

APRIL 12, 2022

TO: All Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area NEXTGEN **Service Providers**

SUBJECT: NEXTGEN Incentive Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

EXPIRATION DATE: Indefinite

CONTACT: Workforce Development Program Administrator

Wendy Johnson

Wendy Johnson
Workforce Development Director

Serving Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties

The Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

NEXTGEN INCENTIVE POLICY

PURPOSE: To issue guidelines for awarding non-cash incentives to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act (WIOA) Youth participants for recognition and achievement in WIOA related activities. *To rescind Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area NEXTGEN Incentive Policy Statement dated November 10, 2021.*

BACKGROUND: The WIOA allows for youth engaged in a WIOA Title I Youth (referred to as NEXTGEN) funded program to be awarded incentives for recognition and achievement in NEXTGEN related activities. The Department of Labor has included the referenced to 2 CFR 200 to emphasize that while incentive payments are allowable under WIOA, the incentives must be in compliance with the requirements in 2 CFR 200. For example, federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs. Therefore, incentives may not include movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment. Additionally, under 2 CFR 200 there are requirements related to internal controls to safe guard cash, which also apply to safe guarding gift cards, which are essentially cash.

This policy is designed to reward NEXTGEN participants for academic achievement and participation in NEXTGEN program activities. The awarding of incentives is a means to encourage attainment of individual goals that leads to the completion of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, an occupational skills credential, a Career Readiness Certificate, or other programmatic outcomes.

A recognized occupational credential must be received from a recognized educational institution that provides the certification. Examples of a recognized credential may include: Certified Nursing Assistant, Welding Certification, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Certified Logistics Technician, etc.

PROCEDURE: 1) NEXTGEN activity (Year-end, graduation, quarterly incentive events) be expected/quoted to exceed the cost of \$250.00, the NEXTGEN Activity Request Form (Attachment A) should be submitted to the Workforce Development Administrator or Workforce Development Director for prior approval.

The WPWDA WIOA Title I **Service Provider(s)** must provide a sign-in sheet for the NEXTGEN participant and WIOA staff who attend any NEXTGEN incentive activities. The WPWDA must have documentation of the NEXTGEN participant and staff who attend for financial monitoring purposes. The NEXTGEN Incentive Documentation Form (Attachment B) should be completed and submitted with the Expenditure Report for the month of the event.

2) Incentives (gift cards) may be provided to increase participant engagement and achievement, leading to elevated program performance. The outcomes of the incentive program include:

- Providing motivation in setting specific and measureable goals
- Rewarding achievement
- Building pride and self-esteem through successful outcomes.

An incentive is a payment to an ENROLLED participant for successful participation and achievement of expected outcomes. The incentive must be linked to an achievement and must be tied to training and education, work readiness skills and/or an occupational skills attainment goal. The attainment must be documented in the participant's file as the basis for an incentive payment.

Incentives may be awarded for the following goal accomplishments or activities:

- Completion of a Secondary Credential
- Completion of a High School Equivalency or Adult High School Diploma
- Measureable Skills Gain for Secondary Progress
- Student Leadership Activities
- Working Smart Completion

The NEXTGEN Incentive Documentation Form (Attachment B) must be completed and signed by the participant including the date issued. If the form is mailed, it must include a self-addressed stamped envelope to return to the Career Advisor before the card is issued.

The form will be uploaded into nworks.gov and the original will go into the incentive file to submit with the monthly expenditure report.

Examples of Incentives include:

Completion of high school diploma or equivalent	\$100
Completion of occupational certificate	\$100
Attainment of a Measureable Skills Gain for Secondary	\$ 50
Student Leadership Activity Completion	\$ 50

Controls are in place for the gift cards. Gift cards are purchased as needed. Career Advisors send a request for the incentive (gift card) to the Program Manager. The Program Manager requests the check in the required amount from the corporate office and then purchases the gift cards for those participants who earned them. The Program Manager logs the gift cards and distributes them to the Career Advisors who then completes the NEXTGEN Incentive Documentation Form (Attachment B) as stated above. Should any incentives not be claimed by a

participant(s), the gift card is returned to the Program Manager and is locked up until it is picked up or reissued.

NOTE: IT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED TO SPEND FEDERAL FUNDS ON ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES OR GIFT CARDS FOR VENUES WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE IS ENTERTAINMENT.

**Western Piedmont Workforce Development
NEXTGEN Activity Request Form**

Activity Title: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

Description of Activity:

Number of Students Attending: _____

Cost per student: _____

Purpose of Activity:

Approved _____ Not Approved _____

WPWDA Program Administrator or WPWDA Director Signature

Date

Additional Information Required:

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ACTIVITIES OR GIFT CARDS FOR VENUES WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE IS
ENTERTAINMENT.**

**Western Piedmont Workforce Development
NEXTGEN Incentive Documentation Form**

Participant Name: _____

Participant's NCWorks State ID#: _____ Program/Location: _____

Incentive Received (Please list totals): _____

Reason for Incentive: _____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Career Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

INSERT COPY OF GIFT CARD FRONT AND BACK BELOW:






NEXTGEN Incentive Policy - Final - 4-12-22

Final Audit Report

2022-04-05

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