

GLOW WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD POLICY

TO: All One-Stop Career Center Staff and Providers

SUBJECT: Needs Related Payments (NRPs)

ISSUANCE DATE: Approved by GLOW WIB September 15, 2009

Purpose

To provide a uniform needs-related payment (NRP) policy for eligible Adult and Dislocated Worker customers engaged in training who have ceased to qualify for Unemployment Insurance Benefits in order to provide support for them to successfully complete training.

Background

The implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which took effect on August 7, 1998 provides program guidelines for needs-related payments for Adult and Dislocated Workers. Under WIA, funds that are allocated to a local workforce area are allowed to be used for Needs-Related Payments. Needs Related Payments provide financial assistance to eligible adult and dislocated workers to enable them to participate in training and education programs. The passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act specifically provides for local areas to provide NRPs to WIA customers to ensure their completion of training and to assist in the economic recovery of the Nation.

Policy

The goal is to ensure no individual approved to attend training should have to refuse or abandon such training because he or she cannot afford living expenses. Needs-related payments (NRPs), a sub-category of supportive services, are a means of allowing trainees to pursue or continue full-time training when they do not qualify for or have exhausted their Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. The Recovery Act and New York State policy require that these payments be made available to adult and dislocated worker trainees to enable them to complete the level of training that will make them more competitive in the job market.

Needs-related payments are defined as providing “financial assistance to participants for the purpose of enabling individuals to participate in training”. To qualify for NRPs, “adults must be unemployed; not qualify for, or ceased to have qualified for, unemployment compensation; and be enrolled in a program of training services under WIA §134(d)(4).” Please note that needs-related payments are not considered taxable income, according to USDOL.

Dislocated workers (DW) are additionally required to “have ceased to qualify for TAA or NAFTA-TAA; and be enrolled in a program of training services under WIA §134(d)(4) by the end of the 13th week after the most recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the worker’s eligibility as a dislocated worker, or if later, by the end of the 8th week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed six months.” [Note: NYSDOL has requested a waiver to allow the dislocated worker requirements to be the same as the adult requirements. Upon approval, notice will be communicated to local areas.]

Needs-related payments may also be paid to youth who are enrolled in training, at the discretion of the local area.

Eligibility

The following would be required to be considered for NRPs:

- a. Must be enrolled for 12 credit hours or attending classes at least 4 days a week with at least 12 hours of class or practicum per week.
- b. The student must meet the school's requirements for attendance and academics to stay in school to receive NRPs. If the school does not have any requirements the WIB will require 90% attendance rate and at minimum a C average to maintain the receipt of NRPs. Attendance will be monitored by documents stating dates of attendance and signed off by the instructor. Grades must be provided to the WIB upon request and at least at the end of a course of study or semester.
- c. NRPs will not be provided if a student is on leave for more than 10 weekdays because of illness, vacation, holidays or school breaks.
- d. Anyone receiving TRA, UI benefits, regular or extended will not be eligible for NRPs.
- e. It is the intent of NRP's to provide financial benefits while someone is completing a full-time course of study and is unable to work because of school responsibilities. If employment income is being generated, the NRP would be discontinued. Income would be calculated by the individual providing pay stubs to their Case Manager on a weekly basis to confirm. Participants would have to re-qualify to start receiving NRP again if the income ends. If it is determined that the student can attend class and generate income without impacting school attendance and grades, the NRP would be discontinued.
- f. If they are receiving benefits from other agencies, such payments will not be offered to individuals who have another means of financial support, such as TANF. Resources and communication between partner agencies are verified by the Case Manager. At intake, the financial situation of the student is assessed to see if they have any other means of financial support to complete a course of study whether it be TAA/TRA, 599, UI, VESID, TANF, or family commitment to the educational plan. If the student's financial situation changes while in training, we will reassess the situation to see if NRPs are necessary to continue the educational process for completion of training.

Payments of NRPs

- 1) GLOW WIB will provide a maximum of \$200 or the amount of the individual's discontinued UI benefit per week, whichever is lower. This would be paid at least monthly.
- 2) The maximum NRP award per student will be \$3,000.00.
- 3) The number of payments would be dependent upon the amount of payment to reach the \$3,000 lifetime limit.
- 4) Students will need to meet with their counselor at least monthly to provide documentation for grades, attendance, and income. Other assurances by the student will be required to maintain the receipt of NRP. One Stop Counselor must report any fraud immediately to the One Stop Management. In the event of fraudulent activity, all payments to the fraudulent party will immediately close. All cases of fraud or suspected fraud will be forwarded to the appropriate legal authorities for criminal prosecution and recovery of payments. A formal letter will be sent to the individual with the amount of overpayment and reason for recovery of payment. NRP payments will discontinue immediately
- 5) NRPs will be paid at least monthly, but may be paid biweekly if that option is available.
- 6) A voucher system will be established for NRP claimants to sign and complete to receive benefits

Administering NRPs

- 1) NRPs will be approved by the Director of the One Stop Center overseeing the educational plan of the student.
- 2) The WIA One Stop provider will oversee the program.

- 3) The WIA One Stop provider staff will respond the questions and complaints.
- 4) The WIA One Stop provider will process payments and oversee the accounting of the program.