinics/treatment centers)

The Mercer WDB authorizes MCOTES to make available needs-based payments to offset the cost of attending vocational training as determined by case management staff based on individual need. MCOTES will adopt eligibility, documentation and other requirements consistent with this policy in the issuance of such payments.