

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

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TO: Subscriber

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, Employment Coordinators, WMS Coordinators, HEAP Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators

FROM: Phyllis Morris, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: NY Youth Works Program TA Budgeting/Eligibility Implications and Reporting Requirements

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

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The purpose of this GIS is to provide instructions regarding the treatment, for TA eligibility determination and budgeting purposes, of stipends and wages received by Temporary Assistance (TA) household members that participate in the NY Youth Works program. This GIS also provides instructions on reporting hours of participation for individuals receiving TA who are participants in the NY Youth Works Program.

NY Youth Works Program

The NY Youth Works Program is designed to encourage businesses through tax credits to hire unemployed and disadvantaged youth. The program supports employment opportunities for eligible youth aged 16 through 24 who live in the cities of: Albany, Buffalo, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, New York City, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse, Utica, Yonkers, and the towns of Brookhaven and Hempstead. More information on this program may be found at: www.jobs.ny.gov/youthworks.

Treatment of Wages Received by TA Household Members Participating in the NY Youth Works Program.

Wages are considered student earnings and are exempt for TA budgeting purposes when earned by a Youth Works participant who is:

- In receipt of TA;
- A dependent child as defined in SSL 101 or a student (either full or part-time); and
- Under 21 years of age.

Wages earned by a Youth Works participant that are not exempt as student earnings are countable income and must be budgeted as earned income with appropriate earned income disregards. This includes minor head of household cases.

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Treatment of Stipends Received by TA Household Members Participating in the NY Youth Works Program.

For youth not ready to work, there are training and job placement providers approved and funded by NY Youth Works that can help. If a youth is placed in a job or training by one of the approved participating providers he/she may be eligible to receive the following stipends, up to a maximum total of \$900, to defray the costs of employment training related needs (e.g.; daycare, clothing or transportation):

- \$300 per month for up to two months if in a work readiness or skill training program while seeking employment; and
- A one-time \$300 payment when beginning employment.

These stipends are reimbursements for specific out of pocket expenses. They are exempt and cannot be used when determining eligibility for temporary assistance or the amount of the TA benefit.

Reporting Hours of Participation for Individuals Receiving Temporary Assistance who are Participants of the NY Youth Works

Paid Employment

For paid employment, districts should project actual hours of employment for up to six months based on the verified number of hours available when the employment is documented. Districts must ensure that hours of paid employment that are based on a client's self-attestation at job entry are reasonable and do not exceed four weeks. In all instances, districts must obtain verification no later than four weeks following the job entry. Verification may include pay stubs or other documentation, such as the number of hours reported by the employer through the Work Number.

After the four weeks that may be reported based on self-attestation, the hours of paid employment should generally be based on an average of verified hours reported for the preceding four weeks. If available, and adjusted for other known and verified information demonstrating that one or more of these preceding weeks was unusual, or to reflect verified changes.

Districts should not wait until the individual has worked for four weeks before entering employment information onto the WTWCMS or NYCWAY. Information should be entered as soon as possible after documentation to verify the projected actual hours of employment (e.g., employer statement) is received by the district. If fewer than four weeks of documented hours of work is available, districts may use as few as one week's worth of documented hours of work to project hours of paid employment for up to six months. In all instances when a change is reported, hours of work must be acted upon in a timely manner.

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Unpaid Work Activities Including Participation in Training

Districts must ensure that assigned work activities and all WTWCMS entries, including hours of participation (New York City must ensure that work activities and all NYCWAY entries, including hours of participation for temporary assistance recipients are consistent with the local employment plan approved by OTDA (see 08 ADM-07) for federal work activity definitions that apply to households with dependent children. Documentation to support the hours of participation reported by the district must be maintained either as part of the case record or by alternate means that permits the district to locate the attendance record for any individual reported as participating. If attendance information is entered by the provider directly on to the WTWCMS or NYSWAY districts must ensure that the individual entering the information is the instructor or other staff who would normally complete and sign the required attendance documentation directly reports onto the reporting system (see GIS 09 TA/DC031) for additional information.

Districts must be diligent about collecting actual documented hours of participation for each of the unpaid work activities and recording these hours on the WTWCMS no later than the 15th of the month following the report month. NYC will continue to use NYCWAY and other local systems to collect and record hours of participation in countable work activities.