

ALASKA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE MANUAL

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WORK: SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PAYMENTS

Supportive Service Payments often make the difference between continued unemployment and the participant's ability to gain employment. The need must be specific, identified in the Plan, directly related to an approved activity or employment opportunity, and the only way to meet the need.

Supportive service payments are not automatic or an entitlement. Each request must be examined to determine if the participant truly has a need for the service and it will assist the family in achieving self sufficiency.

Office managers will set local procedures for authorization of supportive services, including special consideration for local resources and partner agencies that may provide services without charge. Based on the availability of funds, the Division may contract with qualified vendors to deliver some supportive services. The participant's personal resources, such as Permanent Fund Dividends, also must be considered prior to authorization of a service.

If needed, supportive services pay for:

- Tuition Payments;
- Transportation;
- Vehicle repair;
- Driver's license;
- Interview clothing;
- Grooming;
- Professional license;
- Relocation;
- Remedial medical;
- Start-up expenses;
- Special tools, clothing, and equipment;
- Child Care;

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- Car insurance;
- Emergency shelter; and
- Youth enrichment activities.

739-1 **TUITION PAYMENTS**

Tuition payments cover enrollment fees and training costs. Authorize a tuition payment only when other agencies and funding sources cannot cover job training costs. Some other resources include scholarships, JTPA funds, STEP funds, BEOG/SEOG grants, and Pell grants.

Use Tuition Payments to meet the following costs of any approved activity:

- Tuition.
- Books and workbooks.
- Lab and activity fees.
- Fees for learning disability tests.
- OJT employer (wage) reimbursement cost.
- Short-term workshop fees (registration fees).
- Testing fees as charged for specialty licenses.

739-2 **TRANSPORTATION**

Lack of transportation is one of the most common barriers to employment. The most frequently authorized transportation services are bus passes and gasoline allowances.

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Transportation service can cover part or all of the costs of local travel by personal vehicle, public transportation, car pool, or for-hire vehicle when needed by the participant to travel to and from any assigned activity. For-hire vehicles include taxis and private carriers, and cars driven by others who require payment in return for the ride. Use prudent judgement when authorizing use of for-hire vehicles, to assure that the provider's charges remain reasonable.

Consider the cost of bringing dependent children to and from a child care provider when determining a participant's transportation needs. When participants living in different households use a car pool to travel to activities, authorize each participant to receive their share of the car pool's cost.

When more than one household member participates in a required activity, each can receive a transportation payment. However, shared rides among household members to the same activity reduces their combined travel costs.

Depending on local resources and needs, the office manager may elect alternative means of purchasing services for participants. Contracts or grants may offer a solution in serving difficult areas. This options must be explored with the regional manager.

739-3 **VEHICLE REPAIR**

Vehicle repair is one of the most costly supportive services. Repairs may be minor, or be significant and beyond the value of the vehicle. Authorize reasonable car repairs only when other methods of transportation to and from work or approved activities are unavailable or unreliable. Pay only for the cost of an automotive mechanic's labor charges and/or the cost of replacement parts necessary to repair a participant's personal vehicle. Expect the repairs to return the vehicle to a safe and reliable working condition.

A gas station or auto repair shop must confirm in writing the need for the repairs and their estimated cost, and must conduct the repairs or supervise them. Use discretion in requiring additional estimates.

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739-4 DRIVERS LICENSE

An Alaska driver's license is essential to participation in the urban areas of the state. It may be a new license or a renewal. If the participant lacks a driver's license, and needs one to drive to work, then authorize payment for the actual cost of fees charged by the Alaska Department of Public Safety.

Pay the cost of a chauffeur's license, or other license needed to enter a driving occupation, through the "Professional License" supportive service.

739-5 INTERVIEW CLOTHING

To be successful in work search, participants must wear the appropriate clothes. Authorization of interview clothing must be directly related to an appointment for an interview. Only the clothing essential for success at the interview can be authorized. This is not a general clothing allowance.

Use discretion in selecting a clothing vendor. Depending on the need, consignment shops and thrift shops may offer the proper selection. New clothing vendors also are appropriate.

739-6 GROOMING

Appearances often make the difference in a successful work search. Supportive Services for grooming typically offer haircuts and style, or beard grooming. Pay for grooming costs, if doing so improves the opportunities needed to seek or accept paid employment.

739-7 PROFESSIONAL LICENSE

Professional licenses encompass a range of occupations, from plumbers to Certified Nurses Aide. Pay the cost of a professional or commercial license if the participant needs one to engage in a specific occupation.

Pay the actual cost of the license as charged by the Alaska Department of Commerce.

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739-8 RELOCATION EXPENSES

Unique circumstances may require payment of relocation (moving) expenses to accept a paid employment opportunity or participate in special training. This is the most costly supportive service, therefore, it requires pre-approval by a supervisor.

Pay the cost of a temporary or permanent move to a distant Alaskan community, if doing so enables the participant to accept a paid job, or to take part in a specialized and locally unavailable training or work experience activity. Consider a community "distant" if routine commuting presents a barrier to participation, resolvable by relocation.

When authorizing payment for relocation:

- Do not authorize payment of out-of-state moving costs.
- The assigned activity or employment opportunity must remain unavailable in the participant's community of residence, or within a reasonable commute from their residence.
- Use the least costly means of relocation.

Monetary limit for Relocation:

Authorize no more than \$3,000.00 per program year (July 1 through June 30) for this service. |

739-9 REMEDIAL MEDICAL DENTAL

Remedial medical and dental covers care typically seen as cosmetic in nature and not covered by Medicaid. Although Medicaid may not find the care essential, this type of care is often essential in gaining paid employment. The three most common services are: eye glasses, dentures, and hearing aids. All three are costly, and should be authorized when other resources are not available and employment prospects are in the near future. Substance abuse evaluations also can be covered.

Monetary limit for Remedial Medical/Dental:

Authorize no more than \$1,500.00 per program year (July 1 through June 30) for this service. |

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739-10 START-UP EXPENSES

Start-up expenses include low-cost items or services not otherwise listed in this chapter. Such items include alarm clocks, child car seats, school supplies, criminal history background checks, and fingerprinting costs.

Items or services authorized for purchase must relate directly to accepting or retaining employment, or to participation in an assigned work activity.

739-11 SPECIAL TOOLS, CLOTHING, OR EQUIPMENT

Some occupations and trades require special tools, clothing, or equipment. Typical requests are for safety equipment, boots, or gloves. This can include appropriate business clothing for office employment. Pay the cost of special gear that employees working in certain occupations or trades need to train for or enter that occupation.

Authorize purchase of special gear **only** when needed by the participant to take part in specialized occupational training, or to enter paid employment or unpaid work experience.

739-12 CHILD CARE

Specific details about the authorization of child care services are contained in the separate Child Care manual.

739-13 CAR INSURANCE

This supportive service is limited to liability insurance for the primary vehicle needed to transport family members to and from employment.

Clients need to demonstrate that they have explored the market to find the most affordable policy. This supportive service payment should always be made to the client with the reason specified on the authorization. Clients must provide a receipt that verifies the purchase.

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Liability insurance policies paid by supportive services cannot exceed a 12-month term. Unit supervisors and Assistant Regional Managers, however, may approve extensions on a case by case basis. Car insurance is an ongoing expense that must be worked into the family's budget. It is extremely important to review this with clients to ensure that they can cover the ongoing cost of maintaining car insurance.

Note: High-risk liability insurance (SR-22) cannot be purchased.

739-14 **EMERGENCY SHELTER**

This supportive service helps to ensure families are in safe and affordable housing in proximity to employment opportunities. It has three uses:

1. To help with high costs of initially securing housing such as paying first and last month's rent.
2. To assist families who have already paid rent, but who have an immediate need to change their housing situation to ensure self-sufficiency. This includes moving to escape domestic violence or unsafe living conditions, or to accept employment.
3. To pay unmet housing costs that are caused by unanticipated losses of income. This should only be done when there are no other resources available and a family's living arrangement is in jeopardy.

Note: This service cannot be used to pay damage and/or pet deposits.

739-15 **YOUTH ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

This service is used to support before and after school activities or other extra-curricular activities of dependent children who are included in the Temporary Assistance case.

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As with all other supportive services, use this service to promote a parent's participation in employment or approved work activities. A child's participation in before and after school activities, such as Boys and Girls clubs, may help ensure the parent has adequate time to get to work or provide opportunities for parents to pursue evening or weekend classes and training.

Note: This supportive service is not considered childcare and should not be used as a substitute for childcare.