

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Division of Health Care Access and Accountability
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To: FoodShare Wisconsin Employment and Training (FSET) Handbook Users

From: Vicki Jessup, Policy Section Chief
Bureau of Enrollment Policy and Systems

Re: **FSET Handbook Release 11-01**

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EFFECTIVE DATE

The following policy additions or changes are effective 01/07/11, unless otherwise noted. **Yellow Highlighted** text denotes new text. Text with a strike through it in the old policy section denotes deleted text.

POLICY UPDATES

1 FSET Program Introduction > 1.1 FSET Program Purpose

Old Text:

~~The federal Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) requires States to design and operate an employment and training program for eligible FoodShare (FS) recipients. The purpose of FSET is to provide FS recipients the assistance and support they need to obtain competitive employment.~~

The objective of FSET is to utilize the strengths, needs and preferences of the job seeker to provide services that will result in successful competitive employment, while promoting economic self-sufficiency.

The FSET program, as designed in Wisconsin, consists of several employment and training ~~components~~ intended to facilitate an efficient use of resources to assist FSET volunteers move promptly into unsubsidized employment.

~~Since 1987, Wisconsin has continued to design and build a nationally recognized FSET Program of superior services and outstanding results.~~

New Text:

The federal **Food & Nutrition Service (FNS)** requires States to design and operate an employment and training program for eligible FoodShare (FS) recipients. The purpose of FSET is to provide FS recipients the assistance and support they need to obtain competitive employment.

The objective of FSET is to utilize the strengths, needs and preferences of the job seeker to provide services that will result in successful competitive employment, while promoting economic self-sufficiency. **Wisconsin has been recognized nationally for offering a voluntary FSET Program with superior services and outstanding results.**

The FSET program, as designed in Wisconsin, consists of several employment and training **services** intended to facilitate an efficient use of resources to assist FSET volunteers move promptly into unsubsidized employment. **Service provision must be in compliance with state and federal policy and regulation and in accordance with the federally approved FSET State Plan. Wisconsin offers the following employment and training services:**

1. **Job Search:** Services are specifically designed to assist volunteers prepare for employment by addressing barriers to vocational success. This service assists volunteers develop, practice, and apply job seeking skills with the goal of securing employment. Each volunteer should be equipped with the tools and skills needed for an effective job search, prior to contacting employers.
2. **Work Experience:** Services are available to promote exposure to various types of employment for individuals who lack practical on the job experience or training in a particular area of interest. This service may offer volunteers the opportunity to be exposed to different kinds of employment to help clarify job interests and career goals. Establishing a work reference is also a practical aspect of work experience.
3. **Education:** Services in this category range from obtaining a GED, ESL, Adult Basic Education, vocational literacy to short term technical training. Enrollment in a technical or trades program is allowable if there is a direct link to employment that is in demand.
4. **Self Employment:** Technical assistance is provided to develop realistic business plans and create sound financial and marketing plans. Technical assistance may include help to obtain financial support through grants, financial institutions or other service providers.
5. **Job Retention:** Services may be provided for up to 90 days for employment that is obtained as a result of FSET participation. This service is designed to address barriers that may deter the volunteer from maintaining successful employment. Examples of Job Retention may include: participant reimbursement for initial expenses like transportation, uniforms, and childcare. Other services may include vocational case management and making referrals to other agencies that address barriers that are outside the scope of FSET.

2 FSET Funding

Chapter 2 was reorganized.

- Section 2.4 Childcare Reimbursement was moved to 2.3.2.
- Section 2.5 FSET Participant Reimbursement was moved to 2.3.3.
- Section 2.6 FSET Fiscal Reporting Profiles was moved to 2.4.

2 FSET Funding > 2.3 Supportive Services > 2.3.1 Supportive Services Introduction

The original content of this section was give a subsection name: 2.3.1 Supportive Services Introduction.

2 FSET Funding > 2.3 Supportive Services > 2.3.3 FSET Participant Reimbursement > 2.3.3.1 FSET Participant Reimbursement Introduction

The majority of this section was rewritten and clarified in a chart in section 2.3.3.2 FSET Participant Expenses.

Old Text:

~~The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) lifted the \$25 transportation/work-related expense limit and agencies can now use actual costs to reimburse transportation and work-related expenses incurred by the FSET participant for the purpose of obtaining employment.~~

It is the responsibility of the FSET agency to ensure the availability of assistance for transportation and work-related expenses to FSET participants. FSET participants are eligible for assistance to cover the cost of transportation and work-related expenses if they are necessary for the completion of assigned FSET activities. There is no limit to the length of months for transportation assistance reimbursement as long as the FSET participant is in approved FSET activities and the assistance is necessary for the completion of the assigned activities.

The nature and scope of the FSET transportation and work-related expenses provided will vary from agency to agency depending upon the extent to which barriers exist for the FSET participant within the local area. ~~The FSET agency must~~

~~take into consideration the availability of public transit services in the area, job locations, work-related expenses, and other transportation needs of the participants, such as transportation to and from childcare, etc. In general, types of examples of purchases that are potentially approvable for participant reimbursements include:~~

- ~~▪ Transportation (mileage, bus tokens, bus passes, taxi cab, gas money) to and from location of FSET activity;~~
- ~~▪ Child care and related costs including enrollment fees;~~
- ~~▪ Clothing suitable for job interviews;~~
- ~~▪ Uniforms needed to participate in an assigned training/activity;~~
- ~~▪ Licensing and bonding fees~~
- ~~▪ Vision correction (such as eyeglasses, bifocals, eye exam);~~
- ~~▪ Dental work (such as teeth cleaning, bridge);~~
- ~~▪ Test books and training.*~~

~~*Reimbursement for assistance with textbooks, training materials, school supplies, tuition, lab fees, and other education-related costs necessary for training is allowable only to the extent that the assistance is not provided to non-FoodShare, non-FSET participants. See 8.16 Post Secondary Education (PSE) (A1) for additional requirements.~~

~~Reimbursements for the following are not allowable by Federal regulation:~~

- ~~• Housing assistance~~
- ~~• Regular or crisis utility payments~~
- ~~• Rehabilitative services *~~
- ~~• Mental Health counseling~~
- ~~• AQDA services~~

~~* Although persons with disabilities may volunteer to participate in FSET, reimbursement for provision of accommodative goods and services, which would be normally provided by rehabilitative services, is not authorized.~~

~~**NOTE:** Support costs for participation in FSET activities are reimbursable expenses, including expenses for job retention for up to 90 days, if the job was obtained as a result of participating in FSET. Reimbursement of support services to persons who obtained employment independent of FSET is not allowable, unless the service is related to career enhancement or advancement.~~

~~Examples of allowable expenses for career advancement and enhancement may include reimbursement for attending training or completing course work that will allow the FSET participant to increase their earnings at a job they obtained prior to volunteering for FSET.~~

~~The following types of job retention costs must be directly related to employment obtained as a result of FSET services may include:~~

- ~~• Uniform;~~
- ~~• Equipment or tools required for the job;~~
- ~~• Training Material and Test fees; Licensing and bonding fees~~
- ~~• Transportation costs.~~

~~The FSET agency must:~~

- ~~1. Identify existing public transit bus systems, municipally sponsored shared-ride taxi systems, reverse commute services, commuter bus service, accessible transportation options for the disabled (i.e., handivans, medivan, metro+, etc.), express services, specialized, demand responsive service capacity, etc. If public transit services that meet the needs of families are available, these services must be used;~~
- ~~2. Identify specific transportation needs of the FSET participants. Transportation assistance should be provided to eligible individuals/families who need assistance getting to and from all assigned FSET activities (including, but not limited to work, childcare, and school);~~

3. ~~Develop a package of transportation-related options which address these needs;~~
4. ~~Organize or allow for the provision of easy access to transportation, either on a case-by-case basis, or agency wide;~~
5. ~~Organize, provide and facilitate transportation assistance which does not have the effect of creating a new transit service infrastructure, duplicative services or unnecessary redundant service where existing public transportation arrangements are adequate;~~
6. ~~Organize, provide and facilitate transportation assistance which does not have the effect of creating a new transit service infrastructure, duplicative services or unnecessary redundant service where existing public transportation arrangements are adequate;~~
7. ~~Provide timely and accurate reimbursement for transportation costs.~~

Note: The Food Stamp Act, at Section 16(h)(3), prohibits the use of 100% grant funds to reimburse participant expenses. All costs incurred by local agencies in connection with transportation and other expenses reasonably necessary and directly related to participation in an FSET program will be reimbursed under the 50% State and 50% Federal share.

New Text:

It is the responsibility of the FSET agency to ensure the availability of assistance for transportation and work-related expenses to FSET participants. FSET participants are eligible for assistance to cover the cost of transportation and work-related expenses if they are **reasonable and** necessary for the completion of assigned FSET activities. There is no limit to the length of months for **participant** reimbursement as long as the FSET participant is in approved FSET activities and the assistance is necessary for the completion of the assigned activities. **Please see the table in 2.3.3.2 FSET Participant Expenses for a comprehensive list of allowable participant expenses**

The nature and scope of the FSET transportation and work-related expenses provided will vary from agency to agency depending upon **availability of funding** and the extent to which barriers exist for the FSET participant within the local area. **The most common** types of participant reimbursements **often** include:

- Transportation (mileage, bus tokens, bus passes, taxi cab, gas money) to and from location of FSET activity;
- Child care and related costs including enrollment fees;
- Clothing suitable for job interviews;
- Uniforms needed to participate in an assigned training/activity;
- Licensing and bonding fees
- Test books and training.*

*Reimbursement for assistance with textbooks, training materials, school supplies, tuition, lab fees, and other education-related costs necessary for training is allowable only to the extent that the assistance is not provided to non-FoodShare, non-FSET participants. See [8.16 Post Secondary Education \(PSE\) \(A1\)](#) for additional requirements.

In addition to job seeking and training participant reimbursement is also allowable for volunteers engaged in:

- **Job Retention:** Reimbursement for items directly related to maintaining employment that was obtained as a result of participating in FSET is **allowable up to 90 days after obtaining employment.** Reimbursement of support services to persons who obtained employment independent of FSET is not allowable, unless the service is related to career enhancement or advancement.
- **Career Advancement and Enhancement:** Due to changes in the 2008 Farm Bill, participation in employment activity is no longer limited; meaning that **FSET may serve individuals who are employed full or part time.** Allowable

expenses for career advancement and enhancement may include reimbursement for **training** or completing course work that will allow the FSET participant to increase their earnings at a job they obtained prior to volunteering for FSET..

Note: The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 lifted the \$25 transportation/work-related expense limit.

**2 FSET Funding > 2.3
Supportive Services>2.3.3
FSET Participant
Reimbursement> 2.3.3.2
FSET Participant Expenses**

New Text:

The federal Food & Nutrition Service created the following list to clarify expenses that may be funded through 50/50 funding Review each item in the context of being reasonable and necessary for successful participation in the FSET program.

FSET is the payer of last resort. Reimbursement is not allowable for services that are available for free.

Item	Almost Always	Sometimes	Never	Other Details
Auto Insurance			X	
Auto Ownership Tag, Title, Licensing			X	
Auto Purchase			X	
Auto Repairs			X	Currently there are no exceptions
Background Checks		X		Only if required for employment and training
Books	X			
Clothing for job interview	X			
Clothing required for a job		X		Uniforms almost always, otherwise clothing costs are limited and must be reasonable and necessary for employment.
Commercial Drivers License		X		Only if required for employment
Computers, Laptops, etc			X	
Course Registration Fees	X			
Dental Work		X		To the extent that it is required for employment and as funds allow for reimbursement.
Dependent Care Costs	X			
Drivers License to become a taxi driver		X		Only if required for employment
Drug/Alcohol Counseling			X	Refer to another agency
Drug Tests		X		Only if required for employment
Equipment		X		Must be reasonable and

				necessary for training or job retention for a job obtained through FSET. (Up to 90 days from the start date)
Fines			X	No exceptions for any type
Fingerprinting		X		Only if required for a employment
Gas	X			
Legal Services		X		Must be very minor (i.e. notary) and directly related to employment
Licensing and Bonding Fees for work or work experience	X			
Living Expenses and Stipends			X	
Medical Expense		X		Only if minor and required for employment, such as a TB test
Mental Health Counseling or Treatment			X	Refer to appropriate agency
Relocation Expenses			X	
Safety Items (on the job)	X			
Student Activity Fees		X		If required to participate in class
Student Loans			X	Apply for financial aid
Test Fees		X		Must be directly applicable to employment and all other funding sources exhausted
Tools		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for training or job retention for a job obtained through FSET. (Up to 90 days from the start date)
Training Materials	X			
Transportation Expenses (gas, bus fare)	X			
Tuition and Fees		X		Please see 8.15 Education .
Uniforms	X			
Union Dues			X	
Vision Needs (glasses or eye exam)		X		If reasonable and necessary for employment or training.