

WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Incentive Policy

Policy Memorandum 24-01

Date: September 9, 2024

To: All WIOA Service Providers

Purpose: To provide guidance to contractors (service providers) providing incentive payments for eligible participants in the adult and dislocated worker programs.

Rescissions: None.

References: WIOA Adult definition: WIOA sec. 3(2); WIOA Dislocated Worker definition: WIOA sec. 3(15); 20 CFR 680.900; Employment Development Department (EDD) Workforce Services Directive (WSD) 19-06, CalJOBS Activity Codes (December 27, 2019); EDD WSD 23-08, Stipends, and Incentive Payments (May 23, 2024)

Background:

The Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Board (WDB) will make available incentive payments to appropriate Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. The Workforce Development Board ensures that:

- Criteria provided under this policy are necessary to encourage success and enable participants to be recognized for the completion and achievement of activities under Title I of WIOA.
- Provision of incentive payments under this policy is contingent upon the availability of WIOA funds. Stop
- Additionally, at the discretion of the local Workforce Development Board this Policy is subject to change.

Policy:

A. General Provisions

Contracted service provider may grant incentive award payments to eligible participants enrolled in the WIOA adults and dislocated worker programs. Incentive payments are intended to be used to encourage and motivate WIOA participants to reach specific goals to obtain positive performance. Incentive payments are considered awards and are used to encourage participants to complete training, remain in jobs, or for achievement in other program activities. Incentives may be given for a participant's achievement in work readiness skills, and /or entered employment, or occupational skills training, as identified in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

An incentive payment is a one-time payment to a WIOA participant for the successful completion in each benchmark.

B. Benchmarks

Contractor shall use the Incentive Claim form, a locally developed document to identify the activities and/or benchmarks tied to the specific incentive payment amount:

BENCHMARK	SUCCESS CRITERIA	DOCUMENTATION	AMOUNT
Work readiness skills: Training mid-point survey completion	Incentive earned upon completion of a mid-point survey provided to participant after the development of their Individual Employment Plan (CalJOBS activity 205)	✓ Mid-point Survey completion within 3 days from date administered	Maximum, one-time \$25 incentive

<p>Training Completion, certificate attainment AND Customer Satisfaction Survey completion</p>	<p>Incentive earned upon completion of training (CalJOBS activity 300) AND completion of the Customer Satisfaction survey provided to participant</p>	<p>✓ Customer Satisfaction Survey completion; AND ✓ Certification of training achievement/completion; or training provider transcripts</p>	<p>Maximum, one-time \$50 incentive</p>
<p>Entered Employment</p>	<p>Incentive earned upon participant starting employment in the field in which they were trained; can be upon completion of the CalJOBS Job Search activity 125.</p>	<p>✓ Pay stub/statement with dates matching up with post-training completion</p>	<p>Maximum, one-time \$100 incentive</p>
<p>Follow-up, post exit Employment details at 2nd quarter after exit</p>	<p>Incentive earned during follow-up, participants employed during the 2nd quarter after program exit</p>	<p>✓ Pay stub/statement with matching dates to the 2nd quarter after exit</p>	<p>Maximum, one-time \$50 incentive</p>
<p>Follow-up, post exit Employment details at 4th quarter after exit</p>	<p>Incentive earned during follow-up, participants employed during the 4th quarter after program exit</p>	<p>✓ Pay stub/statement with matching dates to the 4th quarter after exit</p>	<p>Maximum, one-time \$50 incentive</p>
<p>Workforce Santa Cruz County Achievement Award</p>	<p>Participants selected for overcoming adversity and succeeded in achieving their goals</p>	<p>✓ Certificate of achievement signed by WDB chair</p>	<p>Maximum, one-time \$500 for sharing their success story</p>

- Work readiness skills are considered a set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job: timeliness, accountability, critical thinking, and problem solving. This benchmark is intended to demonstrate the participants thoroughly completing the written survey within a distinct time period communicating their opinions effectively.
- Entered Employment is considered securing an unsubsidized job.
- Follow-up, post-training employment is considered maintaining the unsubsidized job during the follow-up post training period quarters for 12-months.

C. Exception to policy

Under special circumstances, on a case-by-case basis and with proper justification, WIOA Service Providers could request an exception to this policy. WIOA Service Providers should submit a Policy Exception Memo (Attachment I) with the explanation and justification for the exception to the WDB Sr. Analyst, with a cc. to the WDB Director.

There will be a fiscal monitoring mechanism in place so as not to exceed the annual budgeted amount. Contractor shall create a CalJOBS case note entry to justify any authorizations exceeding the policy amount.

D. Contracted Service Provider Responsibilities

Contractor shall make participants aware upon enrollment and during multiple contact points of the potential to earn incentive payments for completion of benchmarks during their WIOA participation. Contractor will complete the *Incentive Claim form* and maintain the completed form and accompanying documentation for each benchmark in CalJOBS. Incentive payments must be tracked

by the Contractor and all information and documentation of incentive payment eligibility are kept in the case file and made available for review by local, state, and federal monitors.

The service provider is responsible for creating the corresponding incentive payment activity codes and corresponding beginning and ending dates in CalJOBS:

- CalJOBS Activity Code: Supportive Services: Incentives/Bonuses 183

Incentive payment data entry date (or date range) must match the backup documentation for the benchmark(s) used to earn the payment.

Contractor shall create a CalJOBS case note entry to explain/document the incentive payments earned and justify any authorizations exceeding the policy amount.

Upon participant completion of the incentive benchmark, contractor staff will create the Advanced Individual Fund Tracking (AIFT) obligation for the voucher to be paid directly to the participant. Additionally, immediately after creating the AIFT voucher, contractor will send the participant a "congratulatory" message that includes the following information: *Your incentive payment may be taxable and present future tax implications. It could also impact any public benefits you are receiving as unearned income. Please consult with public benefits case manager for further details.*

Incentive payments initiated in AIFT, through County Fiscal may take between 6-8 weeks for the disbursement to be mailed to the participant. Contractor may create a system that allows incentive payments to be made in a more efficient and expeditious way with WDB Director approval.

Contractor may develop a revised payment plan (for inclusion on the incentive form) and obtain WDB or its designee approval to changes in the specific accomplishments used as benchmarks for payment attainment.

Failure to comply with the requirements may result in the service provider being placed on a corrective action and/or incur disallowed costs.

E. Availability of Funding

Participation in the WIOA program does not automatically entitle the participant to the incentive award payment but rather should be an award for achievements of certain benchmarks outlined on the incentive claim form.

It is expected that the availability of funds will fluctuate during the program year as participant benchmarks are attained. WDB Staff will notify the contracted service providers of the annual allocation. The annual incentive budget will be tracked so as not to exceed the allocation. The WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker program services are ultimately contingent upon the availability of Federal funds and continued Federal authorization.

Action: All WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker contracted service providers shall comply with the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Incentive policy. This policy memorandum is on-going and effective immediately for WIOA participants enrolled after July 1, 2024.

Inquiries: Any questions regarding this policy memorandum may be directed to the WDB Director.

Attachments:

- I. Exception Memo
- II. Incentive Claim form

This policy authorized by: the Executive Committee of the Workforce Development Board on September 25, 2024 and Workforce Development Board, October 30, 2024