

UA COSSATOT POWER PROGRAM INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT SERVICES GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

The POWER Program allows for incentive rewards and support services payments to participants. These payments are a way to encourage participant involvement and to reward individuals for achievement of the goals related to employment and education.

This document provides guidance and procedures for assessing needs and providing supportive services to POWER participants. All supportive services are dependent on funding availability, which will be reviewed annually. The current period of funding is March 1, 2025, through February 28, 2026. Prior to March 1, 2026, the Power Director, Grant Manager, and CAO will review and determine the amount of funding available for the upcoming grant cycle.

UA Cossatot will make sure that incentive and support service payments are administered in a manner which ensures equal rewards for equal achievements/activities.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:

For POWER participants, supportive services are available to all registered participants. Supportive services assist the participant with reaching his/her educational and employment goals.

Supportive Services are services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities that further his/her educational goals and/or lead to credentials to enter the workforce. Other supportive services such as medical, uniforms, tools, licenses, and fees, including test fees, may also be provided to POWER participants who show a need and meet eligibility requirements. Supportive Services may be provided through the funding of the SCC POWER grant by the US Department of Labor (DOL).

In accordance with available funding, the following maximum funding limits have been established for participants during the period of March 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026:

- **Nursing Program Students:** A maximum of \$750 per participant. Nursing Program students include individuals officially accepted into the nursing program.
- **Non-Program Students:** A maximum of \$375 per participant. Non-Program students include individuals pursuing a degree in education or taking pre-requisite courses for admission to the Nursing Program.

This policy is subject to change based on funding availability. Any monetary transaction not addressed in this policy will always require management approval with proper documentation.

Program staff will determine a participant's need for supportive services and appropriate resources through an assessment process. The supportive services form must document the supportive services needed to address barriers to a participant's employment goals and how they will be addressed.

Alternatives to POWER-funded supportive services must be sought prior to providing supportive services with POWER funds. Prior to POWER providing a supportive service, program staff must ascertain if community referrals were made, and all other resources were exhausted. This determination must be documented in case notes.

Supportive services are not entitlements and should be provided based on a documented financial assessment and/or individual circumstances, the absence of other resources, and program funds availability. Appropriate documentation is required to receive payments of incentives and support services. The need for such services must be documented in the participant's case notes. All expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, allocable, and allowable. Records must be available to support the awarding or provision of services/expenditures.

PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS:

- 1.) The participant is registered in POWER. The participant may also receive follow-up services and support needed to obtain or retain employment or continue education; and
- 2.) The participant is receiving career or training services as defined in WIOA secs. 134(c)(2) and (3); and
- 3.) Supportive services are necessary to enable continued participation in career or training services; and
- 4.) The participant is unable to obtain similar services from another source (such as Career Pathways or another program). Documentation will be recorded showing all other resources were exhausted.

PROCEDURES TO RECEIVE SUPPORT SERVICES:

1. POWER staff will determine a participant's need for supportive services as a part of the initial and on-going assessment. The supportive service must be related to a career service or training service.
2. POWER staff will determine whether other community resources are available to cover necessary expenses and document this decision in the participant's case notes.
3. POWER staff will submit a Supportive Services Cover Sheet (Attachment A) to the Project Director for approval. The request must include the Participant's name, date of service, vendor's name, and justification for the service, evidence that non-WIOA sources were explored and signature of the requestor.
4. POWER staff must maintain a record of supportive services in AGS Prime for each participant.
5. The Project Director will complete an invoice and submit it to the business office for payment.

6. POWER Coordinator will enter all supportive services on the date the service was provided in the AGS Prime case file. The Coordinator and Project Director will ensure all documentation details are in the program notes.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Assistance provided to POWER participants that will allow individuals to participate in and successfully complete the training provided through the grant, such as access to childcare, transportation, housing, counseling, or uniforms. Case notes will document verification of the need for services as part of participant's plan, such as the need for childcare, transportation assistance, clothing for work experience activity, assistance with utilities, vehicle repair (i.e. tire repair, a new tire, or battery). Requests for reimbursements must be made within 30 days of the allowable purchase. Participants receiving assistance for utility or other bills must submit a receipt showing payment of the bill within two weeks of receiving the assistance check. This receipt must verify that the funds were used specifically for the intended purpose, such as payment for water, electricity, or other eligible services. Documentation must be maintained in the participant's file along with the copy of the original invoice.

- **Transportation Assistance:**

Assistance may be provided for transportation to and from training for participants engaged in classroom training or work-experience learning. The need for transportation assistance must be clearly stated in case notes and will only be paid for actual days attended. Documentation of attendance will be required. The amount of mileage reimbursement will be calculated using the current mileage rate of the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (currently 52 cents) times the daily miles driven from the participant's physical address to the training or work experience site with a \$200 max per month. High school students are eligible only if the district does not provide transportation. See page 5 for policy on minor car repairs.

- **Childcare Assistance**

Childcare costs may be provided for participants engaged in classroom training or participating in work experience. The need for childcare assistance must be clearly documented in case notes. Child(ren) must attend a state licensed day care facility. The rate of payment will be no higher than that charged for other children at the center.

- **Housing**

Housing assistance (rent, mortgage payment, and utilities) is allowable for participants when a housing need is demonstrated as necessary to remain in the training, and the participant is not able to obtain such assistance his/herself and/or/ the assistance is not available through other organizations or sources.

Housing payments must be made to an unrelated party with no conflict of interest and will only be allowed after all referrals have been exhausted. Utility assistance requires documentation from the utility company. The documentation must include the participant's name on the utility bill.

- **Protective Clothing, Tools, Uniforms, Books, Licensing/Testing, Fees, and Equipment**

Assistance may be provided to participants for books, license, test fees, other fees, required equipment and clothing. Clothing includes scrubs, shoes, and clothing needed for interviews or employment.

- **Counseling**

The cost of personal services that will enhance a participant’s completion of training and employability are allowable. This may include employment, financial, individual, family, and drug and alcohol abuse counseling. Personal or emotional problems are outside the scope of services provided by the POWER Project; therefore, referrals to counseling services are critical.

- **Miscellaneous**

Desktops/Laptops/Tablets may be provided when needed/required for completion of approved training. Participants are expected

If funds are available, incentives for test results demonstrating a learned skill, progress in educational training, earned certificate, degree, or credential may be available. Participant signature verifying receipt of incentive as well as a copy of the actual incentive must be maintained.

INCENTIVE REWARDS

An incentive is a reward provided to an enrolled POWER participant for successful participation and achievement of expected outcomes, as outlined in the participant's file. The incentive will be issued in the form of a gift card. The incentive must be linked to an achievement and must be related to training, education, work readiness and or an occupational skills attainment activity that specifically addresses a required POWER element. Such achievements must be documented in the participant’s case notes in AGS Prime.

Incentive based payments for the period of March 1, 2025--February 28, 2026:

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| • Completion of Associate of Science: Education | \$250 | |
| • Completion of Associate of Arts: Teaching | \$250 | |
| • Completion of Associate of Applied Science: Registered Nursing | \$250 | |
| • Completion of Licensed Practical Nursing Technical Certificate | | \$100 |
| • Completion of Teaching Technical Certificate | \$100 | |
| • Completion of Teaching Certificate of Proficiency | \$100 | |
| • Passing NCLEX examination | \$100 | |
| • Passing PRAXIS or paraprofessional examination | \$100 | |
| • Google Educator Level 1 Certification | \$100 | |
| • Completing 24-hour work-based education program | \$264 | |
| • Earning a CNA Credential through the Summer Bridge | \$100 | |
| • Perfect attendance in Education Summer Bridge | \$50 | |
| • Achieving appropriate score to enter Comp 1 in Summer Bridge | \$50 | |
| • Achieving appropriate score to enter Col Algebra in Summer Bridge | \$50 | |

Policy on Minor Car Repairs for Transportation Assistance

Purpose: To ensure that federal funds are used responsibly to address transportation barriers for students, enabling them to attend classes without unnecessary expenditures.

Eligible Repairs: Federal grant funds may be used for the following repairs and expenses, deemed essential for a student's ability to attend classes:

- Gasoline for travel to and from class.
- Battery replacement.
- Tire replacement or repair (up to \$175 per tire).
- Repairs to essential car systems (e.g., brakes, engine, transmission) that directly impact the vehicle's ability to function safely and reliably.

Ineligible Repairs: The following repairs and expenses are not considered essential and, therefore, do not qualify for federal grant funds:

- Cosmetic repairs (e.g., paint jobs, interior detailing, bodywork not related to safety).
- Upgrades or enhancements to the vehicle (e.g., new stereo systems, luxury features).
- Non-essential repairs (e.g., fixing minor dents that do not affect vehicle safety or performance).
- Routine maintenance that does not address a critical transportation barrier (e.g., oil changes, tire rotations).

Request Process: Students seeking assistance with car repairs must submit a detailed request outlining the nature of the issue and its impact on their ability to attend classes. Requests should include:

- A description of the problem.
- An estimate from a certified mechanic specifying the necessary repairs.
- Justification of how the repair directly affects the student's ability to attend classes.

Approval Criteria: Requests will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- **Necessity:** The repair must be essential for the student's ability to attend classes.
- **Safety:** The repair must address a safety concern that prevents the vehicle from being driven.
- **Impact:** The repair must have a direct impact on the student's ability to travel to and from class.

Review and Approval: All repair requests will be reviewed by the director to ensure compliance with this policy. This decision will be final.

Limits on Approved Purchases

The following limits apply to various purchases covered by the grant. These limits are set to ensure that funds are used effectively and appropriately. Participants will be reimbursed up to the specified limit for each category. The following are the current purchase limits:

- **Gas:** Up to \$200 per month for fuel-related expenses.
- **Nursing Shoes:** Up to \$85 for the purchase of approved nursing shoes.
- **Scrubs:** Up to \$150 for the purchase of medical scrubs.
- **Car Tires:** Up to \$175 per tire, limited to two tires within a six-month period.
- **Minor Car Repairs:** Up to \$250 for eligible minor car repairs.

Participants must provide appropriate receipts and/or documentation for all purchases, and any amounts exceeding these limits will not be reimbursed.

Procedure History:

September 24, 2024 Chancellor’s Cabinet approved initial policy

April 21, 2025 Chancellor’s Cabinet approved amended policy – updated annual caps, clarification of policy and procedures, updated limits for services, additional incentives added
