

## **METP Supportive Service and Education/Training Policy**

### **Description**

Supportive Services are defined as those services necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under METP. This Policy provides guidelines for administering Supportive Services. Supportive Services should be made available to assist customers in removing or reducing barriers to participate in METP activities.

Supportive Services may include transportation related expenses and work related expenses. The extent of Supportive Services provided will vary based on the customer's needs and available resources.

Supportive Services are only to be provided to customers who:

- Are participating in employment, education, or training components; and
- Are unable to obtain Supportive Services themselves or via their support network; and
- Are unable to obtain Supportive Services through other programs including community agencies that provide these services; and
- Demonstrate a need for assistance to enable participate in METP components.

Supportive Service payments are requested individually for specific needs. Supportive Service payments are made on a case-by-case basis only when determined necessary and reasonable. A statement that a customer "needs" a Supportive Service will not justify the payment of these expenses. (i.e., "Customer states he needs tools for work." The payment cannot be authorized on this statement alone; but instead, must be related to the METP component; based on customer need; and other resources must be sought first.). The Job Center staff determination of financial need must be documented through case management Service Notes. Because the payment process includes a review of these notes, it is imperative that they are clear, concise, and complete. Failure to properly document the service note in the case management system may result in delayed payment or non-reimbursement.

Service notes regarding Supportive Service payments must include at a minimum all of the following:

- The type of Supportive Service paid (e.g., TRE, WRE, Education/Training);
- The amount of Supportive Service paid;
- The timeframe for which the Supportive Service was paid;
- The justification of need for the Supportive Service; and
- Lack of other community resources.

In all cases, staff must review Service Notes prior to making any Supportive Service payments to avoid duplicate payments and ensure payments remain reasonable and necessary.

### **Transportation Related Expenses (TRE)**

METP participants engaged in an allowable employment, education, or training component may receive mileage reimbursement. Mileage Reimbursement will be paid based on scheduled days and will be supported by a training schedule or work schedule. It will be calculated based on the round trip mileage from the

participant's home directly to the training/work facility and back. Verification documents must be obtained prior to payment. Mileage must be calculated using a web-based mapping service such as Google Maps, MapQuest, Yahoo Maps, or a similar service. The mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.37 per mile and will only be paid via an existing EBT card. METP funds will not be used to pay transportation expenses associated with job search activities.

### **Work Related Expenses (WRE)**

METP participants engaged in an allowable employment, education, or training component may receive WRE if the expense meets all of the general Supportive Service eligibility criteria listed above and required in order to complete the necessary functions to perform a job or training. Example of exclusion would be dress clothes or dress shoes for an office job.

Allowable expenses include:

- Required Training or Work Related clothing, including uniforms;
- Tools;
- Books;
- Registration fees;
- Licensing/bonding fees; and
- Training materials.

### **Education/Training**

In cases where a METP program participant is determined to be in need of Training services, staff must create an Actual Enrollment in the Division of Workforce Development's (DWD) information management system by completing the Eligibility, Enrollment and Employment Plan sections of the system.

Education/Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed participants who:

- A Missouri Job Center staff person determines, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, are:
  - Unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to, or higher than wages from, previous employment through career services; and
  - In need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to, or higher than, wages from previous employment; and
  - Have the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services; and
  - Have selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region, or in another area to which the individuals are willing to commute or relocate; and

- Are unable to obtain financial assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, including State-funded programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance grant funds, and Federal Pell Grants established under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, or require METP assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance, including Federal Pell Grants.

All of these requirements for training services can be met and documented in DWD's information management system. Complete the Appropriateness tab in the Employment Plan by providing a full and complete explanation in the text field.

The case file must contain a determination of need for training services as determined through the interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning informed by local labor market information and training-provider performance information; or through any other career service received. Explanations must include a clear description of the information, such as USDOL-funded State or Federal labor market information to prove the training chosen by the participant is linked to employment opportunity.

The case file must also contain a printout from the Eligible Training Provider System showing that the program of study was approved on the date the training eligibility determination was made. If a program isn't ETPS approved, staff should work with the school in getting the application submitted and approved. METP funds may be used to pay tuition and any other required educational expense which is also on the allowable WRE list above.

METP-funded training must not exceed a total of \$10,000 per year.