Empowers • Earn while you Learn Stipend Policy

*Anoka County Job Training Center*

Local Program Policy and Procedures

Last updated 10/2/23

**Background:**

The Empowers youth team has added the opportunity for youth to “Earn While You Learn”. This model is designed to provide an aligned youth skill building activity, accessible by most eligibility-based programs, that includes a stipend for learning new skills the compliment the 14 elements under the federal Youth Programs and provides the options to customize needed learning throughout the clients’ case life cycle.

**Eligible programs:**

MYP, TANF Youth, WIOA ISY and OSY, and YAW.

**Earn and Learn Options:**

Option One: Work Readiness, technology, professional skills development topics:

* Must be tied to ISS and documented.
* Course options include:
* Pre-approved vendor of online learning
* Webinars/Assignments created by youth counseling staff.
* Documented learning must be active and documented, participants can earn up to a $50 stipend per week. A maximum of $500 can be earned during a 6-month time frame. Supervisor/Manager approval needed after that threshold has been reached.
* Supervisor/Manager will assist in assigning appropriate amount of stipend for one-time assignments.
* An additional option exists to earn an incentive of $50 if they complete a measurable skills gain (bonus paid at end – once measurable skills docs and evaluations are turned in before signing off on bonus pay).
* Counselors and students need to see if HS elective credit or other credits for work-based learning apply.
* Counselors monitor/track and mentor and complete and sign voucher requests.

Possible topics include:

* + Work Readiness (ex: Improving communication skills, Time management, or Teamwork)
  + Job search (ex: Informational Interviewing)
  + Financial literacy (Ex: budgeting, how to pay for school, etc.)
  + Exploring career interests
  + Mentoring (ex: Virtual networking, e-mentoring and opportunity to earn certificates to add to their portfolio)
  + Digital Literacy (Ex: Microsoft Office (WORD, PPT, Excel, and Access)).
  + Entrepreneurship (Ex: Open to Business type classes, how to start a small business, etc.).

Option Two: Credential Bearing

* Must tie to ISS, assessments completed and documented in ISS.
* Pre-approved short-term training– 6 months or less.
* The school must be a WIOA Approved training provider (save page verification from site).
* Ability to earn a WIOA Approved Credential.

**Procedural Information:**

Requirements prior to approval:

* Complete Short-Term Training Packet which includes current LMI justification.
* Complete a “Earn to Learn Stipend Agreement” with your counselor that outlines your role and your counselor’s role during your participation with the program.
* Enter case note verifying current address and social security number.
* Update ISS
* Complete IRS paperwork – if they have not done WEP to date with the ACJTC program.

Requirements to remain in the program:

* Make adequate progress towards the academic requirement of your credential training.
* Meet attendance requirements for the class(es) you are enrolled in that term.
* Report weekly to your youth counselor by phone or by email giving an update on progress.
* Meet with your counselor to work on an updated resume.

Requirements at the end of the program:

* You must turn in a copy of your credential prior to receiving your final stipend.
* You must meet with your counselor within 10 days of completing your training to update your Individual Plan and develop your job search plan.

Tracking & Evaluation

* Tracking will occur from the program side in WF1 and through the fiscal department through accounts payable and each individual youth program grant budget.
* Monitoring and evaluation will occur throughout the pilot period as well through regular internal monitoring.