

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT**
(And TRADE ACT)

**SUPPORTIVE & TRAINING-RELATED
SERVICES GUIDELINES**

Adopted by the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board: September 9, 2015

September 9, 2015
ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Resolution No. 15-I09-15

AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE AND ADOPTION OF BYLAWS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, CONTRACTS AND LEASES/SUBLEASES, ADOPTED BUDGETS AND OTHER FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, TOGETHER WITH ALL OTHER CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS, FROM THE ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

WHEREAS, coming into compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires that Workforce Investment Boards become Workforce Development Boards; and

WHEREAS, WIOA has mandated several other changes in the organization of Workforce Investment Boards; and

WHEREAS, the St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment Board took actions at its June 10, 2015 meeting to initiate all these changes and to transfer its WIOA-compliant operations to the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board (WDB) ; and

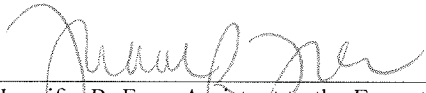
WHEREAS, at its August 3, 2015 meeting the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators (BOL) took official action to replace the temporary WDB it had appointed at its July 7, 2015 meeting with membership that was fully compliant with WIOA requirements; and

WHEREAS, both the County BOL and the WDB recognize that the WDB is and should be the successor in due course to the WIB;

WHEREAS, now that a WIOA-compliant WDB is in place, it is appropriate and prudent for the WDB to officially accept and adopt the bylaws and all the policies and procedures, contracts and leases/subleases, and adopted budgets and other financial responsibilities, together with all other continuing responsibilities and powers, from the WIB ; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board does hereby officially accept and adopt the bylaws and all the policies and procedures, contracts and leases/subleases, and adopted budgets and other financial responsibilities, together with all other continuing responsibilities and powers, from the St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment Board effective on July 1, 2015 and authorizes, empowers, and directs its staff to continue to operate the workforce development system in St. Lawrence County according to the precedents established prior to July 1, 2015 when and as appropriate and consistent with WIOA.

I, Jennifer R. Free, Assistant to the Executive Director of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board, DO HEREBY CERTIFY, that I have compared this copy of this Resolution, adopted September 9, 2015; with the original record in this office and that the same is a correct transcript thereof and of the whole of said original record.



Jennifer R. Free, Assistant to the Executive Director
St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board
September 9, 2015

INTRODUCTION

The St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board (WDB) has determined that the best means of providing financial assistance to customers enrolled in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training or service(s) activity(ies) is through a Supportive Services Payment System. The purpose of this Supportive Services System is to enable customers to participate in those activities authorized under WIOA Title I. Each customer's needs will be determined on an individual basis and justified in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). WIOA counselors, per WDB policy, will insure that customers are referred to resources in the local area to include, but not be limited to, those Supportive Services available to customers of ACCESS-VR, DOSS, SED, and TAA services. When a determination has been made by the WIOA Counselor that other local sources of Supportive Services have been exhausted or are not available to the participant and WIOA funding is available then the WDB Supportive Services Policies will be followed. Supportive Services may only be provided to individuals who are eligible for intensive and/or training service.

TRADE ACT AFFECTED WORKERS

Those dislocated workers eligible for Trade Act benefits will be co-enrolled into WIOA Title I. As such, these individuals will be eligible for all WIOA-funded services, to include supportive services, job search allowances, job relocation allowance and subsistence (temporary shelter) when those services or funds are not available through the Trade Act. These aforementioned services will be funded to Trade Act-affected workers consistent with the following WDB-approved policies and procedures when funded through WIOA Title I. Trade Act-specific policies and procedures are noted below (in Bold Italics) and will be followed when those funds are approved and available.

PROCEDURE

Any Supportive Service payments provided to customers will be justified by using the Local Workforce Development Area's (LWDA) approval process, documented in the IEP (*or Trade Act Approved Employment Plan*) and revisited periodically. All necessary documentation such as invoices, time sheets, mileage sheets, child care forms, and vouchers are in place and are presently being used by the LWDA as documentation for the reimbursement of Supportive Service payments. (*The Trade Act specifies what must be documented.*)

Supportive Service total payments will be based on funding availability. Where limits or rates are specifically stated to be a maximum amount of payment or reimbursement, these may be changed by WDB resolution when economic conditions change such that the cost of WIOA participation is prohibitive at the current "limits" or rate of reimbursement. (*Trade Act benefits have limits that are set by the Federal Trade Act and may not be changed locally.*) There is no maximum amount on total Supportive Services nor is there a maximum length of time for Supportive Services to be available to a customer in WIOA Title I. However, the Board may, at a later date, impose such a limit, if necessary. (*See Trade Act amounts and time limits as specified for the following.*)

Supportive Service payments may include, but are not limited to:

1. Transportation Payments

In all cases where competitive bids are required customers shall follow those guidelines set forth in WIOA Financial Procedures Manual, and shall use the forms provided in Exhibit A.

- a. **In-County** mileage allowance will be reimbursed for customers who are in training or who are in need of such service to participate in WIOA Intensive or Training activities at a rate equal to one-half of the standard mileage reimbursement rate for a privately-owned automobile established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Other in-county forms of public or private transportation services could be paid for at a cost which is reasonable based on local market-price conditions, such as taxi or bus fare, or as provided for by another private individual. In order to receive this allowance, customers must submit a "Customer Expense Form" (Exhibit B) and (if enrolled in training) a completed "Customer Bi-Weekly Attendance Form" (Exhibit C). *(A reimbursable transportation allowance to and from training will be afforded to the individual only when the commute to training exceeds one hour of driving time by private vehicle or 1.5 hours by public transportation. The rate of reimbursement will be determined by the Federal Rate as established at the time of commute. Note: If the cost of transportation reimbursement added to the cost of subsistence and training exceed the total cost of what is elsewhere available, the training may be denied in favor of the least expensive training option.)*

(All transportation costs are included in the TAA Training caps.)

- b. **Out-of-County** mileage will be reimbursed for customers who are in training at a rate equal to one-half of the standard mileage reimbursement rate for a privately-owned automobile established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). (Refer to separate policy for out-of-area job search and relocation). In order to receive this allowance, customers must submit a "Customer Expense Form (Exhibit B) and a completed "Customer Bi-Weekly Attendance Form" (Exhibit C). *(Trade Act policy remains as above.)*
- c. **Automobile Repair(s)**: Automobile repairs will only be considered if the customer can justify that this is the least costly method to provide transportation. Customers must possess a valid driver's license, provide proof of ownership of the vehicle, and present three (3) repair estimates from New York State Certified Auto Service Garages. Repairs up to the retail value of car or a maximum of \$500, whichever is the lesser, may be approved. Approval for car repairs must be granted before repair work can begin. Estimates for automobile repairs must also include the estimated retail value of the car. In all cases where competitive bids are required customers shall follow those guidelines set forth in WIOA Financial Procedures Manual, and shall use the forms provided in Exhibit A. *(There are no provisions under the Trade Act for Automobile Repair(s).)*

- d. **Automobile Insurance:** Automobile insurance will only be considered if the customer can justify that this is the least costly method to provide transportation. Customers must possess a valid driver's license, provide proof of ownership of the vehicle, and present three (3) insurance estimates in their name for liability coverage only, at the minimum required by law. Insurance payments made on behalf of the customer may not exceed a lifetime maximum of \$1,000. Customers shall follow those guidelines set forth in WIOA Financial Procedures Manual, and shall use the forms provided in Exhibit A. *(There are no provisions under the Trade Act for Automobile Insurance.)*
- e. **Automobile registration, permit, and license** costs as determined by New York State Department of Motor Vehicles are payable up to a maximum of \$300 per individual need. *(There are no provisions under the Trade Act for these additional transportation-related costs.)*

2. Health Associated Payments

Health associated payments include medical, dental, eye, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, referral services, individual and family counseling services, special services, and materials for individuals with disabilities may be provided on an individual basis. Payments associated with these services shall be reasonable, based on local market price conditions. These payments must be related directly to the customer's employment goal, and justified in the IEP. *(There are no Trade Act provisions for these health-associated payments.)*

Any registered activities requiring a St. Lawrence County physical examination will be reimbursed up to \$45.00. It is understood that some physicals (e.g. DOT physical) may be required for participation. These physicals may exceed the \$45.00 payment limit, but only upon approval by the Assistant Accounting Supervisor or the WDB Executive Director. Physician instructions and St. Lawrence County Health Evaluation are provided in Exhibit D.

3. Child Care Policy

Customers will be referred to outside sources of childcare funding and be expected to complete the application process prior to commitment of WIOA Program funds. WIOA Title I funding may supplement the difference of partial assistance received from outside agencies up to \$2.00 per hour per child when such need is documented in the IEP. If outside funding sources are exhausted or if a customer is denied assistance due to excess income or length of training program, WIOA Title I funding may reimburse customers up to the aforementioned limits.

Request for childcare reimbursement must be reasonable and customary as compared with the needs of other customers in similar training. If the length of training, in either calendar days or hours per week, is not reasonable or customary, the Employment & Training Counselor may deny some or all future reimbursements. Customers must complete a "Child Care Reimbursement Request" (Exhibit E). In no case shall child care reimbursement be granted without a completed "Customer Bi-Weekly Attendance Form" (Exhibit C) to document attendance at training.

(There are no provisions under the Trade Act for child care allowances.)

4. **Meals and Temporary Shelter**

Meals and temporary shelter can be provided for out-of-county training for customers determined in need of such payments as documented in the IEP. Meals for out-of-county training will be reimbursed at \$15 per day for each day of attendance. Out-of-county temporary shelter payments will be based on local market price conditions and may include a weekend stay when deemed necessary. Customers must complete a “Customer Expense Reimbursement” form (Exhibit F). In no case shall this reimbursement be granted without a completed “Customer Bi-Weekly Attendance Form” (Exhibit C) to document attendance at training.

(Under the Trade Act subsistence payments (temporary shelter) are provided for individuals in approved training, and shall not exceed the lesser amount of the individual’s actual per diem or 50% of the prevailing per diem rate authorized under the federal travel regulations in the area that the training takes place.)

(All subsistence payments are included in the TAA Training caps.)

5. **Books, Fees, and Non-Consumable School Supplies**

Books, fees, and non-consumable school supplies required for WIOA Title I education/training may be paid when necessary for participation and documented in the IEP. *(All books, fees and non-consumable school supplies are included in the TAA Training caps.)*

6. **Payments for Other Reasonable Expenses**

Payments for other reasonable expenses required for participation in intensive or training services (e.g. clothing) must be verified in the IEP and procured through competitive bid. Clothing costs cannot exceed \$250. Tools and equipment required to participate in program activities cannot exceed \$500. Customers shall follow those guidelines set forth in St. Lawrence County’s Procurement/Purchasing Policy, and shall use the forms provided in Exhibit A. *(The Trade Act has no caps on tools, clothing or equipment required for participation in training; however, all costs are part of the TAA Training caps.)*

7. **Needs-Related Payments**

(The Trade Act has provisions for a Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA), which is a form of income support/weekly cash payments available for up to 78 weeks after a worker’s unemployment insurance compensation benefit is exhausted. Basic TRA of 26 weeks may be paid if the individual is in approved training or on waiver from training and meets the 8/16-week deadline. That is, training or waiver has been requested by the last day of the 8th week after the week of the issuance of the certification of eligibility (refers to the petition) or the last day of the 16th week after the worker’s total separation from the employer (whichever is later).)

(Additional TRA of 52 weeks may be paid only for additional number of weeks in training and must meet an additional 210-day deadline. That is, the worker must have filed a bona fide application for training within 210 days of either the issuance of the certification (petition) or within the worker's most recent qualifying separation, whichever is later.)

Needs-Related Payments are cash payments, which may be made available to Adults and Dislocated Workers who are enrolled in WIOA Title I and into full-time, long-term training of a minimum duration of 12 weeks up to a maximum of 32 weeks. For this policy, full-time training is defined as training in which a participant is registered for a minimum of 15 credit hours or 15 hours of actual participation in training each week. Eligible individuals, as described below, may receive a flat weekly payment of \$50 (paid bi-weekly) upon submission of a complete Customer Bi-Weekly Attendance Form for Supportive Services (Exhibit C). Eligible participants will begin qualification for payments on the first day of class. Payments will not be available during any period of five (5) or more consecutive holidays, vacations, or days absent during the school year. Payments are subject to funding availability and participant continued self attestation of eligibility based on the Financial Needs Assessment (Exhibit H).

Customers must complete a "Reimbursement Agreement" (Exhibit G) before any and all Needs-Related Payments are made to the customer.

a. Adult Eligibility

All Adults must:

- 1) Be unemployed,
- 2) Not qualified for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation.
- 3) Not in receipt of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Safety Net benefits.
- 4) Be determined, through the completion of a Financial Needs Assessment (Exhibit H), as unable to attend training due to an inability to provide for their basic living expenses.
- 5) Be enrolled into a full-time (as described above) approved training or educational program that is part of a comprehensive plan approved by and developed with the WIOA counselor.
- 6) Attendance in training/school must be documented on the attached bi-weekly attendance sheet (Exhibit C). School vacation, holiday periods or absences from school/training of 5 or more days will cease to qualify the participant for NRP for that period.
- 7) Bi-weekly attendance sheets will document continued eligibility for NRP. Employment and/or receipt of Unemployment Insurance Benefits or Trade Readjustment Act benefits for any week will disqualify the participant for receipt of NRPs for that week. Any changes in the participants "Financial Needs Assessment" (Exhibit H) will prompt a review by the WIOA counselor of the participants' continued eligibility for NRP.
- 8) Participants' school reports must indicate that they are "academically in good standing" for the continued receipt of NRPs.

b. Dislocated Worker Eligibility

All of the above eligibility requirements must be met **and**:

- 1) Dislocated Workers must, and **in absence of a New York State Waiver to the following requirement:** be enrolled into a program of training begun by the 13th week after a determination of the worker's eligibility (date of actual qualifying dislocation) or, if later, by the end of the 8th week after the workers is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed six months; and
- 2) Be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment assistance.
- 3) NRP levels will be a flat rate of \$50 weekly (as for Adults); and will not exceed the weekly level of unemployment compensation benefits; or for participants who did not qualify for UIB, the weekly payment does not exceed the poverty level.

c. Administration of Needs Related Payments:

The Executive Director of the WDB and/or Sr. Employment Counselor will have the authority to approve participant requests for Needs Related Payments. The Sr. Employment Counselor and Counseling staff will oversee form distribution. The Program will be jointly managed by the Assistant Accounting Supervisor and the Sr. Employment Counselor. Both of these individuals will be responsible for responding to questions and complaints. The Fiscal Staff under the direction of the Assistant Accounting Supervisor will handle payment accounting and payment processing.

Needs Related Payments cannot be provided to customers for the time they are employed or enrolled in OJT, out-of-the area job search, or basic readjustment services.

Needs Related payments are provided only in order to enable an adult or dislocated worker to participate in a full-time, approved training or education program that is part of a comprehensive retraining plan approved by and developed with the WIOA Employment & Training Counselor.

Payments will cease upon completion, withdrawal or termination from approved training or education program.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR YOUTH

(The Trade Act does not have separate services for youth.)

The standard to authorize Supportive Services for Youth shall not vary from those for Adults and Dislocated Workers, with the exception that Needs-Related Payment funds are not authorize for Youth. These Supportive Services include, but are not limited to, the following:

Supportive Services for youth, as defined in WIOA section 129 (c)(2)(G), may include the following:

1. Linkages to community services;
2. Assistance with transportation;
3. Assistance with child care and dependent care;
4. Assistance with housing;
5. Referrals to medical services; and
6. Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear.

JOB INTERVIEW AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Eligibility

Applicants must be currently registered for WIOA Intensive or Training Services. *(Trade Act individuals must meet the following criteria in order to be considered or approved for this benefit: (i) the applicant must be totally separated from the adversely affected employment at the time of the job search; (ii) the applicant must be registered with and seeking employment through the One-Stop System; (iii) the applicant has no reasonable expectation of securing suitable employment within the normal commuting distance (i.e. one hour by private vehicle or 1.5 hours by public transportation); (iv) it must be verified that the applicant is traveling for an available job for which an interview is scheduled; (v) an application for this allowance must be made before the 365th day of the petition certification or their last total separation (use the latter) or the 182nd day after the date on which the worker successfully concluded training or the date of a training waiver.)*

A “Request for Job Interview or Relocation Assistance: Memo to Supervisor” (Exhibit I) must be completed and approved by the requesting counselor’s immediate supervisor. *(Requests for Trade Act Job Interview or Relocation Allowance must be approved by the WIOA Counselor, requested using the Shared database. This request must also be submitted to NYSDOL for approval.)*

1. Job Interview Assistance

Requirements

- a. A bona-fide job interview must be confirmed by submitting a completed employer letter confirming the interview arrangements; *(Trade Act does not say how this is to be documented, just verified.)*
- b. No job interview assistance will be considered for interviews that are less than 50 miles or less from the customer’s residence; *(Trade Act specifies 1-hour commute by private vehicle; 1.5 hour by public transportation.)*
- c. A maximum of three (3) days is allowed for an interview unless prior written approval is given to exceed this limit. *(Job Search for Trade Act individuals must be completed within a reasonable period of time and minimally no later than 30 days after the job search began.)*

Payment

(Job interview allowance shall not exceed a total of \$1,250.00 per customer) *(The Trade Act allowance reimburses 90% of the cost of necessary job search expenses as prescribed (subsistence and transportation reimbursement levels may not exceed those previously stated) but not to exceed \$1,250.)*

- a. Reimbursement for food, lodging and related expenses to a maximum of three (3) days shall not exceed \$125 per day. *(See Trade Act limitations stated above.)*
- b. The actual cost of transportation (if provided by commercial transportation) shall not be reimbursed without appropriate receipts. Automobile travel will be reimbursed at the rate equal to one-half of the standard mileage reimbursement rate for a privately-owned automobile established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). *(Transportation reimbursement limitations for Trade Act are as previously stated.)*

Procedures

- a. Customers requesting reimbursement must submit a completed "Customer Expense Sheet" (Exhibit F) and corresponding receipts.
- b. Job Interview Assistance is a multiple occurrence policy and shall not exceed a maximum total of \$1,250. *(All Trade Act Job Search must be approved and completed within 30 days of approval.)*

2. Relocation Assistance

(The Trade Act requires that an application for this allowance must be made before the 425th day after the date of certification or the 425th day after the last total separation or the date that is the 182nd day after the date on which the worker successfully concluded training or the date a training waiver terminates.)

Requirements

- a. Customers must complete in its entirety an "Agreement of Understanding for Relocation Assistance" (Exhibit J) to confirm acceptance of a job offering. *(The WIOA Counselor must approve a relocation benefit request and submit the request using the shared database; however the State may deny requests for a relocation allowance.)*
- b. The job must be located a minimum of fifty (50) miles from the customer's residence; *(For Trade Act individuals a job must be more than 1 hour commuting distance by private vehicle, or 1.5 hours by public transportation from their residence.)*

Payment

Upon prior written verification for all requirements, a maximum of \$3,000 per participant will be reimbursed with receipts. *(The Trade Act relocation allowance reimburses up to 90% of reasonable and necessary expenses for the worker, the worker's family and household effects and a lump sum equivalent to 3 times the worker's average weekly wage up to a maximum of \$1,250.)*

Procedures

(The Trade Act does not specify what documentation is necessary for reimbursement.)

- a. A relocation allowance not to exceed \$3,000 may be reimbursed only after completion of the Agreement of Understanding for Relocation Assistance, a completed “Request for Relocation Allowance” (Exhibit K) and verification of job offer and acceptance. ***(Limits for Trade Act previously stated.)***
- b. Requests for reimbursement for transportation and toll receipts for actual cost of commercial carrier such as (air, train, bus, or rental) or for automobile travel must be submitted in person or by mail to the customer’s counselor. Customers must complete a “Customer Expense Reimbursement” form (Exhibit F). In no case shall this reimbursement be granted without appropriate documentation/verification (e.g. toll receipts, invoices). ***(Trade Act reimburses 90% of all reasonable and necessary expenses.)***
- c. For each travel day of relocation a maximum fee of \$15/day will be allowed for meals (with receipts) and up to \$125/day for lodging reimbursement (with receipts). Customers must complete a “Customer Expense Reimbursement” form (Exhibit F). In no case shall this reimbursement be granted without appropriate documentation/verification (i.e. receipts). ***(Again, expenses under Trade Act should be reasonable and necessary.)***
- d. Relocation Assistance is a single occurrence policy.

3. Rent Subsidy

(Rent Subsidy is not a Trade Act benefit.)

Requirements

- a. A bona-fide job offer and acceptance of the job must be confirmed;
- b. The job must be a minimum fifty (50) miles from the residence;
- c. In writing, actual cost of rental.

Payment: Rental subsidies limited to the first month’s rent only (no deposit or security deposit will be paid). This is included in the total cost allowed for relocation.

Procedures: The first month’s rent will be paid upon presentation of a lease agreement or bill.