

SC WORKS

PEE DEE

PEE DEE LWDA INSTRUCTION NUMBER: 23-005

TO: Pee Dee LWDA Youth Contractors

SUBJECT: Youth Incentive and Stipend Policy

ISSUANCE DATE: November 15, 2023

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

Purpose: This instruction updates Instruction 19-011, Youth Incentive Policy, to include verbiage of TEGL 21-16, to clarify the list of possible WIOA-funded incentives as non-exhaustive, and to add the completion of work experience as a goal or achievement for which incentives may be awarded.

Background: Section 681.640 explains that incentive payments to youth participants are permitted. The awarding of incentives is a means to motivate, encourage and reward attainment of individual goals directly tied to training activities and work experiences. Incentive awards are not an entitlement, but must be earned. All incentive awards will be subject to the availability of WIOA funds.

TEGL 21-16 indicates that incentives paid with WIOA funds must be connected to recognition of achievement of milestones in the program tied to work experience, education, or training. Such incentives for achievement could include improvements marked by acquisition of a credential or other successful outcomes. Private funds may be used for incentives that WIOA cannot fund. There is no differentiation made between paid and unpaid work experiences.

An incentive payment is a payment to a youth participant for the successful achievement of expected outcomes as defined in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Incentive awards may be non-cash (not redeemable for cash) or cash incentives. This policy outlines procedures for awarding cash and non-cash incentives. The Service provider will provide incentives only to those youth who:

- Are WIOA eligible youth participants
- Are active and in good standing with a program
- Have achieved an outcome listed as a goal within their ISS.

Policy: Each Pee Dee Local Workforce Development Area Youth Contractor must maintain a clear and concise written incentive policy that outlines a uniform and consistent strategy for awarding incentives with WIOA funds. Contractors must ensure that such incentive awards are:

- (a) Tied to the goals of the specific program;

- (b) Outlined in writing before the commencement of the program that may provide incentive payments;
- (c) Align with the local program's organizational policies; and
- (d) Are in accordance with the requirements continued in 2 CFR part 200.

WIOA-funded Incentives may be awarded for the following goal accomplishments or activities and the list is not exhaustive:

- Placement in Education, Employment or Military
- Attainment of Occupational Skills Credential
- Attainment of High School Diploma or Equivalency
- Attainment of WIN Level 4 Assessment (Silver)
- TABE EFL Gains
- Workshop attendance (if the workshops are directly tied to preparation for a work experience or training)
- WorkKeys/WIN skill-level upgrade
- Completion of Work Experience opportunity (includes summer employment opportunities & other employment opportunities available throughout the year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on-the-job training opportunities).

WIOA-funded Incentives may not be awarded for the following:

- Peer referrals to the WIOA youth program
- Workshop Attendance (Incentives cannot be offered simply for attending stand-alone workshops)
- Entertainment, such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment
- Incentives during Follow-up

WIOA Youth Incentives are not intended as emergency assistance, but rather as a compliment to services provided and/or recognition of youth's personal attainment of goals. WIOA youth in need of emergency assistance must be referred to the appropriate service provider.

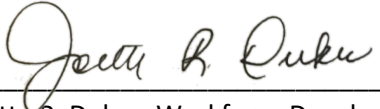
When incentive takes the form of a gift card, gift certificate, check or monetary items, written recognition or receipt of the incentive should be contained as part of the participant's electronic file or official accounting records. In addition, details surrounding the issuance of the incentive should be documented in a case note in SCWOS.

Similar to currency as being a transferrable monetary item, adequate internal controls and safeguards should be installed and considered when purchasing and distributing gift cards, gift certificates and other incentives. An inventory, log, and periodic reconciliation of such items should also be documented and maintained. Lastly, such items should be kept in a secured and locked area.

Action: Contractors are required to adhere to the instructions and guidelines set forth in this policy when awarding youth incentives. Incentives may be a stipend or nonrefundable gift cards provided in exchange for meeting documented specific goals. Contractors are to review and revise current incentive

plans and submit them to the LWDA for approval. The Contractors' policies will be reviewed at least annually.

Inquiries: Questions pertaining to this instruction should be directed to Teresa Jacobs at (843) 669-3138 or t-jacobs@peedeecog.org

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joette R. Dukes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Joette R. Dukes, Workforce Development Director