



December 16, 2024

EASTERN CAROLINA LOCAL AREA ISSUANCE NO. 2024-04

SUBJECT: Local Area's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Incentive Policy

PURPOSE: To transmit the Local Area's Policy concerning awarding **non-cash incentives** to WIOA Title I Youth participants for recognition and achievement pertaining to education and employment in WIOA Title I related activities, and rescind Eastern Carolina Local Area Issuance No. 2022-08, change 2 dated July 1, 2024.

BACKGROUND: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) allows for youth engaged in a WIOA youth funded program to be awarded non-cash incentives for recognition and achievement in WIOA related activities. This policy is designed to reward WIOA youth participants for achievements pertaining to education and employment during participation in WIOA youth program activities. The awarding of incentives is a means to encourage attainment of individual goals that leads to the completion of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, an occupational skills credential, a Career Readiness certificate, or other programmatic outcomes.

A recognized occupational credential must be received from a recognized educational institution that provides the certification. Examples of a recognized credential may include Certified Nurse's Assistant, Phlebotomy Certification, Welding Certification, etc.

ACTION: Youth Service Providers are required to adhere to all policies and guidelines set forth in **Attachment A** when providing youth incentives. All participants receiving an incentive must have a completed incentive receipt (**Attachment B**) and all supporting documentation uploaded into NCWorks Online. The incentive must also be documented in the case notes and must be a part of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2025

EXPIRATION DATE: Indefinite

CONTACT: Executive Director

DISTRIBUTION: WIOA Title I Youth Service Providers



William Green
Executive Director

Attachments: Attachment A - ECWDB's Youth Incentives Policy
Attachment B – WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt

ECWDB's Youth Incentives Policy

Definition of non-cash Incentives

DOL included the reference to the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200 to emphasize that while incentive payments are allowable under WIOA, the incentives must be in compliance with the Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200. For example, Federal funds must not be spent on entertainment costs. Therefore, incentives **must not include entertainment**, such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment.

For purposes of this policy, incentives are considered stipend awards to WIOA youth participants for achievement and participation in **WIOA related activities**. Participants must be **enrolled and actively participating in WIOA related activities for thirty (30) calendar days before they are eligible to receive any incentive**. Incentives are **awarded one time only and not per program year**. Incentive awards must be non-cash, not redeemable for cash and not for entertainment as referenced above. The following is a list of the types of items that could be awarded as incentives:

- gift certificates/cards (*retail stores, bookstores – **NO** entertainment, restaurants, movie theater, game store, etc.*)
- plaques
- certificates
- school supplies

Although the above list is not all inclusive, youth programs must submit, as a part of their statement of work, the types of incentives they propose to provide.

Attainment of secondary school diploma or equivalent

To be eligible, participants at the time of registration may not have attained their high school diploma or its equivalent. For the purposes of this policy, participants who receive a High School Diploma, Adult High School Diploma, or GED will be considered as having attained their secondary school diploma.

Up to a maximum of \$100.00 non-cash award may be provided as an incentive for completion of the secondary school diploma or equivalent.

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of diploma or equivalent or school transcript
2. Receipt for purchases
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Attainment of a Recognized Occupational Credential OR Two-Year Degree

Definition: A recognized occupational credential must be received from a recognized educational institution that provides the certification. Examples of a recognized credential would include Certified Nurse's Assistant, Phlebotomy Certification, Welding Certification, etc. This does not include certificates received for First Aid, CPR, Microsoft Office, Medical Terminology, etc. A two-year degree must be received from an accredited community college.

If a participant receives a recognized occupational credential or a two-year degree a one-time non-cash award may be provided as follows per participant:

Attainment of a Recognized Occupational Credential: up to \$150.00

Attainment of a two-year Degree: up to \$200.00

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of credential or transcript indicating what credential was received
2. Receipt for purchases
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Attainment of a Career Readiness Certificate

If a participant earns a Career Readiness Certificate a one-time non-cash award may be provided as follows per participant:

Attainment of a Bronze Certificate: up to \$ 50.00 gift certificate

Attainment of a Silver Certificate: up to \$ 75.00 gift certificate

Attainment of a Gold Certificate: up to \$100.00 gift certificate

Attainment of a Platinum Certificate: up to \$125.00 gift certificate

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of NC Career Readiness Certificate or documentation from college showing CRC attainment
2. Receipt for purchase of gift certificate
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Successful Completion and Participation in Financial Literacy Workshop/Training

If a participant successfully completes a Financial Literacy Workshop/Training they may receive a one-time non-cash incentive of up to \$25.00. The Financial Literacy Workshop/Training must result in a certificate of completion.

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of certificate of completion
2. Proof of attendance
3. Receipt for purchase of gift certificate
4. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Work Experience/OJT/Internship and Unsubsidized Employment

If a participant receives a good (defined below) mid evaluation or final evaluation during participation in a subsidized work experience, they may receive a one-time non-cash incentive of up to \$50.00. The total incentive award for one participant receiving a good midpoint or final evaluation should not exceed \$50.00.

NOTE: The midpoint and final evaluations are based upon the term established on the worksite agreement or the OJT contract start and end dates.

DEFINITION FOR GOOD EVALUATION: A good evaluation shall be defined as having no more than two areas that need improvement on the midpoint evaluation or no areas that need improvement on the final evaluation.

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of Midpoint or Final Evaluation from Worksite/OJT Supervisor
2. Receipt for purchase of gift certificate
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

If a participant obtains unsubsidized employment during program participation and remains employed for at least 1 month, they may receive a one-time non-cash incentive of up to \$50.00. The total incentive award for one participant obtaining unsubsidized employment should not exceed \$50.00.

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copies of paystubs or verification of employment from employer – must show 1 month of employment
2. Receipt for purchase of gift certificate
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Work Experience/Job Shadowing

If a participant successfully completes a job shadow activity, they may receive a one-time incentive of \$25 for each job shadow completed up to a maximum of 2 job shadow activities (please see job shadow policy). The total incentive award for one participant successfully completing the job shadow activities should not exceed \$50.00.

Documentation required for reimbursement:

1. Copy of Job Shadow Verification Sheet (signed)
2. Receipt for purchase of gift certificate
3. WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B)

Contractor Responsibility

Contractors should submit as part of their statement of work how they will administer the Incentives policy within their program.

Submit a budget or budget revision to ensure that funds are available in Line Item #1100 Miscellaneous and attach an itemized list.

All attainments should be documented on the Individual Service Strategy and in the case notes.

All incentives must be awarded within forty-five (45) calendar days of attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, an occupational skills credential, a Career Readiness certificate, or other programmatic outcomes.

Safeguarding and Tracking Incentive Awards

The Eastern Carolina Local Area does not allow cash to be given out to participants and prohibits the purchase of multiple gift cards in advance.

Once a participant has met the incentive criteria for receiving a gift card, the service provider will make the purchase and secure the gift card in locked safe/cabinet/drawer until the participant receives the gift card.

The service provider will have the participant complete and sign a WIOA Title I Youth Incentive Receipt (Attachment B) that will include the participant's name, the date of purchase, the type of gift card(s), amount(s), the achievement(s) met, the signature of participant receiving the gift card, and the date received.

Request for Reimbursement

All requests for reimbursement of funds will be done through the Monthly Financial Status Report and Invoice process. Supporting documentation along with the monthly invoice is required.

Incentives will be based upon the availability of funds.

SUMMARY OF YOUTH INCENTIVES

ATTAINMENT	INCENTIVE AMOUNT
Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent	\$ 100.00
Occupational Credential	\$ 150.00
Two-Year Degree	\$ 200.00
Successful Completion in Financial Literacy Workshop/Training	\$ 25.00
Bronze CRC	\$ 50.00
Silver CRC	\$ 75.00
Gold CRC	\$ 100.00
Platinum CRC	\$ 125.00
Work Experience – Good Midpoint Evaluation or Good Final Evaluation	\$ 50.00
Obtained & Remained in Unsubsidized Employment for one (1) month	\$ 50.00
Successful Completion of Job Shadow Activity (a maximum of 2)	\$ 25.00 each not to exceed \$50.00
MAXIMUM INCENTIVES ANY ONE PARTICIPANT MAY RECEIVE:	\$ 600.00*
<i>*The maximum amount is based on one participant receiving their secondary diploma/equivalent, two-year degree, successful completion of Financial Literacy, platinum CRC, good midpoint or final evaluations for WEX/OJT, successfully completing two job shadowing activities, and obtaining unsubsidized employment for 1 month.</i>	

