



David A. Paterson, Governor

M. Patricia Smith, Commissioner

NEW YORK STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM TECHNICAL ADVISORY

Workforce Development System Technical Advisory #09-10

TO: Workforce Development Community

DATE: April 8, 2009

SUBJECT: Availability of State Level Funds for Transportation Assistance in Non-Rural Areas

Background

Sections 663.800 and 664.440 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 WIA funded services. Due to current economic conditions, the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL), in conjunction with the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board, will be issuing state level funds to the local areas with counties that did not qualify under Technical Advisory #09-03 in order for them to provide transportation assistance to participants who are in need. (This would include Albany, Bronx, Broome, Chemung, Dutchess, Erie, Kings, Monroe, Nassau, New York, Niagara, Onondaga, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Rensselaer, Richmond, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Suffolk and Westchester counties).

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 \$6,250 per **county** listed above that apply for these funds and meet the requirements below. In the case of Westchester, Yonkers, Oyster Bay, and Hempstead, this means each of these **local areas** will have \$6,250 available to them.

These funds may be used for purchase of gas cards, swiper cards, mileage reimbursement or public transportation reimbursement, including rail, ferry, bus or subway fares, as appropriate for the area.

The grant period is May 1, 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:

Paul Miller, Room 290, Building #12, State Office Building Campus, Albany, New York

12240, (email address: paul.miller@labor.state.ny.us), with copies to both State Program and FOTA representatives, by no later than April 15, 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 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 3 business days 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 transportation assistance initiative. These local policies, procedures and controls must be established by no later than April 23, 2009 and the initiative must be implemented by no later than May 1, 2009.
- Upon completion of local policies, procedures and controls, the LWIA will so notify Mr. Miller by email by no later than April 23, 2009, with a statement of assurance that policies, procedures and controls will comply with WIA Rules and Regulations and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, and that the funds 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:

- Safeguard any cards or tokens prior to their distribution. Essentially, cards and tokens are the same as cash. The LWIA will also be responsible and accountable for the disbursement and monitoring of the use of these resources.
- Establish specific eligibility guidelines to ensure that transportation funds are distributed in a consistent manner.
- Establish procedures for tracking reimbursements to avoid vouchers being submitted that total an amount greater than the county's allocation of \$6,250 during the grant period.
- Develop criteria for State review consistent with priority of services strategies, including a method by which funds will be distributed to eligible recipients, and appropriate denominations for the cards determined (for example, will the funds be used for transportation costs **only** to and from the workplace, the One-Stop Center for services, training, and/or for job search or job fairs ?).
- Provide and maintain appropriate documentation to show that only eligible WIA participants who meet specific criteria receive the transportation funds/benefits.

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