

Northwest Workforce Service Area Letter 109

Subject: Support Services Policy and Procedures

Issuance Date: 1 January 2004, Revised 17 March, 2011

Effective Date: 1 January 2004

Action: To establish an official policy and procedure for providing client support services under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Who: Workforce Investment Board Members, Local Elected Official Board Members, and Program Providers.

Background: Support Service means a one-time payment to a vendor on the behalf of a client to eliminate a client need that prevents or makes it difficult for a client to complete their educational plan and to secure employment. Support services are based on individual need. The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is to clearly indicate the need for support services. There must be no other sources of support and such services must enable participants to engage in WIA services or to provide them with a better opportunity to gain employment or to retain their jobs.

The term “supportive services” means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA, consistent with the provisions of WIA.

The intent of this policy is to provide guidance to insure participant needs are assessed, community resources are utilized, assistance is provided equitably and accountability of funds is maintained.

Policy and Procedures: The following policy and procedures are the basis for providing client support services within the Northwest Workforce Service Area.

1. Support services are based on the individual client need determined by the objective assessment.
2. Supportive service needs must be specified in the Individual Service Strategy.
3. Case Managers should make every effort to utilize other existing community resources and programs such as mental health centers, food shelves, housing programs, county social services, fuel assistance programs, Community Action Agencies, and other identified community resources to meet identified client needs. This should be accomplished through referral to other agencies and the referral documented in the client record. Follow-up should be conducted on all referrals to ensure that the needed resources were received by the client.

4. The reason for support services must be documented and must relate to the need as defined in the Individual Service Strategy. All support service transactions must be noted in the client's case notes in Workforce One. A Support Service Request form must be completed by either the client or the case manager and must be retained in the client records. (Attachment A). Case managers must be aware of the current funding available in each fund source to insure that sufficient funding is available to assist clients with support services.
5. All supportive service requests require team approval. Individual case managers are not to authorize approval of any support without the involvement of other staff. Reasons for approval or denial of the client request must be documented in the client record.
6. The amount of funding available for support services is limited. To ensure that every client has the opportunity to access these funds as needed, the maximum amount any one client may receive under support service is \$3,000. The \$3,000 limit applies to the life of the participant's enrollment. The Individual Participant Support Services Log (Attachment B) must be used to track cumulative support service amounts for each client in order to guarantee that the \$3,000 limit is not exceeded. In addition, Support Service requests of \$500 or higher must have the approval of the NWPIC prior to authorizing any expenditure. The Case Manager is to track the amount of each participants cumulative support services on the Individual Participant support Services Log (Attachment B).
7. All client support service expenditures must be submitted to the NWPIC for approval and for payment utilizing the NWPIC Payment Invoice (See Attachment C) and by following these procedures:
 - a. The payment invoice must be completed in full and the appropriate signatures must be completed
 - b. All vendor payments must be supported by a receipt which clearly states what was purchased and other appropriate documentation, as necessary, describing the type of support and documenting that services were received by the client.
 - c. Staff is to verify the actual costs that are being submitted for payment and to review previous authorizations in the client record to avoid duplication of services or double billing of the item.
 - d. Payment will be made directly to the participant ONLY in situations where vendor billing is not practical. The client record needs to document the reasons as to why vendor billing was not practical when a payment is made directly to the client.
 - e. The NWPIC contracts with Inter-Community Council for accounting services. Inter-County will prepare and forward the check to the vendor once the above procedures are properly completed.

8. Case Managers are to insure that support services, once approved, are utilized within an appropriate time frame. Case Managers are to review client files on a monthly basis and approved support services that are not going to be used should be de-obligated.
9. An individual may receive support services following exit from the WIA program for up to 90 days after exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to ensure job retention, wage gains and career progress. The client must not be able to obtain support services from other programs or agencies providing such services and the need for support must be documented in the client record and must be necessary to ensure the client's job retention.
10. A review of the most common types of support follows along with some discussion as to what should be considered when requests for these items arise.
 - a. Child Care - This service is provided to help clients meet their family care needs during participation. Child care is a crucial element for many of our local clients. If a client has children who may need child care this should be identified in the client case notes as a potential need. The clients assessment should also include information on family members who may be available to provide child care and eligibility for child care assistance from county social services, MFIP or any other non-WIA provider. Because child care can consume program funds at a very rapid rate, all other providers of child care must be exhausted prior to authorizing child care under WIA.

The NWPIC has issued a separate child care policy. Interested parties should refer to Northwest Workforce Service Area Letter 109.1 for the complete child care policy and the forms necessary to comply with the policy directive.

- b. Transportation Expenses - This is service provided to ensure mobility between home and location of employment or training. Examples would be public transit fares, gas, oil, tires, vehicle repairs and maintenance and insurance. The payment of vehicle repairs or insurance may only be paid on vehicles owned and driven by the participant. Documentation needs to be in the client record verifying ownership of any vehicle by the client before any support service funding can be spent on vehicle expenses, with the exception of gasoline purchases. Vehicle repair requests should be accompanied by a quote from an accepted vendor in our area. Accepted means that repair is performed at a professional level even though this may not be the least expensive. Backyard repairs by the client or by friends are not allowed. Vendors should be aware that anything not on the original quote by the vendor or is added after the quote will not be paid without pre-approval.

Crucial vehicle systems should receive priority. Brake systems, tires, or components that have a direct and immediate impact on the safety of the client should have priority immediately after repairs that allow the vehicle to operate.

Payment of auto liability insurance for clients is permissible. Payment of auto insurance is to be limited to a maximum of three months. Case managers should assist clients in planning for their insurance coverage after the three months.

- c. Clothing Costs - A service which will allow the client to improve job search and interview potential or to provide items required for training or as a condition of employment, upon completion of training. Clothing for work, interviews and school are allowed costs. The case manager and the client need to agree on the specific items of clothes authorized and the maximum cost allowed to the client for approved clothing. Programs such as Dress for Success and the use of thrift shops are ways to maximize the assistance provided to clients. All receipts submitted for payment need to be carefully scrutinized to ensure that clients or vendors are not billing for non-authorized items of clothing or non-clothing items.
- d. Rent and Deposits - This service exists to help the client maintain or obtain adequate shelter. The NWPIC will not pay rent deposits. Payment of rent will only be covered on a one time basis for existing housing. Payment of the first month's rent for relocation for a job would be acceptable even though rent had previously been paid. The employment must be verified and documented in the client record prior to authorizing payment of rent in this situation.
- e. Licenses and endorsements - Drivers licenses and endorsements can be paid. Fines cannot be paid when the reinstatement of a Driver's License includes fines. Licenses and certifications such as Nursing licenses, teaching licenses, Nursing Assistant Certification needed by the client to obtain employment are allowable costs.
- f. Moving Expenses - Clients can be assisted with relocation expenses that involve transportation of self and possessions to another community for the expressed purpose of beginning new employment. The employment must be verified and documented in the client record. Payment of moving expenses without verified employment is not allowed.
- g. Telephone and Utilities - NWPIC will not pay for phone connections, re-connections, costs or bills, unless it can be shown that the services are a necessity to client performance of employment, or that the client is dependent on the phone to summon emergency medical help for an existing condition, or if the client safety requires assistance because of a dangerous or abusive environment.

Utilities are not an allowable cost unless the client is in danger or having electrical or gas service shut off and is unable to get assistance from another agency. Notice from the utility company threatening service shut off must be retained in the client record.

- h. Medical Cost - As a rule medical costs are not allowed. Exceptions would be the first month of health insurance payments, eye exams and glasses, and dental

exams. Payments for purchase of health insurance without which the client would not be able to participate in employment or training activities is permissible. Case Managers should work with the clients not covered by medical assistance to obtain Minnesota Care or COBRA coverage.

- j. Tools: A service to provide items required for training or as a condition of employment. The case manager must work with the employer or if the training provider to identify only those items necessary for training or employment. Funds should not be used to purchase tools or related items that are over and above what is initially needed to adequately perform their job duties or to meet their training requirements. The client and the Case Manager must complete and sign the NWPIC Tool Agreement. (Attachment D)

This was not meant to be an all inclusive list but rather to provide a guideline for case managers on the most common types of expenditures. Questions regarding other types of support should be directed to the NWPIC for clarification prior to authorizing the expenditure at the client level.

Attachments

- A. Client Support Service Request Form
- B. Individual Participant Support Services Log
- C. Northwest Private Industry Payment Invoice
- D. NWPIC Supportive Service Agreement

Contact:

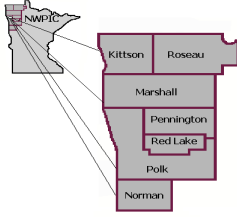
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ATTACHMENT A

CLIENT

SUPPORT SERVICE

REQUEST FORM



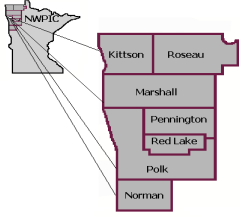
NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICE REQUEST

NAME: _____ SSN: _____

1. What types of items/services could you use at this time that would be useful in achieving your goal of becoming self-sufficient?
 - A. _____ Cost: _____
 - B. _____ Cost: _____
 - C. _____ Cost: _____
2. Why do you need these items/services at this time?
3. How do you plan on acquiring these items/services if WIA can not assist you at this time?
4. How do you plan on acquiring these items/services in the future?
5. Has payment for these services been requested from another agency?
_____ Yes _____ No If yes, please identify the agencies.
7. List the current sources and the amount of your monthly income.
 - A. Source: _____ Amount: _____
 - B. Source: _____ Amount: _____
 - C. Source: _____ Amount: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____



NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

STAFF SUPPORT SERVICE REQUEST

1. Team members involved in the decision:

2. Disposition of request:
[] Approved: Reason for Approval.

[] Denied: Reason for Denial.

3. Additional comments pertinent to the support service request:

Staff Signature

Date

NWPIC 10-01-08

ATTACHMENT B

INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT SUPPORT SERVICE LOG

ATTACHMENT C

NWPIC

PAYMENT INVOICE

NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
 220 Pennington Avenue South, Suite B
 Thief River Falls, MN 56701

~ PAYMENT INVOICE ~

CLIENT NAME _____ SOCIAL SECURITY # _____

VENDOR NAME _____

VENDOR ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ - _____

STAFF SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

TYPE OF PAYMENT _____ PROGRAM _____

TOTAL AUTH. AMOUNT \$
 PRIOR AMOUNT BILLED \$
 AMOUNT THIS PAYMENT \$

CUM. AMOUNT PAID \$
 BALANCE \$

COMMENTS:

CIRCLE ONE:	
	SUPPORT DIRECT
CLIENT NUMBER	_____
VENDOR NUMBER	_____
PRB/SUB-PRG	_____
CHECK NUMBER	_____
PAYMENT DATE	_____

MAIL CHECK TO: PROGRAM OPERATOR _____ VENDOR _____ CLIENT _____

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

NWPIC DIRECTOR _____ DATE _____

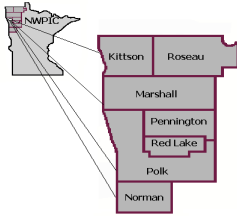
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NWPIC 10-01-08

ATTACHMENT D

NWPIC

SUPPORTIVE SERVICE AGREEMENT



Northwest Private Industry Council

SUPPORTIVE SERVICE AGREEMENT

All clothing, equipment, tools and supplies provided by the Northwest Private Industry Council are for the sole use of the undersigned participant for use in either On-the-Job Training or Classroom Training.

The clothing, equipment, tools and supplies remain the property of the Northwest Private Industry Council while the participant remains in training. If the undersigned participant discontinues his/her training prior to its successful completion, all clothing, equipment, tools and supplies are to be returned to a representative of the Northwest Private Industry Council within ten days.

The undersigned participant will keep the clothing, equipment, tools or supplies in good condition and repair, subject to normal wear and tear. The sale, trade or abuse of these clothing, equipment, tools or supplies is considered an illegal act.

Only when the participant can document successful completion of their training to their assigned Case Manager, will ownership of the clothing, equipment, tools or supplies revert from Northwest Private Industry Council ownership to the participant.

An itemized listing of the clothing, equipment, tools and supplies must be attached to this document and this list will be considered the official inventory.

The undersigned participant verifies that he/she has read, understands and agrees to the above provision of ownership of clothing, equipment, tools and supplies that have been purchased with public funds for participation in training.

Participant Signature

Date

Staff Signature

Date