Western Piedmont Council of Governments
Workforce Development Board

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NOVEMBER 2, 2026

TO:	All Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area Title I Service Providers
SUBJECT:	Tools of Trade Policy
EFFECTIVE DATE:	Immediately
EXPIRATION DATE:	Indefinite
CONTACT:	Workforce Development Program Manager

Charity Patterson Hamber (Nov 2, 2026 10:03:50 EST)

Charity Patterson Hamber
Workforce Development Director

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TOOLS OF TRADE POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide guidance on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reimbursement for tools of trade reimbursements for BLET, Electrical Lineman, Massage Therapy and Medical Title I program participants. *To rescind Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area Tools of Trade Policy dated August 10, 2026..*

BACKGROUND: This policy statement details a monetary and/or quantity limit on expenditures of required tools of trade for Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET), Electrical Lineman, Emergency Medical Services, Massage Therapy and Nursing participants, Nurse Aide participants and other medical areas of study participants for which WIOA Title I funds may be used. Tools of trade are defined as items required specifically for training which does not include tuition, books, fees or healthcare requirements such as immunizations. Tools of trade are not items required for paid/unpaid internships or OJT placements.

ACTION The requested expenditures must be accompanied by curriculum/course syllabus/orientation packet information on letterhead listing the required tools of trade. Exams required to obtain employment (NCLEX, ARRT,etc) are the exception for this documentation as the participant needs to take and pass them for employment therefore documentation is not necessary and WIOA funds can cover the cost. The cost of these items must be reasonable and specific to the curriculum/course requirements.

Reimbursements will be made directly to the vendor for the purchase of tools of trade. At no time will a participant receive a reimbursement check unless extenuating circumstances are documented and approved by the Title I Program Manager.

The cost of these items are included in the lifetime WIOA training funds limit per participant. See the Occupational Trainings, Individual Training accounts and Cost Tracking Process Policy located at https://www.wpcog.org/policy-statements for participant lifetime limit.

Items not eligible for purchase include any item considered an undergarment which includes t-shirts, stockings/tights, socks, long sleeve shirts worn under scrubs for some medical programs, etc. These items will be the responsibility of the participant.

The tools of trade maximum reimbursable amounts listed below do not include sales tax.

BLET program required boots may be purchased once during the participant's participation. The maximum reimbursable amount is $150.00. Additional required running shoes may be purchased once during the participant's participation.

Electrical Lineman program required lineman boots may be purchased once during the participant's participation. Maximum reimbursable amount is $225.00.

Emergency Medical Science program required boots may be purchased once during the participant's participation. The maximum reimbursable amount is $150.00.

Massage Therapy required items such as a massage table, sheets, lotions and holster may be purchased once during the participant's participation. The maximum amount reimbursable for a massage table is $400.00.

Medical program required items such as blood pressure cuff, stethoscope, student lab kit (Tach kits, in/out catheters, IV fluids, sterile dressing change tray, Foley kit), thermometer, watch with second hand, scissors, goggles, HEPA mask and pen light may be purchased once during the participant's participation. The maximum amount reimbursable for a stethoscope is $150.00 and student lab kit is $250.00.

Medical and Massage Therapy program required items such as scrub tops, scrub pants, shoes, lab coat with or without embroidery may be purchased once per program year for continuously active participation. The course syllabus or orientation packet should clearly state the need to purchase scrubs for clinical and if need is not clearly stated a case note should be made in the participant's file for example: Student has clinical 2 days per week and needs 2 sets of scrubs.

If the participant is participating in clinical the following sets of scrubs may be purchased with WIOA Title I funds:

- 2 days per week - 2 sets may be purchased
- 3 or more days per week - 3 sets may be purchased

The maximum amount reimbursable for required shoes for all training programs is $140.00. The only exceptions are required boots as listed above.

An increasing need for successful training completion has become a laptop either for remote schoolwork or for work in school with instructor supervision and instruction. It is assumed that students have access to a computer/laptop although there are many students who do not have access or financial capability to purchase one. This is causing undue stress in training and making successful completion difficult. The required documentation for a laptop is documentation from the syllabus or if not found on the syllabus, the student may write a self-attest stating why a laptop is required for this course of study and sign and date it. The maximum amount reimbursable for a necessary laptop that a participant is unable to obtain is $300. Internet access and required software will be the responsibility of the participants.

It is the Title I Service Provider's responsibility to determine the appropriateness of all expenditures within the approved maximums.

Tools of Trade Policy Final 2

Final Audit Report 2026-11-02

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