


**MAY 2, 2022**

**TO:** All Western Piedmont Workforce Development Title I **Service Providers**  
**SUBJECT:** Finish Line Grant – Needs Related Payments Policy  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately  
**EXPIRATION DATE:** Indefinite  
**CONTACT:** Workforce Development Program Administrator



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Donna Gilbert  
Interim Workforce Development Director

## FINISH LINE GRANT - NEEDS RELATED PAYMENTS POLICY

**PURPOSE:** To provide guidance to Western Piedmont Workforce Development NCWorks Career Center Staff/Community College Partners to determine the appropriate use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Funds for Emergency Assistance through the Finish Line Grant. *To rescind WPWDA Finish Line Grant – Needs Related Payments Policy dated October 11, 2021.*

**BACKGROUND:** Governor Cooper has announced the Finish Line Grant program to help community college students who face unforeseen financial emergencies complete their training. The program leverages \$7 million in federal WIOA funds to help students pay for financial emergencies that students may face through no fault of their own. Grants are available for the 2019-2020 school year and students who have a demonstrated need may receive a maximum of \$1,000 per semester. WIOA funds allow for the provision of financial assistance to cover unforeseen emergency expenses. These may include, but are not limited to, course materials, housing, medical needs, dependent care, or other financial emergencies that may arise.

**PROCEDURE:** Subject to Finish Line Grant funding availability, the maximum amount of emergency assistance is not to exceed \$1000 per semester for no more than 2 semesters. To qualify for the Finish Line Grant, the student must have 50% or more of a WDB-approved training program as noted in the most recent *Career Pathways Training Options* publication and be meeting satisfactory progress through their education program. The Western Piedmont Workforce Development Finish Line Grant Expenditures (Attachment A) outlines allowable expenditures and those which are not allowed under the Finish Line Grant.

The steps below should be followed when requesting a Finish Line Grant.

1. Student should inquire about the Finish Line grant at the Financial Aid/Foundation office of the college which they are attending. Once community college staff confirm that the student has completed 50% or more of a WDB-approved training program as noted in the most recent *Career Pathways Training Options* publication and has satisfactory grades for said program, they will receive a Western Piedmont Workforce Development Finish Line Grant Emergency Aid Application (Attachment B) and list of required eligibility documents. They will then be referred to the NCWorks Career Center to speak to a Career Advisor.
2. The student should complete the application and ensure that they have required documents when they meet with the Career Advisor. (Social Security Card and documents verifying residency, citizenship, veteran status, and selective service where applicable).

3. Student must present documentation of the emergency need and any supporting documents: invoice for incident, service or materials (medical expense, course materials, etc), estimate of required work (car repair), child or elder care cost document, etc. In the instance where there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party payer involved, the Western Piedmont Workforce Development WIOA Agreement with 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer (Attachment C) must be completed.
4. A new Western Piedmont Workforce Development Finish Line Grant Emergency Aid Application (Attachment B) must be completed for each emergency when requesting Finish Line Grant assistance. There should be an emergency event for each grant issued. An emergency cannot carry on for several months.
5. The reason for the emergency need of Finish Line Grant funds must be clearly documented in a case note in NCWorks. This case note should include the reason (source) that caused the emergency financial need and the resulting financial payments being requested.
6. The student must have an emergency to receive a gas card. Gas cards cannot be given monthly without an emergency to go along with each one. Gas cards will be issued 1 – 2 months depending on the emergency and the lingering effects of the emergency.
7. Student must present either a copy of their Program Evaluation (curriculum) or letter/email from the instructor (continuing education) showing that they are progressing satisfactorily in their training.
8. Once eligibility is determined, the Career Advisor will enroll the student into the NCWorks Case Management program. As a recipient of the Finish Line Grant and enrolled NCWorks participant, the student must maintain regular contact with their Career Advisor. They are required to provide documentation of attendance and successful completion of their training program and provide employment information once they obtain employment as a recipient of Finish Line Grant Funding.
9. The Workforce Administrator will email the Finish Line Grant contact at the college to inform them of enrollment and approval of Finish Line Grant funds.

## **Western Piedmont Workforce Development Finish Line Grant Expenditures**

Finish Line Grant expenditures fall under the heading of supportive services in Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I. see WIOA sec. 3(59) and secs. 134(d)(2) and (3). Supportive services are services that are necessary to enable individuals to participate in WIOA authorized activities.

A key principle in WIOA is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) with the authority to make policy and administrative decisions and the flexibility to tailor the public workforce system to the needs of the local community. To ensure maximum flexibility, the regulations provide Local WDBs the discretion to provide the supportive services they deem appropriate subject to the limited conditions prescribed by WIOA. Decisions about the provision of Finish Line Grant funds, including the duration, timing, and type, are made by the Local WDB.

These expenditures must be reasonable, allowable, necessary, and address a financial need that will enable the student to continue training. Care must be given to be sure that the expenditure solves a short-term problem and not simply applies a “down payment” on a chronic financial problem. All efforts should be made to disburse the grant funds to the provider of a service, instead of to the student or 3<sup>rd</sup> party payer. Examples would include paying a mechanic directly for auto repairs, or an eyeglasses provider for a new pair of glasses for a student.

In the event that a 3<sup>rd</sup> party payer makes an emergency payment on behalf of the WIOA participant, the payer must complete the WIOA Agreement with 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer form (Attachment B). This form must be uploaded to the WIOA participant’s file in NCWorks.gov along with the receipt showing that payment has been made. The reimbursement check will be mailed directly to the 3<sup>rd</sup> party payer.

### **Examples of Allowable Expenditures for Finish Line Grants**

#### **Transportation**

Transportation assistance may be provided to assist the student to get to the community college or other places that support WIOA activities. Transportation assistance may be paid in advance based on a plan for the transportation cost. Examples are bus passes and gasoline assistance. Gas cards may be given as a stipend based upon the daily round-trip mileage as follows:

25 – 100 miles = \$25.00  
 101 – 300 miles = \$75.00  
 301 – 650 miles = \$150.00  
 651 – 1,000 miles = \$225.00

#### **Auto Repairs**

Auto repair payments that allow a participant to participate in educational and training activities are allowed. This includes repairs of an immediate need. Normal vehicle maintenance costs are not allowed. If a participant is repairing a personal vehicle, Finish Line Grant funds may be used to purchase the parts. Auto repair may not exceed the amount of the

vehicle. WDBs should take into consideration if public transportation would be a more feasible option for the participant and, if so, Finish Line Grant funds will not be required.

### **Child Care**

Child care assistance for children ages 12 and under who reside in the home of the student are allowed if other resources are not available. Expenditures may be limited to a daily maximum per child. Birth certificates may be required to verify the ages of children.

Payments for child care may be required by the provider for a space to be maintained for the child even when the child is not in attendance for sickness or holidays. If this is the policy of the child care center, the provider may be required to provide verification of that for the day(s) in question.

### **Dependent Care**

Dependent care assistance may be utilized to help a participant meet their family care needs during participation in their educational activities. Dependent care service providers should be selected by the student. WDBs should ensure that Finish Line Grant funds do not duplicate dependent care assistance available from another source.

### **Housing Assistance**

Housing assistance provided to students allows students to maintain or obtain adequate or temporary shelter while participating in educational activities. Finish line Grant funds may not pay for rental deposits or mortgage payments. Students needing housing assistance should be referred to community housing assistance programs if applicable. WDBs must ensure WIOA Title I funds do not duplicate housing assistance from another source.

### **Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

Finish Line Grant funds may be utilized to assist a student who needs accommodations to enable them to participate in their educational activities. The WDB should ensure that grant do not duplicate funds provided by another source. A referral to Vocational Rehabilitation may be appropriate and, if so, Finish Line Grant funds would not be required.

### **Utility Bills**

Students may obtain assistance in paying for utility bills, including water, gas and electric bills. Care should be taken to ensure that the grant funds do not duplicate assistance from another source.

### **Referrals to Health Care**

Students in need of medical or counseling services should be referred to other community medical resources if applicable. The WDB should ensure Finish Line Grant funds do not duplicate medical assistance available from another source. The referrals include DOT physicals, drug screens, required immunizations, dental, ophthalmologist, drug and alcohol counseling, mental health counseling, behavioral counseling, etc.

### **Assistance with Books and School Supplies**

Grant funds may be utilized to assist a student attending approved education classes with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items related to their education

### **Assistance with Tuition and Fees**

In the context that the student has an emergency financial challenge that has negatively impacted the student's ability to pay for tuition and fees, then Finish Line Grant funds may be

used to pay tuition and fees, however, it is not the intent of the grant program to function solely as a scholarship for a student's tuition and fees.

### **Examples of Unallowed Expenditures for Finish Line Grants**

Finish Line Grant funds are not to be used for student expenses that are not allowed as supportive services including:

- Titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated (e.g. rent or housing deposits, mortgage payments, property taxes, fines and late fees).
- Purchase of vehicles
- Business startup costs.
- Internet or phone service (including a prepaid plan, minutes etc.)

As additions or updates are made to this document they will be available on the NC Department of Commerce website – <https://www.nccommerce.com/jobs-training>.

## Western Piedmont Workforce Development Finish Line Grant Emergency Aid Application

**Please Print and Answer all that apply...Use "NA" If it does not apply to you.**

Please complete in ink and answer each question honestly, as the answers should represent who you are and your need for the Finish Line Grant.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** Male Female **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_ **County of Residence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last 4 of SS#** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternate phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of emergency assistance you are applying for:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for needing emergency assistance:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Size and Income:** Married \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Household Income \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Check all that Apply to you:**

Disability \_\_\_\_\_ Food Stamps \_\_\_\_\_ English Language Learner \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime other than minor traffic violation: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have reliable transportation: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education History:**

Highest Grade Completed: \_\_\_\_\_ GED: \_\_\_\_\_ HS Diploma: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you completed 50% of your community college program? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

What is your overall GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment History:**

Are you currently employed: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If Yes: Full Time \_\_\_ Part Time \_\_\_\_\_

Previous or Current Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Wage: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Employment: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

If unemployed, have you filed for unemployment: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, date you applied \_\_\_\_\_

Receiving any unemployment benefits: Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ Pending: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when did you begin receiving unemployment benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

**Veteran Status:**

If you are a MALE that is 18 years old or older, have you registered for Selective Service: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please go to [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) to “check registration” if you are not sure)

Are you a Veteran? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, when did you serve: \_\_\_\_\_

**Training Information:**

Community College Training Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

How can a Finish Line Grant help you to complete your training and meet your goals?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Program acceptance and enrollment is NOT guaranteed until applicant has met all eligibility requirements, completed and submitted all required documentation, and demonstrated need. Applicants will receive notification of acceptance into the program or training. If an individual does not qualify for this program, the Career Center offers many resources that are available to assist you.**

**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

**By signing below, I am confirming that the information included in this application is complete and accurate. Furthermore, my signature below authorizes NCWorks Agencies and other partner agencies to share the confidential information in this application as needed to assist me, and any third party reporting as required by the funds. I understand this information may be used to formulate an assistance plan and to determine eligibility for assistance through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. I hereby acknowledge this consent is voluntarily given:**

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities: 1-800-735-2962 (TTY) 1-800-735-8200 (Voice)*

**Documents needed to complete application:**

- Social security Card
- Verification of residency (Birth Certificate)
- Verification of citizenship (Birth Certificate, Passport)
- Verification of Veteran’s Status (DD-214)
- Verification of Selective Service Registration – all male US citizens and male immigrants between the ages of 18 and 25 are required to register for selective service. Any male born on or after July 1, 1960 is required to have registered for Selective Service. There was no requirement for registration for males born prior to this date
- Program Evaluation (curriculum) or letter/email from instructor (continuing ed) stating that they are 50% complete and are making satisfactory progress
- Documentation of the cost of emergency need (invoice for incident, service or materials, estimate of required work, child or elder cost document, etc)



**Western Piedmont Workforce Development  
WIOA Agreement with 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer  
Finish Line Grant**

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer, agree to make payment for \_\_\_\_\_ (Participants Full Name) to cover an emergency need of \_\_\_\_\_ using my credit card/checking account with the understanding that I would be reimbursed for the purchases. I understand that the payment will be mailed directly to me and should be mailed to the address below:**

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Career Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_


# Finish Line Grant - Needs Related Payment Policy - Final - 5-2-22

Final Audit Report


2022-04-26

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 Agreement completed.

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