



David A. Paterson, Governor

M. Patricia Smith, Commissioner

## NEW YORK STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM TECHNICAL ADVISORY

### Workforce Development System Technical Advisory #09-03

**TO:** Workforce Development Community

**DATE:** January 26, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Supportive Services - Availability of State Level Funds for Gas Cards

#### ***Background***

Section 663.800 of the WIA Rules and Regulations allows for the Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) to pay transportation costs for eligible participants while they are receiving core, intensive or training services. Due to the economic conditions, the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL), in conjunction with the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB), will be issuing state level funds to the local areas in order for them to provide gas cards to participants who are in need of them, particularly for those LWIAs who lack a comprehensive mass transit system and/or have significant rural based populations. Those LWIAs eligible for these funds are Counties with Percent Rural Population of 33.3% or more on the 2000 County Typology as identified in the "Socioeconomic Trends and Well-Being Indicators in New York State, 1950-2000." (This would include Oneida, Cayuga, Fulton, Genesee, Madison, Montgomery, Ontario, Oswego, Wayne, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Clinton, Cortland, Jefferson, Otsego, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Tompkins, Ulster, Warren, Columbia, Greene, Herkimer, Livingston, Orleans, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga, Washington, Wyoming, Yates, Allegany, Chenango, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Lewis and Sullivan).

#### ***Action***

Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs), on behalf of the Local Chief Elected Official and the Local Workforce Investment Board, may request funds from NYSDOL. The state is making available \$250,000 statewide, to be divided equally among all areas that apply for these funds and meet the requirements below.

The grant period is March 2, 2009, through June 30, 2009. The continuation of this State Level Initiative will be subject to availability of funds and outcomes.

#### **Actions Required by Local Areas:**

- Local areas who wish to be considered for this initiative must send an email to:
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Paul Miller, Room 290, Building #12, State Office Building Campus, Albany, New York 12240, (email address: [paul.miller@labor.state.ny.us](mailto:paul.miller@labor.state.ny.us)) by no later than January 30, 2009, indicating their interest in these funds and certifying that the local workforce area will develop policies for determining eligibility, distribution and control of these cards and funds. It is anticipated that an initial determination by the Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions (DEWS), on behalf of NYSDOL, will be forthcoming within 72 hours of receipt of the letter of intent and certification.

- Upon receipt of the initial determination by DEWS, the LWIAs will develop the specific local policies, procedures and controls for the administration of the gas card initiative. These local policies, procedures and controls must be established by no later than February 20, 2009 and the initiative must be implemented by no later than March 2, 2009.
- Upon completion of local policies, procedures and controls, the LWIA will so notify Mr. Miller by email by no later than February 20, 2009, including an assurance statement that policies, procedures and controls will comply with WIA Rules and Regulations and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, and that the cards must only be used for WIA-eligible purposes.

Upon receipt of all required certifications and assurances, we will expedite the issuance of the NOA to the local areas.

### **Policy Considerations**

Several issues that you might want to consider when developing your policy include but are not limited to the following:

- The safeguarding of these cards prior to their distribution. Essentially, these cards are the same as cash. The LWIA will also be responsible and accountable for the disbursement and monitoring of the use of these resources.
- Documentation, to ensure that only eligible participants who meet specific criteria for consideration for receiving these cards /benefits, is provided and maintained on file. The LWIA will develop criteria for state review that is consistent with their priority of services strategies including how these cards will be distributed to eligible recipients, the criteria for determining the amount of the gas card, as well as guidelines on the use of these cards. For example, will the gas cards be just for transportation costs to/from the workplace, the One-Stop Center for services, job search, or job fairs?
- The establishment of specific eligibility guidelines to avoid the possibility of distributing these cards in an inconsistent manner.
- Procedures to insure that your local area does not procure more of these cards than can be easily used over a one month period since these cards in most cases are non-refundable.

*NYSDOL will subsequently monitor the disbursement of the gas cards and review the developed policies, procedures and controls, to ensure compliance, allowability and reasonableness of the costs.*

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