

## **Subject: Incentive Payments for State EcSA Participants**

**Policy No: 2023-03**

**Effective Date: 1/30/24**

**Revised: 7/29/2024**

### **Purpose:**

In recognition of the work that Washington's Workforce Development system did to alleviate poverty through the original Economic Security for All (EcSA) initiative, the state is making continued investments that are allocated to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to expand on the work currently done by local EcSA programs funded by the Governor's WIOA statewide activities funds. Because this new allocation is state funded, these new resources provide an unprecedented opportunity to further expand the services provided by Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC) to improve workforce outcomes and reduce poverty across Benton and Franklin counties.

### **Background:**

State EcSA participants are eligible to receive incentive payments. This financial support will be utilized and provided in recognition and achievement of milestones associated with the state EcSA program and activities. This policy establishes the terms, conditions, requirements and responsibilities of subrecipients to support EcSA work with Community Reinvestment Funds (also referred to as EcSA Career Accelerator Incentives Funds).

## **Operational Procedure**

### **A. Eligible EcSA Participants**

All State EcSA participants receiving funding through State EcSA Career Accelerator Incentives Funds must be determined eligible based on the guidelines outlined in WIN 0129 and enrolled as participants in the State EcSA program in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) management system or its successor.

Participants may receive incentives from the EcSA Career Accelerator when enrolled whether they are above or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.

The EcSA Career Accelerator's focus is supporting Black, Tribal, and Latino communities, and areas should implement outreach strategies to reach these populations. However, anyone who is eligible may be enrolled in State EcSA and receive assistance from the EcSA Career Accelerator.

### **B. Incentive Payments to EcSA Participants**

State EcSA Career Accelerator Incentives Funding provides financial support payments of \$1,000 per month in incentives to State EcSA participants receiving career development assistance to aid them in achieving suitable employment, which provides a self-sufficient wage. Subrecipients must ensure a large proportion are for Black, Tribal, and Latinx Participants.

- There is no limit on how many months a customer may receive incentives from the EcSA Career Accelerator program.
- Upon receiving an initial incentive from EcSA Career Accelerator, participants must continue to receive them monthly while meeting eligibility requirements for as long as they are enrolled in the program and funding is available for the Career Accelerator program.
- Staff must take steps while working with participants to assess other benefits received and determine what impact, if any, receipt of EcSA Career Accelerator incentives will have on those benefits. After identifying potential issues, the customer and staff must discuss how to address any conflicts.
- Incentives received under the EcSA Career Accelerator program do not have any impact on eligibility for any other incentives, EcSA or otherwise. Participants may still receive incentive payments from State EcSA if they are eligible for them as part of their career plan and if local area provides them in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State EcSA program.

### **C. Examples of milestones associated with State EcSA program and activities but not limited to:**

- Job readiness activities ie: resume development, workshop completion, job search activities
- Educational activities ie: progress in GED attainment, applying to college, completing FAFSA
- Satisfactory progress or completion of work experience or training services, including obtainment of job skills as specified in the training plan.
- Achieving a recognized credential

- Completion of WIOA performance achievements
- Completion of EcSA performance achievements
- Becoming Employed

#### **D. Documentation and Data Entry Requirements**

All state EcSA participants enrolled in a training or education activity must develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) with staff. The IEP must be included in the participant's file and updated monthly to keep track of and justify the payment of incentives, which include but are not limited to:

- Satisfactory progress in employment, training or education activities as defined in their IEP for each month of enrollment. If on academic break (i.e. summer quarter), incentives may still be earned based on what is outlined in their IEP. The progress report must indicate what benchmarks or activities are expected.
- Completion of additional monthly State EcSA activities outlined in their IEP.

Monthly progress reports in the ETO (or its successor) training activity touchpoint will indicate whether a state EcSA participant received an incentive payment and, if not, the reasons for not receiving an incentive payment in a given month. These incentives may only be awarded to state EcSA participants for making satisfactory progress in carrying out the career plan developed with the staff. Monthly progress must be recorded in the activity touchpoint via case note.

At the time of enrollment, State EcSA participants shall be informed that incentives are awarded for satisfactory progress in carrying out the career plan. Subrecipients **may use** the Acknowledgement Form (Attachment A) to inform the participant of the incentive program while developing their IEP. Participants who were previously enrolled in state EcSA are eligible to receive incentive and shall also be informed of the incentives and what that they can be awarded for satisfactory progress in the career plans.

**Data entry requirements** – Incentive payments are not services but, rather, financial transactions. Subrecipient must document incentive payments to State EcSA by recording in case notes, and participant files the milestone, including attainment of unsubsidized employment, achieved along with the incentive amount paid for the achievement. Case notes shall document the justification for receiving an incentive payment and details of the incentive provided, and expenditure records of incentive payments must be uploaded in the participant file.

#### **E. Additional Information**

- Subrecipients should be aware that the number of participants served from these target populations is being tracked in order to provide regular reports to the Washington State Department of Commerce and the Governor's Office of Equity. Because of this, proper data entry concerning customer demographics is especially vital for this program.
- Incentive payments may not be awarded to participants enrolled in WIOA programs or activities, to include Federal EcSA, unless they are co-enrolled in state EcSA and meeting training plan expectations. If co-enrolled, the training or education activity may be funded by either WIOA or state EcSA.

## **F. Action Required**

Subrecipients of State EcSA Community Reinvestment funding must have procedures in place that govern the award of incentive payments to State EcSA Participants according to the requirements in this policy for the purpose of local, state, and federal monitoring and audits.

Incentive payments are considered taxable non-wage related income because of this, subrecipient must understand their responsibilities and the implications of such services.

## **G. Definitions**

**Self-Sufficiency for the EcSA Program:** is defined as the Attainment of 100% of individualized household Income Adequacy, as established through use of the UW Self-Sufficiency Calculator.

## **H. References**

[WIN 0129](#)

## Attachment A

### State EcSA Career Accelerator Incentives Agreement (to be completed once with each participant)

State EcSA Community Reinvestment funding provides financial support payments of \$1,000 per month in incentives to State EcSA participants receiving career development assistance.

To **qualify** for an Incentive, you must:

- Meet monthly with staff to review your Individual Employment Plan (IEP).
- Meet satisfactory progress in employment, training, or education activities as defined in your IEP.
- Complete activities outlined in your IEP.

#### Payments

State EcSA Career Accelerator Incentives program provides \$1,000 per month to State EcSA participants who are making satisfactory progress in carrying out their career plan.

**Important note:** Incentives are considered taxable non-wage-related income a 1099-MISC form will be sent to you at year end.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ *agree to the above-mentioned Incentive Guidelines.*

**Participant Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_