

Department of Public Health and Human Services	SECTION: PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
WoRC GUIDELINES MANUAL	SUBJECT: Supportive Services

GENERAL RULE:

Funds are available to pay expenses that are, or may be incurred, in a benefit month by the TANF participant to comply with his/her FIA/EP activities. When wisely used, supportive services can promote meaningful work activities and employment and help participants develop planning and budgeting skills.

As the participant's activities are negotiated with the WoRC Case Manager, an evaluation for need should be done, in connection to participation or employment, personal and other resources available to meet the need. Supportive Services should always be considered in the framework of short and long term participant personal planning. If need is determined, supportive service payments are available in a timely manner to assure the participant has the needed item/service to participate in activities. ***Before a supportive service check is authorized, the address on the ADDR screen must be verified. Once a supportive service check is authorized, it may take 5 to 7 days for the participant to receive the check.***

► All Case Managers should be discussing and planning budgets with each participant. In addition, each case manager should identify appropriate referrals for all participants to agencies and/or resources in their community, including low-income housing, energy assistance, the telephone assistance program, etc.

In all instances, care must be taken to prevent participant reliance on the availability of supportive services. In particular, *gas supportive services should be seen as a short-term solution, not an automatic, on-going monthly allowance.* OPA and WoRC are encouraged to maintain a consistent local supportive service philosophy.

PER CASE LIMITS:

Each case will have an upper limit of \$1250 per state fiscal year (July-June). This limit applies to a case no matter which county the individual was receiving services in when the payment was issued. The \$1250 is based on the following limits:

- \$600 for participation related expenses
- \$650 for employment related expenses

NOTE: The County Director, WoRC Program Director or Supervisor can make the approval of expenses in exception to the above guidelines. Justification for the exception should be fully documented in case notes.

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PARTICIPATION and EMPLOYMENT RELATED NEEDS:

Basis for determining need:

1. Needed to participate in negotiated activities;
2. Participant must be in compliance with negotiated activities;
3. Needed to accept or maintain employment;
4. Necessary to alleviate barriers prohibiting job retention;
5. Resource not available from any other source.

Needs include but are not limited to:

Fees: (FE)

- Credit counseling
- Legal such as adoption, child custody, child support
- Application
- GED
- Specific short-term training tied to employment (i.e., CNA training)
- Driver's license exam and renewal costs
- Fingerprinting for background check

Clothing (training or employment related): (EM)**Basic personal grooming and hygiene (no perms/hair color/tint): (EM)**

- Limited to \$30.00 every six months

Telephone Expenses: (EM)

- Limited to \$60.00 every six months

Gas: (GA)

- If a participant is requesting/receiving fuel assistance for their vehicle it is a requirement to certify that they have a valid driver's license, car registration and insurance. A copy of these documents must be collected and retained in the case file for each issuance.

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Transportation related expenses: (TR)

If a participant is receiving funds for car repair on their personal vehicle it is a requirement to certify that they have a valid driver's license, car registration and insurance. A copy of these documents must be obtained and retained in the case file for each such issuance.

- Public transportation
- Vehicle diagnostics, when it appears major work is needed
- Vehicle repair (multiple bids are required before payment given)
- Liability insurance (least expensive bid, shortest term policy)
- Vehicle Registration

Tools (training or employment-related): (EM)**Child care expenses: (CH)**

(Only in very rare circumstances and can only be authorized with approval of PAB Central Office or WoRC monitor.) **Deposits cannot be covered using supportive services.

Union dues and initiation fees: (FE)**Business licenses: (FE)**

There is one additional service that may be provided under **EMPLOYMENT RELATED NEEDS ONLY**.

Housing: (SH)

- Rent, when tied to relocation expenses for employment.
 - *Must be Monitor approved
 - **Deposits cannot be covered using supportive services.
- Past Due utilities needed for employment when the participant did not have the funds to pay the bills originally. Please verify amount due and that all other resources have been exhausted before authorizing.

** Deposits cannot be covered using supportive services. This includes other fees that may be returned by the vendor to the participant. For example, hook-up fees.

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Past due rent accumulations may not be paid by Supportive Services. If an eviction is imminent, the participant should be referred to the OPA to apply for Emergency Assistance.

► **Supportive Services for Other People’s Vehicles**

Supportive services can be used for gas and /or minor repairs on a vehicle that is not owned by the participant if the following conditions are met:

1. The use of another person’s vehicle is the only means available to provide transportation for work activity participation (must be documented, e.g., no bus lines, no taxi, too far to walk, etc.);
2. The request is for minimal repairs (repairs below \$150 such as new battery, oil change, fixing a flat tire, headlights, etc.);
3. The owner and driver of the vehicle and the participant (if they will be driving) provide a copy of current insurance, vehicle registration and valid driver’s license; and
4. The individual is otherwise eligible for supportive service payments.

Other restrictions:

1. Supportive Service payments when issued for another person’s vehicle are limited to 2 times per year; and
2. The amount of payment does count toward the participant’s limited supportive services.

► **NOTE:** The \$150 dollar cap is the total when supportive services are issued for another person’s vehicle. Only two supportive services may be issued when it is another person’s vehicle and not the participant’s. Example: Supportive services might be issued for gas 2 times or it could be auto repairs two times or it could be 1 gas and 1 auto repair.

Coding:

If the supportive service is issued for gas, code **GA**; if it is used for a vehicle repair code **TR**.

CASE FILE REQUIREMENTS:

The Supportive Service Request, all documents verifying the needed item/service, and two written estimates for high cost items/services must be retained in the WoRC case file. A high cost item is defined as \$200 or over. In addition, for vendor payment, copies of receipts and/or invoices for

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services provided must be retained in the case file. It is not necessary to keep receipts of purchases with participation payments (PP). However, if it is questionable whether the supportive services were used to purchase the approved items or services, the WoRC case manager may ask to view the receipts and return them to the participant.

NOTE: The participant must obtain the written estimates from the vendor(s) agreeing to provide the service. The supportive services payment is based on the amount of the approved estimate.

HCS 761:

The HCS 761-Supportive Service Request must have the following information completed in full for each and every supportive service issuance:

1. Current benefit month
2. Participant's name
3. TEAMS Case Number
4. Payment type
5. Detailed and itemized expense description
6. Justification of expense
7. List other resources checked
8. Participant's certifications signed and dated
9. If vendor payment is requested, complete name, address and tax identification number listed on the *Vendor Payment Made To*: portion of form.
10. Authorization

PAYMENT METHODS:

TEAMS SSPR is used to authorize both participant and vendor payments. Participant payments are issued via the usual TEAMS issuance process, Vendor payments are issued by the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau. **All payments require supervisory review and authorization prior to issuance.** The WoRC Supervisor/Designee reviews the payment request including required verification, the calculated payment amount, TEAMS SSPR and VEPA screens and the W-9 (when applicable).

The W-9 must be received for all vendor payments prior to the supportive service check being issued.

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ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:

“Work-eligible” individuals (required to have a FIA), who are disqualified from receiving TANF cash assistance but are required to participate in employment and training activities, are eligible for supportive services, as long as they are participating and in compliance with allowable work activities. If a participant is IPV or serving a sanction penalty month they can receive supportive services if they have a signed FIA/EP and are in compliance with allowable work activities.

NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:

Individuals who are coded **NPI, NIH, NCC, BOB** and **EBI** are **not** eligible for supportive services. If you have requested one of the above codes to your monitor, supportive services should not be issued unless the code is denied and the participant is in compliance with activities.

TEAMS will not limit the number of payments that may be issued for a case in a benefit month but only one TEAMS payment may be issued per day. **Payments are not to be authorized for less than \$10.**

NOTE: A supportive service payment can only be authorized in the current month and case notes must contain a clear explanation of why specific payment method is used, if different that the policy outlined above.

WHAT CANNOT BE COVERED WITH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES?

Supportive service dollars cannot be spent on:

- Medical needs (including drug testing or Medicaid cost-sharing) or services (e.g., medical related travel) per PRWORA & TANF grant regulations
- To pay participant fines or associated costs of any type (traffic, library, criminal activity etc.)
- Perms/hair color/tint
- Child care needs such as diapers, breast pump, formula, clothing
- Rent (unless tied to relocation for employment purposes)
- Vehicle payments
- Deposits for rent, utilities, or child care
- Any payment that may be returned to the participant from the vendor
- Reinstatement fee for driver’s license
- DUI classes
- Purchase of a vehicle
- Gift cards/incentive cards

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***Please ask your WoRC Monitor if you have a question as to what can or cannot be assisted with supportive service money.**

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHECK ADDRESS ON TEAMS BEFORE ISSUING SS.

LOST WARRANTS

To replace a lost warrant please contact your monitor. Please email the following information:

- Case number
- Client name
- Current address
- Social security number
- Amount of warrant
- Benefit month the warrant was issued for
- Original warrant number

STOLEN CASHED WARRANTS

To replace a warrant that has been stolen and cashed, please contact your WoRC Monitor and they will in turn contact the Department of Administration.

Stale Date vs. Cancel Warrant

Stale Dated = Participant entitled to the supportive service funds when they were issued

Cancel = Supportive service issued in error

**When fiscal stale dates the funds, they are sent over to abandoned property and the person can claim them indefinitely. When they are cancelled, the participant can't claim them later. However, canceling a warrant can only be done if documentation is present that the payment was issued in error by the case manager. The case manager cannot just change their mind due to later circumstances.