

## Incentives/ Food Assistance/ Medical and Mental Health Care and Allowable Uses of State EcSA Funding Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 14, 2023

POLICY #: P215.V3

### I. Purpose:

This directive sets forth the policies and procedures governing allowable uses of State Economic Security for All (EcSA) funding. These include the monthly incentive payments aimed at participants who are currently part of the State EcSA program, actively involved, and making satisfactory progress toward their career goal of becoming economically self-sufficient. Additional guidance regarding the State EcSA programs can be found in [WIN 0129](#).

### II. Background:

Economic Security for All (EcSA) is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs to increase their collective ability to support low-income Washingtonians in their pursuit of equity, dignity, and sustained self-sufficiency. A combination of intensive program navigation, local innovation, and flexible support fills gaps and meets needs within existing programs and regulations. At the local level, EcSA is run by partnerships of community service providers, includes the voices of those who have experienced poverty, and is convened and coordinated by Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs). EcSA takes an innovative approach to equitably reduce poverty, focusing on historically marginalized populations and people with multiple obstacles to self-sufficiency.

EcSA receives funding from two sources: the Governor's Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Statewide Activities funds and a direct allocation from the Governor's office via legislative approval. These funding sources are categorized as Federal EcSA and State EcSA, respectively. Federal EcSA follows WIOA regulations, while State EcSA grants Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) greater flexibility for program innovation and fund utilization. This policy outlines the guidelines for fund utilization under the State EcSA.

### III. Policy & Procedure:

#### Allowable Uses of the State EcSA Funds:

- All services listed in the State EcSA Services Catalog and commonly provided by WIOA Title 1 are automatically approved to be provided under State EcSA
- The following services and activities not capable of being provided by WIOA Title 1 are allowable uses of State EcSA funds:
  - Stipends/Participant Cash Support Payments/ Incentives

- Food Assistance
- Housing and Rental assistance
- Medical and Mental Health Care including technology (eyeglass, hearing aids, dental care etc.)
- Marketing and Outreach
- For the purpose of State EcSA, a participant support payment is defined as the provision of cash or gift cards to client in order to incentivize participation or assist in participation in programs established in the client's individual employment plan. Items such as rental assistance or payments made on behalf of the client are supportive services and must be recorded and reported as such.

### **Guidance on Monthly Incentives:**

#### **A. Step 1 – Determining Eligibility:**

- i. Anyone enrolled in the State EcSA program is eligible to participate in this pilot program.
- ii. Additionally, subcontractors might prioritize certain demographic groups based on their determination of need and benefits from the monthly incentive payments. In such cases, subcontractors must provide the list of priority groups in order of priority to the WDC project manager.

## **B. Step 2 – Selecting the Cohort:**

- i. Each sub-contractor can enroll State EcSA program participants in this pilot program based on the eligibility criteria discussed above.
- ii. Case Managers must provide information about the monthly incentive payments program (pilot) to all eligible State EcSA program participants.
- iii. Case Managers must run the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta’s CLIFF Tools report for all interested program participants and explain the effects of receiving the extra \$1,000/month on the receipt of public assistance so they can make an informed decision about whether to enroll in the pilot.
- iv. Because the amount of funds available for the pilot is limited, subcontractors must create a process to randomly pick the number of eligible program participants that they can support and provide incentive payments. The policy must be submitted to WDC project manager.
- v. Selected participants will be required to sign the State EcSA Incentive Acknowledgement Form (Attachment A) detailing the pilot program.

## **C. Step 3 – Monitoring Progress**

- i. Minimum expectations to qualify for the \$1,000 monthly incentive payments include but are not limited to:
  - a. Meet at least monthly with the case manager to discuss progress/challenges in any activities (training, education, job search, etc.) as defined in their customized career plan/individual Employment Plan.
  - b. Attending all scheduled financial literacy classes.
  - c. Complete additional monthly State EcSA activities outlined in their customized career plan/individual Employment Plan.
- ii. Case Managers must complete and submit the monthly progress report (Attachment B) to their managers (or complete it online on Cognito Forms).
- iii. Record monthly progress reports in the ETO (or replacement database) under State EcSA Support activity by selecting the State EcSA Financial Support Payments touchpoint. Case note should indicate whether a participant received the monthly incentive, and if not, the reasons for not receiving the incentive in a given month.

## **D. Step 4 – Payment Process:**

- i. Before awarding the \$1,000 monthly incentive payment, case managers must ensure that the participant –
  - a. Has been enrolled in the State EcSA program

- b. Has completed the UW Self-Sufficiency Calculator report
  - c. Has completed an Individual Employment Plan
  - d. Has signed the acknowledgement form (Attachment A) detailing the monthly incentive program.
- ii. Monthly Incentive Payments are made to the participants as long as they meet with their case managers and complete the monthly progress report.
- iii. Monthly Incentive Payments may **only** be awarded to State-Funded EcSA participants for progress in their career plans. They may **not** be awarded to participants enrolled in WIOA programs or activities, including Federal EcSA, unless they are co-enrolled in State-Funded EcSA and meeting the minimum expectations criteria discussed above.
- iv. **Method of Payment:** Monthly Incentive payments may be made by the electronic transfer of funds through financial institutions, or other appropriate methods.

ATTACHMENT A:

State EcSA Monthly Incentive Payment Acknowledgement Form

The following are the requirements to qualify and participate in the State EcSA Monthly Incentive Payments Pilot Program:

1. Be enrolled in State EcSA program.
2. Meet additional demographic requirements to fall on the priority groups for the sub-contractor providing the services (if applicable).
3. Meet at least monthly with the case manager to discuss progress/challenges in any activities (training, education, job search, etc.) as defined in their customized career plan/individual Employment Plan.
4. Attend all scheduled financial literacy classes.
5. Complete additional monthly State EcSA activities outlined in their customized career plan/individual Employment Plan.

Payments:

If participants meet the above criteria, they are eligible for monthly incentive payments of \$1,00 as long the participant is enrolled in the State EcSA program.

Filing Taxes:

It has been explained to me that this incentive is considered as taxable non-wage related income. And as an earner I should calculate the amount of taxes that should be set aside.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, *have read the requirements and agree to abide by them.*  
(Print Name)

I understand this form and the contents have been explained to me in my primary language.

Yes  No

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Case Manager Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT B:

### Monthly Progress Report for Participants Receiving Monthly Incentive Payments

Participant Name:	ETO #
Program of Enrollment: State Funded EcSA	Co-enrollments (if any): Example -WIOA Adult
Reporting Month:	Meeting Type: In-Person/Online

1. Is the participant on track to reach their career goals? Briefly describe the progress made by the participant on the following activities (if applicable).

Financial Literacy Classes	Workshop Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Present <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Notes:
Job Search	Satisfactorily Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Notes:
Trainings/Education	Satisfactorily Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Notes:
Work Based Learning	Satisfactorily Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Notes:
Other Activities	Notes:	

2. What was the participant's biggest success story and/or challenge this month?

3. What does the participant need help with?