



Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board
Policy/Procedure Name: **Youth Incentive & Stipend Policy**
Policy/Procedure #: **WIOA-2017-035**
Revision: October 8, 2020
Revision: March 2, 2021

PURPOSE

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) allows for the provision of incentive payments to youth participants. They are permitted for recognition and achievement directly tied to training activities and work experiences. LWDA's must have written policies and procedures in place governing the award of incentives and must ensure that such incentive payments are:

- (a) Tied to the goals of the specific program;
- (b) Outlined in writing before the commencement of the program that may provide incentive payments;
- (c) Aligned with the local program's organizational policies; and
- (d) In accordance with the requirements contained in 2 CFR § 200 and 20 CFR § 681.640

STATE POLICY

Reference Technical College System of Georgia – Office of Workforce Development Section 3.4.4 Supportive Services

Reference Workforce Implementation Guidance (WIG) Letter No. WIG PS-17-001, Youth Incentives Dated January 29, 2018

LOCAL POLICY

WIOA youth participants that have successfully achieved a pre-determined milestone that is directly tied to education and training activities or work experiences are eligible to receive an incentive payment. Incentive payments must be tied to a work experience or education and training activity that is reflected in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The participant must be active in a WIOA youth program or follow-up activity.

All incentive payments with supporting documentation for the achievement must be fully documented in the participant's case file and the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal.

The following sections explain the type of incentives and amounts a youth participant may receive for successful achievements of goals or objectives. It is required that all documentation pertaining to incentive payments be kept in each participants' file. All goals must be measurable and must be supported by appropriate documentation to support the successful achievement of the pre-determined goal or objective. All incentive payments and supporting documentation for the achievement must be fully documented in the participant's case file and recorded in the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal.



A. In School Youth

1. Class-Based Training

\$25 per week may be paid to participants for successful achievement of pre-determined goals or objectives of class-based training.

2. Basic Skills and Excel Awards

- **\$25** for meeting a basic skills goal in either reading or math. The goal must be set and met within one year. A participant may receive an incentive payment for one basic skill.
- **\$50** for meeting a second basic skills goal in the same area in which the first goal was met. The goal must be set and met within the same school year as the first goal. Only participants who have earned the \$25 incentive payment may be eligible to receive this incentive.
- **\$100 Excel Award** will be awarded to those participants who meet all academic requirements and maintain a "B" average for the school year.

A cumulative total of \$175 may be earned through this incentive.

3. Job Readiness / Work Readiness Awards

- **\$25** for meeting a job readiness or life skills goal. The goal must be met within the school year in which it was set.
- **\$50** for meeting a work readiness goal. The goal must be set and met within the same school year as the first goal. Only participants who have earned the \$25 incentive payment may be eligible to receive this incentive.
- **\$100 I'm Ready Award** will be awarded to participants who maintains unsubsidized employment for thirteen weeks with a minimum of 20 hours per week.

A cumulative total of \$175 may be earned through this incentive.

4. Occupational Skills Awards

- **\$25** for meeting an occupational skills goal. The goal must be met within one year of being set.
- **\$50** for meeting a second occupational skills goal. The goal must be set and met within the same school year as the first goal. Only participants who have earned the \$25 incentive payment may be eligible to receive this incentive.
- **\$100 I Made it Award** will be awarded to those participants who enter into training related employment and maintains employment for thirteen weeks at a minimum of 20 hours per week.

A cumulative total of \$175 may be earned through this incentive.



5. High School Diploma Incentive

- **\$150 Got It Award** will be awarded to those participants who earn a High School Diploma.

B. Out of School Youth

1. Class-Based Training

- **\$25** per week may be paid to participants for successful achievement of pre-determined goals or objectives of class-based training.
- **\$150 Got It Award** will be awarded to participants who obtain a GED.

2. Work-Based Training

- **\$100** will be awarded to participants who maintain unsubsidized employment for thirteen weeks at a minimum of 30 hours per week.

C. Other In School and Out of School Youth Incentives

In some situations, field trips can be utilized as an incentive for completing a formal project with goals such as, but not limited to, for Job Readiness / Work Readiness. The proposed project must be written and described in detail, include a project plan/agenda and approved ahead of time by SWGA WDB Staff and included in the provider's statement of work. All goals associated with the project must be met and documented in order to qualify for the incentive.

Note: Incentives must not include entertainment (Reference: USDOL TEGL 21-16), such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment (Reference Section E below for Unallowable Incentive Payments).

D. Unallowable Incentive Payments

As stated in USDOL TEGL 21-16, all incentive payments paid with WIOA funds must be in compliance with outlined Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200. This TEGL emphasizes that "incentives must not include entertainment, such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment".

Additionally, the following are other unallowable uses of WIOA funds for incentive payments:

1. Recruitment or referrals;



2. Rewards for submitting eligibility documentation;
3. Possession of a credential attained prior to enrollment; and
4. Regular attendance or participation in a WIOA program where payment is to sustain participant's ongoing attendance or participation.

E. Stipends

A stipend is a pre-determined fixed payment made to a WIOA Youth participant for participation in and completion of pre-determined activity(ies) goals/objectives.

Stipends may only be provided for pre-approved activities. Requests must be made formally in writing and, if approved, a contract modification will follow. Stipend amounts will vary and will be negotiated, including structure, (i.e. lump sum or multiple payments) with the detail incorporated into the contract modification.

Justification for the need of training must be documented and also the activity goals/objectives must be defined in the participants Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Documentation requirements for stipends will include:

- Attendance or time record sheets for each qualifying activity, maintained in the participant file and in the WorkSource Portal system.
- Certificate(s) of completion or other similar documentation
- Case notes verifying the completion and date of completion
- Proof of payment, signed and dated by the participant; and
- WorkSource Portal system voucher & payment

Note: According to IRS publications, stipends are considered miscellaneous compensation and are taxable.

F. Disaster and Emergency Considerations

In the event of a natural disaster or declaration of an emergency situation, the following provisions shall immediately be available for enrolled youth participants. These provisions shall become effective immediately upon the declaration of a State of Emergency within the Southwest Georgia region and/or the State of Georgia by the Governor and/or the President of the United States. Participants must have been enrolled to receive youth services at the time of the declaration OR enrolled to receive youth services following the State of Emergency. The provision shall remain in effect until the State of Emergency is lifted OR amended by the SWGA Workforce Development Board.



A. Remote Learning and Additional Training Needs

1. Participants shall be permitted to complete training activities remotely, if authorized by the contracted youth service provider.
2. Participants shall be eligible to make requests with the service provider for additional training materials required in order to complete training, such as computers or access to internet services.

G. Other Policy Considerations

A contracted service provider may request an exception in the Incentive policy area. The request must be in writing and describe the reason for the requested exception. The exception must be approved and signed by the Executive Director, Colquitt City Manager or Mayor of Colquitt.

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