

Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments

Technical and Procedural Guide



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Division of Employment and Training Services
Adult, Dislocated Worker, National Dislocated Worker Grants
& Youth Program

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Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments Technical and Procedural Guide

Supportive services and Needs Related Payments are not an entitlement and should be used when justified need exists. They may include services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments (NRP) that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title IB.

This guidance is intended to provide information on the provision of supportive services to all participants. Supportive services may be provided when a participant is registered and utilizing individualized career services, training services and follow-up services. Participants receiving these services should demonstrate a **need** and **require support** to complete their plan and get a job. Other readily available funding sources must be used before WIOA funds, and should be included in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). In addition, participants requesting NRPs must meet eligibility requirements according to funding stream. Participants may receive NRPs only when enrolled in full-time training.

The overall maximum funding limit per IEP and ISS for supportive services, NRPs, and individual training accounts (ITAs) are subject to annual review and modification by the Director who will issue a memo each year stating the limits. These limits apply to all participants who are enrolled during the time period the memo is in effect.

The examples contained in this guide are intended as guidance only. Career planners should adjust figures and forms based on participant need and circumstance. **Career planners are discouraged from providing the maximum benefit without clear evidence of need.**

The limits described in the supportive services chart are intended to be maximum levels of service for a total **IEP or ISS period** not per year. The career planner may exceed these limits with approval from the DETS Director or designee.

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Support Service Chart

Supportive Service	Definition	Limits-IEP/ISS
Counseling	Professional counseling services	\$1,000
Clothing	Clothes needed for training or employment	\$1,500
Combined Room and Board	Combined Meals and Housing	\$7,500
Dental Care	Dental	\$4,000
Energy Assistance	Oil/Fuel, Electricity, propane, etc	\$7500
Eye Care	Examinations, frames, or lenses	\$1,000
Family Care	Childcare, elder care, respite care	\$5,000
Health Care	Medical care Health Insurance	\$5,500
Housing/Lodging	Housing/Lodging Expenses	\$7,500
Housing Maintenance Emergency	Minor emergency repairs	\$1,000
ID's and Licenses	State ID Card, Alaska Driver's License, Occupational Credential	\$2,000
Interpretation Service	Communication assistance	\$500
Laundry/dry cleaning	Laundry Services	\$250
Meals/Food	Fixed daily or weekly rate	\$5,000

Other Supportive Services	Special needs devices or services	\$1,000
Personal Care	Supplies or services including personal hygiene	\$1,000
Relocation Assistance	Relocation for employment	\$7,500
Short Term Prevocational Training	Prevocational training	\$5,000
Training Related Materials and Supplies & Training Related books/Software	Tools or supplies needed for training	\$3,000
Transportation (Local)	Actual cost or fixed rates Mileage, Auto repair, Auto Insurance	\$7,500
Transportation (Non-ITA) Out of Area Training	Prevocational type of training travel	\$3,000
Transportation (Non-ITA) Out of Area	Job Search/Placement Assistance travel	\$3,000
Transportation (ITA) Out-of-Area Training	Transportation for training	\$3,000
Work Related Supplies	Tools or supplies needed to get a job or maintain a job	\$3,000
Work Experience Wages	Wages for work experience. Work experience may happen multiple times throughout a career plan.	\$2,500
Youth Incentive	An inducement or reward made to a youth participant to encourage achievement of workforce development activities.	\$1,000
Youth Stipend	A fixed regular small payment made to a youth participant to encourage the participant in certain activities such as regularly attending classroom instruction.	\$1,000

A. Documentation

Participant Case File:

Career planners should document supportive services in the participant's case file. Documentation should describe the participant need, supportive service(s) necessary to fulfill their need, resources available (if any), and fairness of cost.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS):

Supportive services must be tied to the participant's IEP or ISS to show that each service supports his or her training and employment goal. The IEP and the ISS are planning documents and not binding agreements. As such, both participants and DETS may discontinue participation in the plan at any time. Justifiable cause must be established to discontinue services identified in the plan. The participant shall be given information on how to file a grievance if they disagree with DETS's decision to discontinue services.

Satisfactory Progress:

Satisfactory Progress is the minimum standard of performance in a training program necessary to earn or be awarded a credential, certificate, or degree. Satisfactory Progress is determined through regular review of a participant's efforts in training that result in a credential and employment. This can be documented through transcripts, progress reports from the trainer, grades, or any objective assessment of a student's progress toward completion of training.

If the participant is in danger of not earning a credential from the program of training, the course instructor or career planner may outline appropriate steps to improve the participant's performance. If the participant's progress does not improve, the training program or career planner may take further remedial action or corrective action up to and including withdrawal from the course and discontinuance of Supportive Services and/or NRPs. Each step in this process should be carefully documented.

Verification/Compliance:

The file should reflect that appropriate procedures were followed, the participant was referred to another agency for supportive services, eligibility was determined, the participant progressed, and the service was provided. Items such as invoices, receipts, grades, and progress notes should all be included in the case file.

Individual Case Management System (ICM):

Information pertinent to the participant's involvement in the program should always be entered timely into the Individual Case Management System (ICM). The ICM also provides an automated IEP after all of the required data is entered. Information to be entered in the ICM includes supportive service costs and any other sources of funding. Additionally, supportive services have established categories in the ICM: training, training expenses, and support related to job placement. Supportive services should be recorded based on these categories of the program.

B. Coordination and Linkages

Dual Enrollment:

Supportive services should be provided when no other resources are readily available. Participants enrolled in multiple programs e.g. Dislocated Worker and Trade Adjustment Assistance or WIOA Adult and Youth; should develop an IEP that details the services to be funded by each program.

Supportive Services from Other Agencies:

WIOA requires the non-duplication of services and establishes, through the Memorandum of Understanding between the partner agencies, a method of referral. Before supportive services are provided, a thorough assessment of resources must be conducted. If another agency can provide the services requested, then the participant should be assisted in accessing those services. For example, Public Assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Senior Employment Programs, Child Care Assistance, Food Stamps and Medicaid are a few of the programs co-located in the One-Stops where participants may be referred for assistance. In many instances, other agencies will require their own plan of service be developed. To the maximum extent possible, it is important to try and coordinate services and in some cases develop a single plan of service.

During the period that a participant awaits an eligibility determination by another agency for services it may be appropriate to fund the necessary supportive services until the new agency can begin providing services. Once services are available from another source WIOA should discontinue provision of any duplicative supportive services.

C. Supportive Service Limits

Specific Service Limits:

The limits described in the chart are intended to be the maximum levels of service. The career planner may exceed these limits with prior approval from the DETS Director or designee for the Dislocated Worker and Adult Programs, or through the Youth Program Coordinator for the Youth program, through submitting a Request for Exception.

Reasonable and Adequate Cost (per AAM 81.210): Individuals authorizing supportive services are expected to select the most cost-effective and efficient method available to address the identified participant need. The participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and/or case notes should provide clear and comprehensive justification if the most obvious and least expensive option is not selected. Alaskan vendors should receive preference prior to purchasing services from outside the state.

D. Supportive Service Descriptions

Below are detailed descriptions of some services listed in the table. Not all items are listed as many are thought to be self-explanatory.

Counseling: (maximum \$1,000)

Career planners may use WIOA funds for counseling centered on individual, family, financial, drug or alcohol abuse. WIOA resources may also be provided for limited non-residential services when appropriate as part of a participant's IEP/ISS, and to the diagnosis of a certified counselor. Career planners may seek not-for-profit services that use a sliding-fee scale.

Clothing: (maximum \$1,500)

If a participant does not have the means to provide the basic clothing necessary for a program activity or to obtain and/or retain employment, financial assistance for clothing may be provided. This may include clothing essential for job interviewing or clothes deemed to be "essential" necessary items for the program/activity and can include items such as arctic gear for employment on the North Slope. The need should be appropriately documented in the participant file.

Combined Room and Board: (maximum \$7,500)

Combined room and board is used for a training program where the housing and food costs are combined into one set amount. An example of this would be AVTEC or other training providers where training lasts longer than 30 days and both meals and lodging are being paid by the program.

Dental Care: (maximum \$4,000)

The services should be necessary for a person to participate successfully in training or to obtain and/or retain employment consistent with their IEP/ISS. An example might include repair of an abscessed tooth. Cosmetic or elective procedures may not be provided unless there is a direct relationship to training or employment requirements.

Energy Assistance (maximum \$7500)

Reasonable heating oil/fuel, electricity, propane, natural gas or wood costs necessary for a participant to successfully participate in program activities.

Eye care: (maximum \$1,000)

This includes examinations, frames, and prescription lenses. This should be necessary for successful participation in training and employment. Effort should be made to fund these services through non-WIOA sources first. Example: Lions Joint Sight Committee (ANCH), nonprofit agency will vary by region.

Family Care: (maximum \$5,000)

This may include childcare, elder care, or respite care assistance needed by an enrolled participant during assessment, job search or during any training activity. Dependent care may also be provided for a participant placed in unsubsidized employment; however, whenever possible, efforts should be made to fund these services through non-WIOA sources first. These may include, but are not limited to the Parents Achieving Self-Sufficiency Program (PASS). Such efforts shall be described in the participant's IEP/ISS and/or case notes.

Payment for dependent care should not exceed the average market rate for these services in the area. A sample telephone survey of rates in that area should be recorded in the case notes to justify the rate.

The decision regarding who will provide the dependent care will be left to the participant. Care providers must be licensed in order for the state to support them. Family members of the participant must not be paid to provide dependent care under WIOA unless they are currently operating a licensed care facility. "Family member" includes spouse, child, parent, grandparent, in-law parent, stepparent, sibling, sibling-in-law, stepsibling, child-in-law, stepchild, aunt, uncle, nephew and first cousin.

Health Care: (maximum \$5,500)

The medical services should be necessary for a person to participate successfully in training or to obtain and/or retain employment consistent with their IEP/ISS. Examples might include a physical exam required for employment. For additional guidance contact your CSTS Program Coordinator. Cosmetic or elective procedures may not be provided unless there is a direct relationship to training or employment requirements.

Also included in this category is:

- Group **Medical Insurance** premium payments may be made up to the maximum of \$5,500.

Housing/Lodging Expenses: (maximum \$7,500)

The Housing and Lodging Expenses may include daily, weekly or monthly rent or mortgage payments and the total cannot exceed the \$7,500 maximum per IEP.

Lodging types and rates fall under the purview of the [Alaska Administrative Manual 60.240](#), lodging types and rates. Lodging is defined as a temporary place to stay while conducting program activities and are broken out into short term lodging (30 days or less) and long term lodging (longer than 30 days).

The actual costs of the accommodation may be paid for short term lodging (30 days or less) however the total amount may not exceed the maximum allowed.

The state policy for long-term lodging expenses (longer than 30 consecutive days) is \$45 per day. The long-term rate outside Alaska is 55 percent of the federal maximum lodging amount for short-term. The federal maximum lodging amount may be obtained by contacting the Division of Finance, Department of Administration, at 465-2240. This may include reasonable costs of lodging for participants while en-route to or attending a program activity, or while en-route to employment. Lodging may be reimbursed for the participant only. Additional charges for family members, or persons other than the participant, are not allowable. The participant must provide original receipts regardless of the payment computation method.

Housing is defined as long term place to live. The methodology used to determine the fixed housing costs must be documented in the file or case noted. Mortgage or rental agreements must also be collected as back up documentation for the expense. If more than one adult is in the household the cost should be allocated appropriately between the adults in the household. In situations where spouses/partners are sharing a residence where one individual does not work due to childcare or medical issues and the household is dependent solely on the sponsored participants support, the entire monthly housing amount may be approved.

Housing/Lodging Expenses may also assist the participant to maintain housing needs such as fuel, electricity, cooking fuel, telephone, and internet and is to be documented in their IEP.

Housing Maintenance Emergencies: (maximum \$1,000)

Housing emergencies may prevent a participant from attending training or securing employment. Such services might include repair of a heating system, broken windows or doors that create an unsafe residence, or faulty mechanical systems that create a serious threat to safety as determined by a professional. This does not include routine maintenance or defects that do not place a participant in danger or services that should be provided by a landlord.

ID's and Licenses: (maximum \$2,000)

Many occupations require certification by Federal, State, and industry standards and supportive services may be used to obtain appropriate documentation in support of employment. This may include TWIC, professional licensing fees (such as RN), background checks, fingerprinting, and photos required for applications for licensing. This code includes the testing fee when the participant is not receiving a training service but needs to test to obtain the state certification.

Interpretation Services: (maximum \$500)

Communication and interpretations services are for non-English speaking participants.

Laundry/Dry Cleaning: (maximum \$250)

In certain employment and training settings the employer or industry sets the standard for attire. To ensure a participant's attendance in training and compliance with the standard it may be necessary to fund appropriate laundry services. These services include the purchase of laundry supplies and coin operated laundry facilities or dry cleaning services depending on the cleaning requirements of the uniform or clothing.

Meals/Food: (maximum \$5,000)

Prior to providing the initial supportive service authorization, the career planner and the participant will need to review and sign a CSTS Supportive Services Guidance form. A copy will be provided to the participant and the original will be kept in the file. Participants have two options for reimbursement of meal expenses: (1) they may receive a fixed daily/weekly meal-rate, or (2) they may be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals (as documented by approved, original receipts), not to exceed \$60 per day.

The most updated meal cost information based on geographical area can be found on DOL's Research & Analysis Division webpage:

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/col/col.pdf>

The fixed daily/weekly meal reimbursement rate shall be calculated as follows:

- For periods of less than seven consecutive days, the fixed meals reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$60 per day. Partial days may be prorated as follows: Breakfast - \$15; Lunch - \$15; Dinner - \$30.
- For periods of seven consecutive days or more, the fixed meal reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$200 per week or \$600 per month. This may be prorated; however, documented substantiation should be noted on the IEP/ISS, supportive services authorization and/or case notes.

Other Supportive Services: (maximum \$1,000)

Services and devices for people with disabilities are provided under other services. This may include personal devices or services for disabled individuals that cannot be obtained through other sources such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The Assistive Technology Program in the DVR should be contacted (1-800-770-0138) prior to providing such services.

Personal Care: (maximum \$1,000)

Proper hygiene and grooming are necessary for participation in most, if not all, training and employment settings. As such, items necessary to maintain a high level of hygiene and grooming are appropriate supportive services. This includes toothpaste, soap, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, haircuts, manicures, and other grooming service and products as required for training and employment.

Relocation Assistance: (maximum \$7,500)

If a participant has obtained employment consistent with their IEP/ISS, and the employment has been verified, WIOA funds may be used to transport the participant to the job-site.

The state may pay for any additional cost for immediate household family members. This means

dependents living in the home such as a spouse and children under 18 (or older, if disabled). The State may also pay costs related to transporting household goods.

Short Term Pre-Vocational Training: (maximum \$5,000)

Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills (ESL), interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training is considered 'Prevocational Services'. *Short-term* is defined as generally six (6) months or less in length. Short term workshops and in-house training activities and such employer based activities as short term work experience and internships also fall under this category.

Training Related Materials and Supplies & Training Related Books/Software: (maximum \$3,000)

Assistance with the purchase of books, fees, supplies primarily necessary for participation in TRAINING rather than employment.

1. **Tools:** May be purchased in support of training, however clear justification in the case notes and IEP is required. Any tool package purchase over \$1,000/\$1,500 will require two estimates when multiple vendors are available unless a specific tool package has been identified by the training provider. This includes safety equipment and/or supplies such as head, ear and eye protection, as well as any other type of safety devices required and not normally provided by the training entity. Items that may be required for training will not be given to the participant unless he/she successfully completes the training and there is clear documentation that the need for tools is necessary for employment, only then can the tools be released to the participant. Until that time those items will be considered the possession of the state.
2. **Computer:** The State does not purchase computers for participants unless it is a required aid for participation in a course of study (such as a computer maintenance course). If the participant successfully completes the training the computer will be returned to the career planner to log into the tool inventory so that another participant can use it, unless there is clear documentation that the need for a computer is necessary for employment only then can the computer be released to the participant. Until that time those items will be considered the possession of the state. Computer and software cost can be broken down separately or as a package, however not to exceed established training cost limits.

Transportation (Local): (maximum \$7,500)

If a participant does not have a safe, dependable, affordable means of transportation to/from program activities, or to start a job, an adequate amount for providing such transportation may be provided. Direct vendor payments, reimbursement or fixed-rate advances to a participant for local commuting area transportation needs that will allow a participant to participate in program activities if safe, dependable, affordable means of transportation are not available.

Fixed transportation reimbursement rate:

A fixed transportation rate (up to a set maximum) may be provided in situations where a participant is within commuting distance of a regularly scheduled program and related activities. The steps in providing the fixed rate are as follows:

1. Determine the appropriate daily rate based on the transportation options available in the applicable community. This determination may be made utilizing many different resources and/or methods as long as there is proper documentation for the determination in the participant file. The following are examples of some methods of determination, however, they are not intended to be an exhaustive list:

If the participant is in an area without public transportation and has access to a ride or a vehicle for a ten-mile trip (one-way) to training, various methods can be utilized with proper documentation such as per mile, or mileage with estimated miles/gallon. Some resources for documentation and justification can be found on the following websites:

www.google.maps.com

www.mapquest.com

www.mpgomatic.com/gas-mileage-by-car/

www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/findacar.htm

In a second example, the participant is in a community with public transportation. A transit pass may cost \$60 a month, or approximately \$2 per day. Assuming the transit system could meet the participant's necessary transportation needs, the reimbursement should be set at \$2 per day. Although the participant may still choose to use other means of transportation, the fixed rate would not exceed \$2 per day.

2. Determine whether the transportation rate would also be paid on non-training days, since the service might be necessary for special appointments or necessary grocery shopping, for additional guidance contact the program manager.
3. Describe the process above on the participant's supportive service authorization, IEP/ISS and/or case notes to justify the decision to provide a fixed transportation rate in the amount specified.
4. To process the reimbursement using inter-departmental procedures, obligate the funds with the current authorization form and submit it with a fixed transportation invoice to fiscal for payment. The invoice requires the participant's signature acknowledging the intent of the payment and staff signature to certify that the participant is maintaining active and satisfactory progress in their IEP activities.
5. Auto repair maybe entered under this category but the total of all repairs to car should only be for safety type of repairs. Repairs should not exceed 50% of the value of the vehicle. Verification of insurance, registration and of the vehicle's value should be kept in the participant's file.
6. Auto insurance premiums can also be entered under this category and includes **SR-22** or high-risk auto insurance.
7. No penalties or fines can be paid.

Transportation - (Non-ITA) Out of Area Training: (maximum \$3,000)

This is for transportation that is out of the local commuting area for prevocational training, customized, or classroom training on behalf of an employer.

Transportation - (Non-ITA) Out of Area: (maximum \$3,000)

When this transportation code used for a Job Search/Placement Assistance out of the local commuting area, the career planner must document on supportive service authorization that there is an interview scheduled. This code may also be used when the participant is in need of transportation assistance out of area to successfully complete the IEP. [Example – a physical required for training or employment is not available in the local area.]

Transportation (ITA) Out-of-Area Training: (maximum \$3,000)

Occasionally, it may be necessary to assist a participant moving from their place of residence in order to participate in training. This is different from relocation assistance in that the service is tied to a participant's training activities. If a participant is enrolled in a training program occurring outside his or her home community, standard commuter air, ground and/or water transportation to and from the site may be provided.

Other Transportation Related Costs: Costs specifically identified with non-participants or activities not directly associated with training participation (e.g. ferry tickets for family members) will not be provided, regardless of the total cost. Additional transportation costs (including shipping or excess baggage charges) for goods other than those necessary to participate in the program activity, are the responsibility of the participant.

Work Experience Wages: (maximum \$2,500)

Work experience wages can be utilized multiple times during the ISS period. Total work experience amount is limited to \$2,500.

Work Related Supplies (maximum \$3,000)

Assistance with the purchase of work related supplies may be provided when necessary to obtain and/or retain employment.

Tools: May be purchased in support of job placement; however, clear justification in the case notes and IEP is required. Any tool package purchase over \$1,000/\$1,500 will require two estimates when multiple vendors are available unless a specific tool package has been identified by the employer. This includes safety equipment and/or supplies such as head, ear and eye protection, as well as any other type of safety devices required for employment and not normally provided by the employer.

Youth Incentive: (maximum \$1,000)

An incentive is a payment to a youth participant for the successful participation and achievement of goals identified in the ISS. It must be tied to training and education, work readiness skills and/or an occupational skills attainment. Incentives need to be documented in the ICM and in a log for incentives for audit purposes. It is essential the incentive information is entered in the Case Notes and how it relates to the ISS and the Cost Tab documentation. Incentives can be gas cards, cash cards or other items as deemed appropriate per policy #07-522.

Youth Stipend: (maximum \$1,000)

A stipend is a fixed regular small payment made to a youth participant during enrollment to encourage the youth participate in certain activities such as class room instruction. Stipends may be paid based on actual hours of attendance and attendance in the activity must be documented as the basis of stipend payments.

E. Needs-Related Payments (maximum \$7,500)

During full-time training, participants may receive supportive services in the form of needs-related payments (NRPs). NRPs are cash benefits to be used to enable a participant to assist with basic needs while attending full-time training and may be issued bi-weekly or monthly. The career planner must evaluate the participant's need and determine that NRPs are the most effective for meeting a participant's needs. The career planner must review the NRP amount every 30 days and adjust NRPs to reflect changes in family income, and may also adjust the level of supportive services to distribute them until exit.

Assessment of Supportive Service Needs:

An assessment should provide sufficient information for the career planner to determine a participant's need for supportive services or NRPs. This assessment should indicate the participant's budget including any other supportive services and all potential sources of family income and expenses. The career planner should review all current sources of family income including pay stubs, Permanent Fund Dividends, Native Organization dividends, and support from other government agencies, the ES/UI database, food stamps, public assistance, and cash assistance from the Department of Agriculture TAA program, and any other forms of financial support available to the family. The income should be compared to the family expenses in order to determine when NRPs are necessary.

NRP Limits and Duration:

NRPs may be provided up to 30 calendar days prior to a participant's start date for training and up to 30 calendar days upon the completion of training while the participant is seeking work. The career planner may request to extend the 30-day period up to 90 days to address circumstances associated with a participant entering training or upon the completion of training and entry into employment. All extension approvals must be justified and approved through the DETS Director or Designee.

The career planner must determine the actual number of weeks of NRPs that will be provided and the payment schedule and record the cost estimate for the State fiscal year (July-June) on the IEP/ISS, the ICM system.

The maximum number of weeks payable is for the duration of training or 104 weeks, whichever is less. Plus an additional four weeks to cover the 30 days prior to the start of training and four weeks to cover the 30 day period after the completion of training. However, for accounting purposes, only the expected amount to expend during the current State fiscal year will be encumbered at one time.

WIOA Youth Program (Older Youth):

To be eligible for NRPs, a *youth* must meet **all** of the following conditions:

1. Demonstrate a financial need for NRPs;
2. Be unemployed;
3. Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation;
4. Not be eligible for other forms of financial support or cash assistance (such as Alaska Temporary Assistance Program);
5. Be enrolled in a program of services as determined by and documented in the Individual

Service Strategy; and

6. Make satisfactory progress in the training program.

WIOA Adult Program:

To be eligible for NRPs, an *adult* must demonstrate **all** of the following:

1. Demonstrate a need for NRPs,
2. Be unemployed;
3. Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation;
4. Not be eligible for other forms of financial support or cash assistance (such as Alaska Temporary Assistance Program);
5. Be enrolled in a program of full-time training services; and
6. Make satisfactory progress in the training program.

WIOA Dislocated Worker Program:

To be eligible for NRPs, a *dislocated worker* must demonstrate **all** of the following:

- A financial need for NRPs;
- Be unemployed;
- Completed an IEP;
- Make satisfactory progress in a program of full-time training.

And also meet the requirements in any one of the following options below depending upon the participant's circumstances.

Option One:

- Cease to qualify for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation or extended benefits or Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) under the Trade Act); and,
- Be enrolled in WIOA training services by the end of the 13th week after the most recent qualifying layoff; **or**, if after the 13th week; or,
- Be enrolled in training by the end of the 8th week after the participant is informed that a short-term layoff will, in fact, exceed 6 months; or,

Option Two:

- Not qualify for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation or extended benefits or Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) under the Trade Act); or,

Option Three:

- Be enrolled in training within 6 weeks of the receipt of a National Dislocated Worker Grant (DNEG) award.

NRP Payment Limits:

The maximum weekly amount of NRPs is limited to the equivalent maximum weekly benefit amount for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation for all funding streams. (\$370 plus \$24 per dependent up to three.) Based upon assessed need, participants may receive up to the maximum weekly benefit amount or the poverty level (based on 2011 guidelines is \$262 for a family of one, or \$353 for a family of two) for an equivalent period and family size. The upper limit is dependent upon which level is less. The information below provides guidance on how to calculate for NRPs.

Dislocated Worker Calculation of NRPs:

Dislocated workers, who have exhausted UI but are still in their UI benefit year, may receive the equivalent weekly benefit amount of their UI claim including the dependents allowance. Once the UI benefit year is over and the participant is no longer eligible for UI, their NRP benefit amount may be re-determined based on the poverty level guidelines.

Dislocated workers who were not eligible for UI may receive a weekly benefit amount of \$262 for a family of one, or \$353 for a family of two, per week based upon the poverty rate as determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services. This is computed by dividing the annual poverty level amount based on family size into a weekly benefit amount. For families of two or more persons, the payment level must not exceed the maximum UI weekly benefit amount of \$370. A dependents allowance of \$24 for each dependent up to three dependents can increase the NRP weekly amount to a maximum of \$442 per week.

The state's definition of a dependent is an unmarried child, stepchild, legally adopted child, or legal ward under 18 years of age who is lawfully in the individual's physical custody at the time the individual claims the allowance or is dependent on the individual for more than 50% of support. A dependent is also an unmarried child, stepchild, legally adopted child or legal ward of ANY age who is dependent on the individual for more than 50% of support and who is prevented by infirmity from engaging in gainful occupation.

The Employment and Training Technical Unit (ETTU) is responsible for determining the maximum NRP weekly benefit amount. This will be determined by reviewing the participant's eligibility for UI and by reviewing the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) poverty guidelines. The career planner must determine family size by the number of persons residing in the same residence related by blood, marriage, or adoption. Career planners must also identify any non-custodial dependents of the participant, and determine if the participant provides at least 50 percent of their support.

The career planner will fax an NRP determination request to the ETTU for a determination on the maximum weekly NRP amount for which the participant is eligible. ETTU will complete the determination and fax it back to the career planner. The career planner will determine the actual weekly amount (without exceeding the max) that will be necessary to enable the participant to attend training based on the participant's financial circumstances.

DHHS updates the Poverty Guidelines annually in February.

Adult and Youth Calculations of NRPs:

Based on completion of a financial needs analysis an NRP for a youth or adult participant must not exceed the equivalent UI weekly benefit, including dependent allowance if applicable or if not eligible for UI, the poverty guidelines for an equivalent period.

Monthly Review of NRPs:

The career planner must review participant and/or family income on a monthly basis and make adjustments to the NRP if necessary. Each month the career planner should contact the participant to determine if the same funding level is still necessary. If the spouse's income covers more of the family's expenses the career planner may reduce the number of NRP's the participant is receiving. If the spouse's income covers fewer expenses the career planner may increase the number of NRP's up to the maximum weekly amount.

The ETTU will deduct any of the participant's family weekly earnings that were not originally identified in the financial form from the weekly NRP amount upon processing the NRP claim. (If the participant has earnings, they are not eligible to receive an NRP for that week as the law requires that they be unemployed) This is based on the following formula and designed to mirror the UI regulations. A family member may earn up to \$50 per week without reducing the weekly NRP amount. Each dollar earned over \$50 will reduce the weekly NRP amount by \$0.75.

For Example:

\$442 Maximum weekly benefit, family of five
\$150 Weekly family earnings (not originally reported on the financial worksheet)
 $\$442 - (150 - 50) * .75 = \367 Formula to determine weekly payment
\$367 equals an adjusted weekly benefit for a family of five with \$150 weekly earnings.

Concurrent payment of NRP's and Supportive Services:

DETS may issue NRPs and other supportive services concurrently under the following conditions. First, the additional supportive services should be of an unexpected nature, not previously considered in the decision to award NRPs. Second, an additional review of other resources must be conducted. It may be necessary to refer the participant back to an agency that previously determined the participant ineligible. Third, the career planner must review their coordination with partner agencies and modify the IEP if necessary.

Garnishment and Collections:

WIOA funds are not exempt from collection or garnishment. DETS should not issue NRPs if it is likely the funds will be garnished or collected. Other appropriate supportive services should be provided. Exceptions to this policy may apply where payments to the Alaska Department of Revenue, Child Support Services Division (CSSD) are in arrears. The career planner may negotiate an exclusion from CSSD on the collection of NRPs for payment of child support in arrears. A participant who owes child support must demonstrate need for NRPs beyond the need for child support payments.

Modification procedure for CSED withholding orders:

Modification of Income Withholding Amount Based On Hardship 15 AAC 125.550.

- (a) At any time after an order to withhold and deliver has been issued, an obligor may request that the order to withhold and deliver be modified based on evidence of

- hardship on the obligor or the obligor's family. In order to obtain a modification under this section, the obligor shall present clear and convincing evidence of the hardship that would result if the order to withhold and deliver were not modified.
- (b) The agency may consider the following factors in determining whether, for purposes of this section, a hardship exists:
- (1) significant illness or disability that prevents the obligor from working at any reasonable employment;
 - (2) exceptional medical expenses that are not reimbursed by insurance, Medicaid, or another government program, or through private litigation;
 - (3) an accident or other disaster that significantly affects the obligor or an immediate family member of the obligor;
 - (4) the obligor has physical custody of one or more of the children for whom support is sought under a valid custody order issued by a tribunal of competent jurisdiction; or
 - (5) the obligor lives a subsistence life style without any local opportunity for employment.
 - (6) the net monthly income of the obligor's household is 150 percent of the poverty guideline for this state, as set out in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the agency has not determined the obligor to be voluntarily underemployed or unemployed under [15 AAC 125.060](#).
- (c) In order to qualify for a modification based on hardship, the obligor must provide all information required by the agency to verify hardship or, if the information cannot be provided, must explain why the information is not reasonably available. The obligor must disclose the obligor's entire household assets, income, and expenses, including the assets, income, and expenses of each member of the obligor's household.
- (d) In deciding whether to grant or deny a request under this section, the agency will consider the extent to which, in the agency's determination, the obligor has eliminated discretionary spending and has disposed of the obligor's non-essential assets. For purposes of making a determination under this subsection,
- (1) discretionary spending
 - (a) includes an expenditure made for recreation, comfort, sport, investment, entertainment, private schools, travel, or rental or recreational property;
 - (b) does not include an expenditure necessary to feed, house, clothe, or ensure the health of the obligor and the obligor's immediate family members;
 - (2) the agency will consider each expenditure on a case-by-case basis;
 - (3) in determining whether the obligor must dispose of an asset under this subsection, the agency will, in its discretion, consider the sentimental value of the asset to the obligor and will, in its discretion, weigh the sentimental value of the asset to the obligor and the cost to the obligor of selling the asset against the asset's market value.
- (e) The agency will grant or deny a modification requested under this section. If the agency grants a modification under this section, the agency
- (1) will not reduce the monthly withholding amount calculated under [15 AAC 125.540](#)(a) below the amount of the obligor's ongoing monthly support obligation or to an amount less than \$50 per month, whichever is greater; and

- (2) will grant the modification for the duration of the hardship, as determined by the agency, but for no more than two years.
- (f) Repealed 6/15/2001.
- (g) An obligor may apply to extend a modification granted under this section beyond the period set under (e)(2) of this section. The agency will review an extension request in the manner that the agency reviews an initial request under this section.
- (h) In deciding whether to grant or deny a request under this section, the agency will consider the obligor's history of applying for a permanent fund dividend under AS [43.23](#). The agency will not deny a request under this section solely because an obligor failed to apply for a permanent fund dividend in the past.

However, the agency will not grant a request under this section unless the obligor agrees to

- (1) apply for permanent fund dividends in the future; or
- (2) demonstrate to the agency's satisfaction that the obligor would not be eligible for a permanent fund dividend under AS [43.23](#) and [15 AAC 23](#).

An administrative review or administrative appeal is not available from a decision under this section. The decision is final for purposes of appeal to the superior court.

Authority:

AS [25.27.020](#)

AS [25.27.250](#)

NRP Forms

At this time, there are five forms associated with the process of issuing NRP's.

NRP Determination Form

This form is used to request a determination on the weekly amount the participant is eligible for. The career planner completes the top portion and the Employment and Training Technical Unit; Employment Security Specialist completes the bottom portion.

Financial Form

This form is used in determining if the participant needs NRP's. It is submitted to the Employment and Training Technical Unit along with the NRP Information form when the NRP file is being set up. The career planner will also use the information on this form when determining the NRP weekly amount.

NRP Information Form

This form is completed by the career planner and faxed to the Employment and Training Technical Unit for a NRP file to be created. This provides information to the Employment Security Specialist who will be encumbering NRP amounts and issuing the NRP payments.

NRP Change Form

This form is completed by the career planner and used to update the weekly NRP benefit amount or change the encumbrance amount or number of weeks originally approved by the career planner.

NRP Weekly Claim Form –While in training

This form is completed by the participant and the training facility and submitted to the Employment and Training Technical Unit for payment.

NRP Weekly Claim Form – Before and after training

This form is used during the 30 day period prior to the start of training and 30 day period after the completion of training. Work search efforts should be documented during the 30 day period after the completion of training. This should be submitted to the Employment and Training Technical Unit for payment.

Direct Deposit instructions and application form

This can be located at http://doa.alaska.gov/dof/forms/resource/EDI_agreement.pdf

NRP Determination and Payment Process

1. The career planner has the participant complete page 1 of the *financial form* while developing the individual employment plan. Based on the information provided on the financial form, the career planner can determine if NRP's are needed.
2. If NRP's are needed, the career planner completes the *NRP determination form*. Included on this form is an area for the participant to list dependents to be considered in the NRP determination.
3. The career planner faxes the *NRP determination form* to the Employment Security Analyst (ESA) in the Employment and Training Technical Unit. (fax 907-465-8753)
4. Upon receipt of the *NRP determination form*, the ESA checks the DB2 system to determine if the participant is eligible for an Unemployment Insurance claim.
 - a. **If yes**, the ESA completes the *NRP determination form* with the UI information. The participant will need to file for UI benefits rather than NRP's.
 - b. **If no**, the ESA checks to see if the participant has an existing UI claim and if the UI benefit year is still in effect.
 - i. **If yes**, the ESA determines that the NRP amount to be the same as the UI benefit amount including the dependents' allowances that were established with the UI claim.
 - ii. **If no**, and the participant is not eligible for a UI claim, the ESA determines the NRP amount based on the poverty level for the participants family size. The ESA reviews the dependents listed on the *NRP determination form* and adds them to the NRP weekly amount accordingly.
5. The ESA checks with CSSD to see if there is a withholding order and the % of the garnishment.
6. The ESA completes the bottom section of the *NRP determination form* and faxes back to the career planner.
7. The career planner then determines how much per week (up to the maximum weekly amount determined by ETTU) the participant will need based on their financial situation.
8. The career planner also determines the max amount of NRP's payable for the current State fiscal year (July-June).
9. The career planner completes the *NRP Info Form* with the participant and the participant is given a copy for their records. The participant is also given *NRP claim forms* and *direct deposit information*.
10. The career planner enters the participant NRP lump sum amount into the ICM system and faxes a copy of the *NRP information form* and participant's *financial form* to the Employment and Training Technical Unit (ETTU) for file set up, encumbrance establishment and NRP claim processing.
11. Upon receipt of the *NRP Info Form*, the ESA requests a Pay Vendor Number (PVN) to be created in AKSAS. The ESA also ensures a PVN is created for any CSSD deductions. The

ESA also established an encumbrance for the total NRP amount payable during the current State fiscal year. The ESA creates a paper file to keep all participant information such as **financial form**, **NRP determination form**, the **NRP information form** and subsequent **NRP claim forms** in.

12. The participant completes the front of the **NRP claim form**, has the training facility complete the back and faxes it directly to the ESA every two weeks.
13. The ESA reviews the **NRP claim form**, checks for any UI or TRA eligibility, and checks for any change in CSSD deductions or if a CSSD termination notice has been received. The ESA calculates any deductions for family wages, CSSD, lump sum payment from the US Department of Agriculture TAA program, etc. and creates a payment transaction into the AKSAS system. Any deductions that have been applied to the NRP are indicated in the remittance section of the participants NRP warrant.
14. The ESA has the certifying officer certify all NRP AKSAS transactions on a daily basis.
15. NRP funds are directly deposited into the participant's bank account the following day if direct deposit has been set up. If not, a check is mailed to the participant the following business day.
16. The ESA updates an Excel spreadsheet with the date and amount of NRP paid and notes any deductions that were applied to the payment.
17. Every 30 days the ESA will fax the back of the **NRP claim form** to the career planner for their files. (Changes in income and satisfactory progress are recorded on that side of the NRP claim form.)
18. The career planner will review the **NRP claim forms** monthly for any changes in the participant's income or resources and will adjust the weekly amount of the NRP's the participant is eligible for accordingly. If changes are warranted, the career planner will fax a **NRP Change Form** to the ESA.
19. If there are issues with the **NRP claim form** such as late filing, traveling, then the ESS investigates the issue by contacting the participant to determine if the NRP week is payable under the law. NRP's are designed to mirror UI and TRA payments and determinations will be based on existing UI guidelines.
20. If the issue is "not making satisfactory progress" in training the ESA faxes a copy of the NRP to the career planner for resolution. The ESA does not make any payments until the issue is resolved and is directed to issue payment by the career planner.
21. If the NRP is denied due to issues, the ESA issues the denial letter to the participant, which includes grievance information. The ESA faxes a copy of the denial letter to the career planner for their file.

NRP Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *How many hours of educational training are participants expected to participate in, in order to receive Needs-Related Payments (NRP)?*

A: The hours in a day and days in a week of attendance in training shall be full-time in accordance with established hours and days of training of the training provider.

Q: *Is there a limitation on how long a participant can receive needs-related payments?*

A: Yes. Needs-related payments cannot exceed 104 weeks while in training and 4 weeks for the 30 day period prior to the start of training and 4 weeks for the 30 day period after completion of training.

Q: *Can a participant receive NRP's if they are in short term pre-vocational training?*

A: No. Short Term Prevocational training is considered an intensive service, not a training service by the Federal Government.

Q: *How many participants in the same household can receive NRP simultaneously?*

A: Usually one, but in rare cases two. The household income must be at or below the poverty level <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/> for the previous six months in order for both participants to receive NRP's.

Q: *Can participants enroll in more than one training program?*

A: No. Every participant will need to choose a single career path that will ultimately lead to employment in a new occupation. The training program could include one or several classes or programs, but all classes or training programs will need to be related directly to the employment plan negotiated by the career planner and participant and consistent with the goal of re-employment.

Q: *How are the numbers of "dependents" determined for the total NRP?*

A: The state's definition of a dependent is an unmarried child, stepchild, legally adopted child, or legal ward under 18 years of age who is lawfully in the individual's physical custody at the time the individual claims the allowance or is dependent on the individual for more than 50% of support. A dependent is also an unmarried child, stepchild, legally adopted child or legal ward of ANY age who is dependent on the individual for more than 50% of support and who is prevented by infirmity from engaging in gainful occupation. Up to three dependents are allowed.

Q: *Is there a limit on how many hours a participant can work while in retraining?*

A: No. However, the participants' will not be eligible for a NRP during a week in which they are working. They must be unemployed in order to collect a NRP.

Q: *Is there a limit on how much a participant's family member may work during a week?*

A: Total family income is looked at when determining NRP's weekly amount. A family member can obtain part-time work and their wages will be deducted from the weekly NRP. The family member may earn up to \$50 per week without reducing the weekly NRP amount. Each dollar earned over \$50 will reduce the weekly NRP amount by \$0.75.

Q: *Can a participant receive needs-related payments while waiting for a training program to begin?*

A: Yes. Up to 30 days prior to the beginning of training. The 30-day rule can be extended up to 90 days to address appropriate circumstances.

Q: *If a participant has a low NRP weekly amount based on a UI claim, can that amount be adjusted?*

A: Yes. If the participant's financial circumstances warrant an increase in the NRP, a request to increase the amount needs to be requested through the Employment and Training Technical Unit in Juneau. The DETS Director or designee has the authority to increase the amount up to the maximum allowed in the NRP policy.

Q: *Can a participant receive NRP's and supportive services concurrently?*

A: Yes. As long as there is a need to receive both in order to enable the participant to attend a full-time training program.

Q: *Are NRP's IRS tax reportable?*

A: No. Revenue Ruling 75-246 and TEIN 12.84 ...if the activity amounts only to participation in a training program, the payments are in the nature of relief payments made for the promotion of the general welfare and are excludable from the gross income of the recipient.

Q: *Do I have to authorize the maximum weekly NRP amount payable to the participant?*

A: No. The weekly amount that the career planner authorizes should be based on the participants needs. A simple calculation of the amount the participant is short per month times 12 months divided by 52 weeks can be used to determine the amount of weekly NRP the career planner should authorize.

Q: *Is direct deposit available for NRP payments?*

A: Yes. Information on establishing direct deposit can be located at http://doa.alaska.gov/dof/forms/resource/EDI_agreement.pdf

Q: *Are there time limits that have to be met in order for a participant to be eligible for NRP's?*

A: Yes. For WIOA dislocated worker program one of the following options must be met:

Option One:

1. Cease to qualify for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation or extended benefits or Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) under the Trade Act); and,
2. Be enrolled in WIOA training services by the end of the 13th week after the most recent qualifying layoff; **or**, if after the 13th week; or,
3. Be enrolled in training by the end of the 8th week after the participant is informed that a short-term layoff will, in fact, exceed 6 months; or,

Option Two:

4. Not qualify for Unemployment Insurance (UI) compensation or extended benefits or Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) under the Trade Act); or,

Option Three:

5. Be enrolled in training within 6 weeks of the receipt of a National Dislocated Worker Grant (DNEG) award.

F. WIOA Funding

Supportive Service Guidance/Collection of Funds:

At times, supportive services such as food, clothing, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene products are needed to assist participants in successfully obtaining their employment goal. It is the responsibility of the Career Planner to discuss what is expected when supportive services are being requested during development of the IEP, as well as the steps that will be taken when an authorization is misused which could include not receiving further funding for training. The participant needs to understand and acknowledge authorizations are for specific support items.

In the event of an inappropriate purchase by the participant, **the recovery of misappropriated funds remains at the local level and the responsibility of the career planner and conducted in a timely manner. Reimbursement will need to be made in the form of a check or money order payable to the State of Alaska.**