
GST MICHIGAN WORKS! POLICY 18-10 Change 6

TO: GST Michigan Works! Service Providers and Agency Staff

FROM: Jody Kerbyson, CEO

SUBJECT: The Connection: BRN Supportive Services

EFFECTIVE: January 2, 2020

PROGRAMS: The Connection: BRN Program

REFERENCES: Michigan Works! System Plan

RESCISSIONS: PI 18-10 change 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

BACKGROUND: Supportive Services are offered to participants facing hardships that would directly prohibit their success toward long-term employment and self-sufficiency. The key to supportive services is to provide temporary support that enables participants to retain employment and develop a plan of self-sufficiency moving forward. All references to CV/Community Ventures have been removed from policy.

POLICY:

Service Providers shall adhere to the limitations established for the provision of supportive services. Any supportive service provided to remove a barrier(s) to enable an individual to participate in program activities, including retention, shall be documented in the Management Information System (OMIS) in the Supportive Service area. A participant is considered enrolled once he/she appears on the OMIS and is participating in the BRN program.

Supportive services may be provided when necessary to eliminate employment barriers. Alternative sources must be explored prior to any supportive service authorization. Under no circumstance may a supportive service be provided if the supportive service is readily available in a timely manner from another source. Supportive services may be identified during the intake/assessment process and entered onto the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Through case management practices, and/or during employment activities, case notes should be updated to reflect supportive services that become identified. Supportive services authorized by contracted service providers will be in accordance with this policy issuance, unless specific requirements of other assistance programs may be conflictive. However, single funding source limitations may not be exceeded with the aggregate of multiple funding sources.

The CEO of GST Michigan Works! or her/his designee may grant waivers to specific supportive services limitations and/or prohibitions.

The Connection: BRN Support Services Policy continued

Limits on individual support services addressed in this policy will be in effect. The participant, along with their Success Coach, must determine supportive services priorities for the best use of supportive service dollars.

Support Services may begin from the date a participant is determined eligible for the BRN program and will conclude the earlier of 12 months or the grant end date of September 30, 2020.

Acceptable accounting procedures, including procurement requirements, shall be used in the provision of supportive services.

NOTE: Supportive Services must be discontinued immediately if a participant voluntarily quits a job or is fired due to negative actions on the part of participant.

Eligible Service Categories:

AUTOMOBILE PURCHASE

Auto Purchase Assistance (\$4,000 per lifetime)

Up to \$4,000 may be authorized toward the purchase of an automobile if it will be used as the participant's primary means of transportation for employment even if public transportation is available. In addition, the \$4,000 may be used towards the purchase of an affordable vehicle demonstrated through a budget sheet. Payment may be authorized for a licensed mechanic's inspection in addition to the \$4,000 automobile purchase authorization. Automobile purchase is limited to once in a client's lifetime.

Required Documentation

The vehicle purchase must be approved in advance. Before authorization of a vehicle purchase can occur, the following conditions must be met:

1. The participant must be active in employment for at least 90 days, and be in good standing with the employer,
2. Participant must have a valid driver's license,
3. The vehicle must be insured and registered in the participants name,
4. The cost of the vehicle must not exceed the vehicles retail value,
5. A licensed mechanic must verify the vehicle is safe and roadworthy,
6. All documentation must be maintained in the participant file.
7. Budget showing the participant can afford car insurance, tags, registration, etc., to be completed with success coach.
8. Secretary of State verification

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered/insured in the name of the participant. Furthermore, automobiles cannot be purchased from participant's immediate family members, (father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter). The participant is not allowed to sell the vehicle while enrolled in the BRN program.

GST Michigan Works! and Service Provider employees are prohibited from selling vehicles to participants that will be purchased using supportive services funds.

AUTO-RELATED EXPENSES

Automobile Repairs (\$900/12-month time period)

Automobile repairs may be authorized up to \$900 per participant in any 12-month period. The vehicle must be the participant's primary means of transportation for employment. The cost of the repairs must not exceed the vehicle's retail value. Common allowable repairs are: brakes (rotors/pads), tires, fuel pumps, engine transmission, radiator, shocks, etc. This funding is not allowed for regular maintenance, such as oil change, lubrication, etc.

Required Documentation

The following documentation is required from the participant prior to authorization and approval of car repairs:

1. Copy of vehicle title and vehicle registration, both must be in the participants name,
2. Copy of participant's valid driver's license,
3. Proof of current insurance,
4. Kelly Blue book value,
5. A minimum of one estimate from certified mechanics and
6. Receipt required.

All documentation must be current to be considered valid; no expired documents may be accepted. All repairs are expected to make the vehicle safe and roadworthy.

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered and insured in the name of the participant.

Automobile Insurance (\$2,000/lifetime maximum)

Automobile insurance may be provided to eligible participants. The intent of providing automobile insurance is to assist with the first 1 to 3 months of coverage. A lifetime maximum of \$2,000 may be used for coverage.

Required Documentation

The following documentation is required from the participant prior to authorization and approval of car insurance.

1. Copy of vehicle title and vehicle registration, both must be in the participants name,
2. Copy of participant's valid driver's license,
3. A minimum of two estimates from insurance companies; and
4. Receipt required.

CLOTHING (\$500.00/12-month limit/\$300.00 for Steel Toed Boots)

A maximum of \$500 in clothing supportive services may be provided to participants per 12-month period, excluding steel toed boots. Allowable items include clothing for work, work gloves, hard hats, personal safety items, protective/special clothing, uniforms, and other clothing as needed.

The Service Provider may also determine the need for the replacement of previously authorized clothing.

Steel Toed Boots – Participants may be reimbursed for 2 pairs of steel toed boots per calendar year. The reimbursement cannot exceed \$150.00 per pair.

The Connection: BRN Support Services Policy continued

Required Documentation

The following documentation is required from the participant prior to authorization:

1. Employment verification (paycheck stub, employer letter),
2. Case note describing need/justification for clothing, and
3. Receipt required.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

Participants with children 12 years of age or younger may receive childcare assistance. Participants must apply for childcare assistance through Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The participant must provide a determination letter from DHHS to the Success Coach. The childcare assistance will be provided as a gap coverage until the DHHS services begin. Co-payments can be made to cover any cost beyond the DHHS limit not to exceed the hourly rates listed below. Child care assistant payments may not exceed six (6) months.

Required Documentation

The following documentation is required prior to receiving childcare reimbursement:

1. Childcare reimbursement form including the name, phone number and address of the daycare provider and must be signed by the participant and the child care provider,
2. Current payroll stub, and
3. Birth certificate of each child or court documents.

In addition:

- The childcare provider must be at least 18 years of age,
- Childcare provided by the participant's immediate family is not allowable. "Immediate Family" is defined as the child's father, mother or sibling residing in the same household; or any other adult living in the same household,
- Childcare hours must not exceed two (2) hour over the actual length of employment. The additional hours are to be used for travel time to and from work,
- Payments will not be authorized for time children are attending school, pre-school, Head Start or similar programs,
- The participant must provide a determination letter from DHHS to the Success Coach, and
- Letter from the daycare provider stating what their enrollment and hourly fees are and how many hours the child is expected to be in daycare.

Childcare rates are as follows:

LICENSED CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Infants (2 ½ years of age or younger) \$3.00/hour

Youth (Older than 2 ½ years of age) \$2.50/hour

TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

Allowances for public transportation or private automobile mileage reimbursement may be provided.

Public transportation allowances or private automobile mileage reimbursement may only continue to be provided to those participants who are employed and working. Transportation allowances include traveling to and from the participant's home to his/her employment site.

Private Mileage Reimbursement

Private transportation reimbursement will be paid at the Federal **IRS** business rate of .575 cents/mile. Reimbursement payments will be made directly to a participant and cannot exceed \$200.00 per week and cannot exceed 12 months of reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement must be submitted at least biweekly by the participant. Reimbursement will not be given for mileage costs incurred more than 30 days prior to submittal date.

The 1st month will be reimbursed with weekly gas cards. These cards will be figured at the \$.575 per mileage rate based on verified mileage (MapQuest) completed by Success Coach.

The remaining possible 11 months of reimbursement will be reimbursed in the form of a mileage check.

Required Documentation - Mileage

Each participant must provide the following information prior to receiving mileage reimbursement:

1. Participant mileage reimbursement form, and
2. Copies of check stubs/timesheets, or employer verification form.

Required Documentation – Gas Cards

1. An accurate record of gas cards numbered, with names and dates assigned will be maintained by the service providers. Participant signature required verifying receipt of gas card.
2. Case Notes in OMIS updated to document the need and nature of the emergency.

Public Transportation

Bus Passes –BRN participants may receive bus passes utilizing MTA, SA TA, Thumb Body Express, GLTA, Sanilac transportation and Thumb Transit bus system during employment for up to 12 months.

Required Documentation

Each participant must provide the following information prior to receiving bus pass:

1. The bus pass will be based on verified mileage (MapQuest) completed by the Success Coach or the Retention Manager.
2. Copies of check stubs or employer verification form.

RENT/UTILITY EXPENSE ASSISTANCE

Participants may apply for Rent and Utility expense assistance.

1. If a participant is being evicted from current housing, before assistance will be given, the participant must apply to DHHS for State of Emergency Relief (SER) assistance.
2. If the participant is homeless or moving out of current housing, they do not have to apply to DHHS.

Deposits

The participant must provide to the Success Coach the Decision notice from DHHS. The BRN program may pay the copayment if housing is deemed affordable by DHHS. This is a onetime per lifetime payment.

Rent

The participant must provide to the Success Coach the Decision notice from DHHS. The BRN program may pay up to one month's rent if housing is deemed affordable by DHHS. The participant must attend a budgeting session with the Success Coach to determine if rent assistance is allowable. This is a onetime per lifetime payment.

Utilities

The participant must provide to the Success Coach the Decision notice from DHHS during critical months. If the participant is a CARE recipient, they are not eligible for assistance. The participant must attend a budgeting session with the Success Coach. In addition, the participant must have documentation of previous payments. One-time BRN payments for utilities (heat, electricity and water) will not exceed \$500.00 each.

RELOCATION EXPENSES (\$1,500/per move)

A moving expense allowance for participants who have obtained verified employment at a location outside commuting distance (50 miles) from their home may be provided. Allowable moving expenses, and specific requirements for each expense, are as follows:

1. A letter verifying employment must be obtained from the employer.
2. Pre-location expenses may be paid (coordination of details of the move beforehand, as well as, the actual moving plan). Receipts must be provided.
3. Trailer or truck rental requirements and provisions:
 - a. A professional moving company must be used, and
 - b. A minimum of two documented quotes should be obtained from companies.
4. Rental of moving equipment, such as dollies.
5. Mileage costs to drive to the new residence may be reimbursed at .15 per mile.
6. Receipts must be submitted for all expenses. Only costs deemed to be reasonable would be reimbursed.
7. The security deposit and first month's rent may be covered.
8. Total reimbursements for moving expenses may not exceed \$1,500.00.

In addition, moving expenses are available once during a participant's BRN eligibility period.

Required Documentation

1. A letter verifying employment must be obtained from the employer.
2. A minimum of two estimates from moving companies.
3. Receipts required.

The Connection: BRN Support Services Policy continued

TOOLS/JOB SPECIFIC SUPPLIES (\$500.00)

Service providers may pay for tools/job specific supplies determined necessary to perform specific employment activities. The \$500 limit can only be used once in a lifetime.

Required Documentation

1. Case notes in OMIS updated to document the need for tools/job specific items as related to employment.
2. Letter stating required tools (on employer/institution letterhead);
3. A minimum of one quote indicating cost/store contact information*; and
4. Receipt required.

*Proper documentation must be maintained in the participant's file.

OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Other available supportive services may available and will be determined on an individual basis. Document need of supportive service must be in case notes and receipts are required.

VOUCHERS & VENDOR CHECKS

All vouchers issued to participants must include the participant's and vendor's name. This requires a participant signature and presentation of ID when voucher(s) are redeemed.

EXCLUSIONS

GST supportive services funds cannot be applied to the following: defaulted loans, fines, penalties, parking tickets, moving infractions, etc.

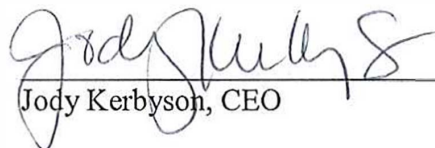
ACTION

Service Providers shall take the appropriate actions necessary to implement the directives of this policy issuance. Service Provider officials shall ensure the information contained in this policy is disseminated to all appropriate staff.

INQUIRES:

Questions regarding this policy issuance should be directed to Cindy Thornthwaite 810-233-5974 extension 352.

SIGNED:


Jody Kerbyson, CEO

1/7/20
Date