

**SUPPORTIVE SERVICES – Draft July 14, 2003
POLICY**

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Section 1 - General Provisions

The Merced County Workforce Investment Board (WIB), through the Merced County Department of Workforce Investment (WI), will make available supportive services to appropriate Workforce Investment Act (WIA) participants. All requests for participant supportive services and any collaborating information will be documented in the Individual Employment Plan and/or the participant's diary. To the best of its ability, the Department of Workforce Investment ensures that:

- Services provided under this policy are necessary to enable participants to participate in activities authorized under Title I of WIA;
- Services provided do not duplicate services available from other sources and are coordinated with the services and resources of the One-Stop partners and other community service partners;
- Financial assistance does not include post-exit services;
- Bonus and incentive payments, if provided, are based on the attendance and performance by the participants receiving them;
- To the extent possible, similarly situated participants receive similar services;
- The Workforce Investment Area will meet applicable Internal Revenue Service and Fair Labor Standards Act requirements; and
- Needs-related supportive services are based on the program activity in which an individual is enrolled and the ongoing assessment related to the participant, such information to be documented in the Individual Employment Plan.
- Provision of supportive services under this policy is contingent upon funds available.

Effective July 1, 2003, participants may be provided supportive services using the criteria stated in this policy and in the Department of Workforce Investment's Individual Training Account policy, Section VI. Limitations of Financial Support.

Supportive services will be provided through a Flexible Benefit Account for each eligible participant. The Flexible Benefit Account is a set amount of dollars available to each eligible participant, based on the daily allowance for transportation and child care and/or the actual cost of other services provided, to offset any authorized supportive service needs for which the participant is eligible, as agreed to, and documented by, an Employment and Training Specialist. Each eligible participant may select how their allocation will be used to assist them during training and or job search activities. At no time will a participant's use of any one service, or combination of services, exceed the total amount of money available in his or her Flexible Benefit Account.

The maximum limits for a participant's Flexible Benefit Account are:

Enrolled in Core B/Intensive services - \$150.

Enrolled in a full time training activity (as defined by the training provider) - \$1,500.

Enrolled in Licensed Vocational Nursing program at Merced College – \$1,700.

Enrolled in Registered Nursing Program at Merced College – \$2,775.

Exceptions may be made to this policy, on a case-by-case basis, should individual circumstances warrant exception and are documented in the case diary by an Employment and Training Specialist. Only the appropriate Program Manager, or his or her designee can approve exceptions.

Section 2 – Supportive Services

The Department of Workforce Investment, in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and its enabling regulations, will provide supportive services deemed appropriate for payment or reimbursement to participants and/or other agencies or businesses for pre-approved necessary services, equipment and/or materials provided to the participant. Such services, equipment and/or materials may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Transportation¹
- Childcare²
- Placement Incentives³
- DMV printouts;
- Physicals;
- Tools;
- Uniforms/shoes/boots;
- Immunizations;
- Testing costs;
- Fees;
- Licensing or endorsements;
- Application fees;
- Haircuts;
- Work clothes.

¹ In-county residents attending out-of-county full-time training, and in-county residents with a round trip commute of 50 miles or more (including to and from child care provider) to attend in-county full time training, are eligible to be reimbursed at the rate of \$10 per day (daily attendance for training to be verified by training provider).

² Participants with a child 12 years of age or younger may be eligible for childcare. Participants with a child 13 – 18 years of age may be eligible for childcare if the child is physically or mentally incapable of caring for him or her self, as determined by a legally qualified professional, or who is under court supervision. If the participant's spouse or significant other is neither working, looking for work, nor in a training program and is not incapacitated or does not have special needs, childcare is not authorized. Participants qualifying for childcare will be reimbursed at the rate of \$15.00 per day, regardless of the number of qualifying children. Documentation for reimbursement for childcare is the participant's time and attendance for days in training, furnished by the training provider. Referrals to Children's Services Network will be made for those participant's that appear to be eligible for childcare services through Children's Services Network.

³ A participant who has successfully completed their enrollment component and has entered full time employment is eligible for the placement incentive of his or her choice: \$25.00 gas card; \$25.00 phone card; or a \$25.00 cash payment. Verification from the employer is required to qualify, and there must be adequate money in the participant's Flexible Benefit Account to cover the cost of the incentive.

An Employment and Training Specialist will provide approval for services, equipment and/or materials that are typical for a participant's area of training, job search, and/or program activity.

Section 3 – Merced College Licensed Vocational Nursing Program Participants

Participants enrolled in the Merced College Licensed Vocational Nursing program are eligible for a Flexible Benefit Account that is for direct training support only, as per the attached list⁴, and excludes transportation and child care. The individual Flexible Benefit Account limit for each participant enrolled in the Merced College Licensed Vocation Nursing program is \$1,700.

Section 4 – Merced College Registered Nursing Program Participants

Participants enrolled in the Merced College Registered Nursing program are eligible for a Flexible Benefit Account that is for direct training support only, as per the attached list⁵, and excludes transportation and child care. The individual Flexible Benefit Account limit for each participant enrolled in the Merced College Registered Nursing program is \$2,775.

⁴ List to be verified with Merced College at the beginning of each semester, and adjustments made to the list, and LVN flexible benefit account limit, as necessary.

⁵ List to be verified with Merced College at the beginning of each semester, and adjustments made to the list, and the RN flexible benefit account limit, as necessary.