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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH
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Bureau of Workforce Programs
Policy Issuance (PI): 06-33

Date: April 10, 2007

To: Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) Directors

From: Brenda C. Njiwaji, Director, Bureau of Workforce Programs **(SIGNED)**

Subject: Supportive Services

Programs Affected: Work First/Jobs, Education, and Training

Rescissions: PI 01-40 and Changes

Background: As of October 1, 2006, case management follow-up and unsubsidized employment job retention were extended to 180 days. This PI extends transportation allowances to 180 days and modifies the education and training stipulations.

Policy: The MWAs are charged with managing payment of supportive services and are responsible for ensuring that the provision of supportive services is appropriate, with proper documentation on file. The MWAs shall respond in a timely manner when supportive services are requested. Requests may be an emergency, meaning that without immediate action (i.e., within 24 hours) on the part of the MWA, the participant would lose their current employment. In emergency situations, the MWAs will respond within 24 hours in order to prevent the loss of employment. The MWAs and the Department of Human Services (DHS) are to locally coordinate supportive service payments to ensure that expenditure limitations are not exceeded.

The DHS may pay for employment-related supportive services for Family Independence Program (FIP) recipients and Non-Cash Recipients who are enrolled in Work First when both the DHS and the MWA agree that it is in the customer's best interest to have the DHS issue the supportive service payment. DHS and MWA staff should locally determine when and under what circumstances this should occur.

When a participant moves between MWAs while still eligible for supportive services, they will receive those services from the MWA that covers the area into which they have moved. The MWA that originally placed the participant into employment will provide documentation through a locally, agreed upon manner to the new MWA, which would allow the new MWA to serve the participant consistent with program guidelines.

Supportive services with limitations are required to be entered into the One-Stop Management Information System (MIS). The MIS will provide a warning when a supportive service category reaches the participant's yearly or lifetime limit. The following supportive services are required to be entered into the MIS:

- Automobile purchase (\$1200/lifetime limit)
- Automobile repair (\$900/12-month limit)
- Clothing allowance (\$500/12-month limit)
- Relocation expenses (\$1500/limit per move)
- Transitional supportive services (\$200/12-month limit)

The MWAs are not to utilize funds to pay any fines or penalties, such as those associated with a driver's license reinstatement. Also, funding may not be utilized to pay any fees associated with enrolling a child in day care.

All of the following supportive services may be provided to all Work First participants at anytime during their enrollment in Work First, with the exception of transportation allowances:

Transportation Allowances

Allowances for public transportation or private automobile mileage reimbursement may be provided for all allowable activities under Work First, up to and until the participant completes a 180-day retention. Public transportation allowances or private automobile mileage reimbursement may be provided to participants enrolled in education or training activities for the duration of their participation with the exception of Vocational Occupational Training (VOT). State Law allows 36 months of VOT participation in conjunction with a Community Service Program, however, supportive services may only be provided for up to 24 months.

Allowable transportation activities include traveling to and from the participant's home to a job interview, job site, childcare provider, job club, an education or training facility, or to a community service site.

Compensation for transportation is the actual cost for public transportation or 20 cents per mile for the use of a private automobile. Payment of a flat rate is allowed, but the rate must be based on public transit costs or actual miles. In a two-parent family, each parent is eligible to receive a transportation allowance

if they are meeting their Work First requirements and have the need for separate transportation.

Volunteer drivers may be reimbursed at the same rate that DHS volunteer drivers are reimbursed. The MWAs should use the current DHS rate as a guide. Reimbursement for volunteer mileage may not exceed the DHS's maximum allowable rate.

Automobile Purchase

Up to \$1200 may be authorized toward the purchase of an automobile if it will be used as the participant's primary means of transportation for employment related activities, even if public transportation is available. In a two-parent family, each parent may be eligible to receive up to \$1200 toward the purchase of an automobile. Payment may be authorized for a licensed mechanic's inspection in addition to the \$1200 automobile purchase authorization. Automobile purchase is limited to once in a client's lifetime.

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered and insured in the name of the member of the eligible family. For purposes of this policy, a member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is included in the FIP grant.

While the state does not have a policy that prohibits the purchase of an automobile from a relative of a participant, the MWAs must ensure that all policies and procedures are followed.

Automobile Repair

Automobile repairs may be authorized up to \$900 per participant in any 12-month period for an automobile that is his or her primary means of transportation for employment related activities, even if public transportation is available. In a two-parent family, each parent may be eligible to receive up to \$900 toward the repair of the automobiles.

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered and insured in the name of a member of the eligible family. For purposes of this policy, a member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and included in the FIP grant. Payment may be authorized for a licensed mechanic's repair estimate in addition to the \$900 automobile repair authorization.

Clothing

Clothing as required for participants assigned to work projects and as needed for employment may be provided. Allowable items include clothing for interviews, work gloves, work boots, work shoes, hard hats, personal safety items, protective/special clothing, uniforms, and other clothing as needed to participate in training and/or clothing that is considered to be “job appropriate.” There is a \$500 limit per participant in a 12-month period. Both parents in a two-parent family are eligible if they both have a need. The MWA may also determine the need for the replacement of previously authorized clothing.

Relocation Allowance

A relocation allowance for participants who have obtained verified employment at a location outside commuting distance from their home may be provided. Allowable relocation expenses include pre-location expenses (coordination of details of the move beforehand, as well as the actual moving plan); trailer or truck rental; compensation for persons assisting in the move; mileage allowances; rental of moving equipment, such as dollies; security deposit and payment of the first month’s rent at the new location; and any other expense of the move determined as necessary by the MWA. Moving expenses are limited to \$1500 per participant per move. In two-parent families, both parents are eligible if they both obtain employment that requires relocation.

Non-DHS Employment Related Medical Expenses

Certain services, which are not defined as medical services by the DHS, may be needed to overcome barriers to employment or training, and are allowable supportive service expenses. These services may include:

- Employment related photocopies.
- The completion of a DHS Medical Needs form by a Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) certifying that, based on previous medical records or a recent medical examination, the client is able (or unable) to participate in employment-related activities; and whether or not there are limitations or restrictions on the types of activities in which the participant may be engaged.
- An employment or training-related general medical or physical examination by an MD or DO (including the completion of a DHS Medical Needs form).
- Employment-related immunizations and tests required as an employment or training condition (i.e., drug testing or vaccinations).

Work First supportive services may be used for dental services that are not covered under Medicaid, another health insurance plan, or by a community public health agency that normally covers medical and/or dental services for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of physical or mental diseases.

The MWAs have the discretion to determine the types of dental services that are necessary and appropriate for employment. To access information about the types of dental services that are covered under Medicaid, the MWAs may either contact a local Medicaid provider or email Ms. Chris Farrell, the Medicaid Dental Policy Specialist at the Michigan Department of Community Health, at farrellc@michigan.gov.

Work First Transitional Supportive Services

Transitional supportive services are cash payments intended to be used by the participant to cover miscellaneous employment related expenses not normally covered by regular supportive services. Individual MWAs desiring to provide transitional support services are required to submit a written request for a policy waiver. This written request must include the amount and frequency of the proposed transitional support payments, as well as the MWA's rationale for providing the proposed payments. Transitional support payments may not exceed \$200 in total per participant during a 12-month period.

Additional One Time, Work Related Expense

At the discretion of the MWA, other one time/non-continuing work-related expenses may be provided to enable individuals to participate in activities to seek, obtain, and retain employment. Examples of one time, work-related expenses include payments for professional license fees (auto trade certification, etc.); the purchase of professional tools; business start-up expenses; etc.

Action: MWA officials shall take appropriate action to comply with this policy.

Inquiries: Questions regarding this PI should be directed to your Welfare Reform grant coordinator.

The information contained in this PI will be made available in alternative format (large type, audio tape, etc.) upon special request received by this office.

Expiration

Date: Continuing

BCN:BW:kb