



## **Policy: WIOA Youth Stipend and Incentive**

**Effective Date: 10/27/22**

---

**Purpose:** This policy provides staff with specific policy, procedures, and guidelines for granting incentive awards to youth enrolled into the Essex County WIOA Youth programs. Process, documents, and entry into the AOSOS (America's One- Stop Operating System) system are fully detailed.

**Background:** The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act of 2015, Section 129, states WIOA youth funds can be used to provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth.

**Substance:** Incentives and stipends are allowable to youth enrolled into the WIOA Youth program. They are intended to be used to encourage and motivate WIOA youth to reach specific goals and obtain positive outcomes. Incentive and stipend awards are not an entitlement. All incentive awards and stipends will be subject to availability of WIOA Youth funds. It is the discretion of Essex County WIOA Services to decide on a case by case basis, the use and extent of use of stipends and incentives and may be subject to need of the participant and the availability of funds for stipends and incentives.

**Definition Incentive:** An incentive is a payment to a WIOA Youth participant for the successful completion and achievement of expected outcomes as defined in the individual's {ISS} Individual Service Strategy. The incentive must be linked to an achievement and must be tied to training and education, work readiness skills and/or an occupational skills attainment goal as identified in the ISS. All achievements must be documented in the participant's file as the basis for an incentive payment and reflective in AOSOS.

Incentives are considered awards to WIOA youth for their achievement and participation in WIOA activities only. This list of cash incentives may be awarded to WIOA Youth participants for full completion and achievement in a WIOA activity. Incentive payments may be awarded as cash incentives only.

**Essex County WIOA Youth Incentive payments may be awarded for the following goal accomplishments or activities:**

- Attainment of GED/HS Diploma or it's equivalence
- Basic Skills attainment
- Attainment of Post-Secondary Certificate
- Completion of Workplace readiness classes
- Attendance at Youth provided workshops
- 100% attendance to YRO, ABE or GED per month
- **Workplace Readiness Youth Program Orientation class** To qualify for workplace readiness incentives, the following items must be met. Youth must attend a minimum of 4 weeks of workplace readiness classes with no more than 3 unexcused absences and or 5 tardy's. A pre- and post-test must be administered and will serve as documentation to measure gains and should be placed in the participant's file. Incentive will be paid to youth who attend workplace readiness classes, complete pre-and post-tests, and show a measurable gain on post-test administered. The youth must also create a portfolio consisting of a cover letter, resume, sample application, and follow-up letter with at least one mock-interview.

**Documentation:** Incentives may be awarded providing that the provision of an incentive is included in the participant's Individual Service Strategy. At a minimum, the following documentation must be maintained in the youth's file and AOSOS:

- The Individual Services Strategy (ISS) must specify the goal that must be met in order to qualify for the incentive.
- The Individual Service Strategy must document the need for stipend and specify services that are planned in order for the youth to receive a stipend.
- Justification for payment of stipend.
- Timesheets or attendance sheets for payment of stipends.
- To qualify for an incentive, a copy of the required documentation(s) as outlined on attachment 1-WIOA Youth Incentive Certificate(s) verifying completion should be retained in the participant(s) file.
- All WIOA Youth Incentive certificate should be included in the participant(s) file.