



College Technical Guidance

SkillUP is an important part of Missouri’s comprehensive workforce development system serving the needs of individuals receiving SNAP as well as employers. The SkillUP program assists SNAP recipients in obtaining livable wage employment and achieving self-sufficiency through job search, training, and education. This guidance does not cover every situation or scenario a college may encounter in their day-to-day activities, but is designed to assist providers with policies, procedures and decision-making. For additional detail regarding the program guidelines and MoJOBS, please refer to the SkillUP Handbook, which can be found on the mccatoday.org website.

I. Partner Roles & Responsibilities

The Family Support Division (FSD), Department of Social Services (DSS) administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which is referred to as the Food Stamp Program in Missouri. States must provide employment and training services to program participants as a part of administering the Food Stamp Program. SkillUP is the corresponding Food Stamp employment and training program in Missouri and requires the collaboration of federal, state, and local partners. Colleges are expected to collaborate with other SkillUP providers to ensure participants are receiving all needed services to overcome barriers, successfully complete employment and training programs and eventually attain employment.

- a. **USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)** – provide the federal funding for both Food Stamp benefits and SkillUP and have oversight authority.
- b. **Family Support Division (FSD)** – receive the federal funding from FNS and contract with MCCA, MU and Community-Based Organizations to manage the SkillUP program. Provide funds for child care.
- c. **Missouri Community College Association (MCCA)** – contract with FSD to provide education and job training through subcontracts with community colleges.

- d. **Community Colleges** – subcontract with MCCA to provide short term (one year or less) job training and intensive advising to SkillUP participants. Refer participants to the job centers and other providers for wrap-around services.

II. Eligibility

An individual can receive SkillUP services if he/she meets all of the following:

- a. Receives Food Stamp benefits
- b. Does NOT receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- c. Is age 16 or older
- d. Has the physical and mental ability to work at least 20 hours per week, or is able to do so within the next year
- e. Can participate in SkillUP immediately

It is important to be mindful of the purpose of the SkillUP program: to help get people off of food stamps and into gainful employment. It is specifically designed for people who do not have a marketable skill or set of skills. There may be instances where a person meets all of the basic eligibility guidelines outlined above but may be already in possession of in-demand credentials. At this point, colleges should conduct a needs assessment:

- Does the applicant currently possess a degree, certificate or credential?
- If yes, is the degree, certificate or credential in an in-demand field supported by LMI data? (if the answer is no, the applicant may be enrolled in the SkillUP program)
- If yes, is the applicant seeking to enroll in SkillUP to further their career pathway with stackable credentials? (if the answer is yes, the applicant may be enrolled in the SkillUP program)

Cases may need to be evaluated on a case by case basis and MCCA can help with need determination. Below are some examples of actual cases encountered:

*Example 1: An applicant had a bachelor's degree and a teaching certificate. The applicant had grown tired of teaching and did not renew her contract. Once she was eligible for food stamps, she applied and then sought out SkillUP training to go into the medical field. SkillUP leadership determined that this case **did not** meet the needs threshold for this limited E&T funding. A teaching degree/certificate is an in-demand occupation that the applicant had chosen to leave, and the training being pursued through SkillUP was not related or stackable to her current skill level.*

*Example 2: An applicant had a bachelor's degree in Psychology, but because she had not pursued advanced degrees in the field, she had never worked in the field. The applicant was out of work and on food stamps. SkillUP leadership determined that this case **did** meet the*

needs threshold for this limited E&T funding. A bachelor's degree in Psychology by itself does not lead to in-demand occupations.

Non-Covered Services:

- Four-year college
- Transfer degrees
- On the job training wages
- Stipends provided in certain training programs

ABAWD Eligibility:

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 set time limits for ABAWDs to receive Food Stamp benefits. Prior to January 1, 2016, the State of Missouri's Family Support Division had a waiver and ABAWDs did not have to complete work and/or training to continue to receive benefits. Effective January 1, 2016, the waiver expired, and time-limits and work/training requirements were reinstated for ABAWDs to receive Food Stamp benefits.

- ABAWD eligibility for Food Stamp benefits is limited to any 3 months in the 36-month period between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2021 **unless** the individual meets the ABAWD work/training requirements.
- Any month an ABAWD participant receives a full month of Food Stamp benefits and is not in compliance with the monthly work/training requirement, they are using a non-work month. An ABAWD can only receive three non-work/training months in a three-year (36 months) period.
- If an ABAWD loses benefits due to 3 non-work months, eligibility can be regained by completing 80 hours of work and/or training in a 30-day period. After eligibility has been regained, an ABAWD can receive benefits for an additional 3 non-work months and then can only receive benefits on a month-by-month basis.
- Example:
 - John was an ABAWD and did not participate in work and/or training activities for January, March and May 2016.
 - He later regained eligibility by participating in work and/or training activities for 80 hours in July 2016 and began receiving benefits again in August.
 - In October he did not meet work requirements. He will receive October, November and December as non-work months.

- Starting in January, John can only receive benefits for months he completes 80 hours of work and/or training.
- **For additional information, ABAWDs can visit the SkillUP website or call 855-FSD-INFO.**
- NOTE: If a participant shows as an ABAWD in MoJOBS and they do not meet the requirements of an ABAWD, report this immediately to FSD on the FS-5 in the EXEMPTION section. The participant can also report this to FSD by visiting a Resource Center or by calling 855-FSD-INFO.
- In order to continue receiving monthly Food Stamp benefits, an ABAWD is required to work, and/or participate in approved employment and training activities for 80 or more hours per calendar month. Employment and training activities include WIOA activities and services provided at Missouri Job Centers, work and/or training reported to FSD and work and/or training services provided at one of the community colleges or a Community Based Organization.
- ABAWDs are notified by mail of the requirements that must be met to continue to receive Food Stamp benefits past three (3) months. The IM-4 SkillUP flyer is also mailed to ABAWDs giving them additional information regarding SkillUP. An ABAWD may also sign an Agreement to Volunteer (Appendix F) and volunteer in a program that promotes job readiness and builds work experience.
- ABAWD Exemptions:
- FSD may determine an ABAWD is exempt from employment and training requirements, either temporarily or permanently. If an ABAWD meets an exemption, they will not have to participate in an employment and training component but may still be eligible to receive their Food Stamp benefits.
- NOTE: ABAWD exemptions are only determined by FSD. Exemptions may include one or more of the following:
 - ✓ Receiving unemployment (in any state)
 - ✓ Required in the home to care for an ill or incapacitated person
 - ✓ Unable to work due to an illness, injury, or disability
 - ✓ Attending drug addict/alcohol treatment program
 - ✓ A full-time student

- If an ABAWD states they meet an exemption, report this to FSD on the FS-5 in the EXEMPTION section. The ABAWD can also report this to FSD at any time.

Volunteer Participation:

- Voluntary SkillUP participants between the ages of 16-59, are not required to participate in an employment and training component or meet 80 hours; however, they may volunteer to participate. Voluntary Food Stamp participants may enroll or withdraw from participation at any time.
- For volunteers, it is not mandatory to transmit documentation of participation hours to FSD, unless the participant obtained employment. Employment documentation must be sent to FSD on the FS-5 form, in the WORK ACTIVITY #1 section.
- FSD may change a voluntary participant's status to ABAWD. Once FSD changes a voluntary participant status to ABAWD the participant will be required to follow ABAWD employment & training requirements.
- Client Status Changes & Closures:
- If an individual's status changes from active to inactive during participation in SkillUP, the participant's enrollment in MoJOBS and all SkillUP components are ended.
- If a participant's status changes from voluntary to ABAWD or ABAWD to voluntary, MoJOBS will be updated in a nightly batch to reflect the new status.
- SkillUP Voluntary Closure Service providers can only close enrollments for SkillUP/Voluntary participants. Enrollments should only be closed if the participant is sure they do not want to receive any additional services. Voluntary Closures Include: The participant indicates they no longer want to participate. The SkillUP provider will need to close the components and the participant in MoJOBS.
- SkillUP Voluntary Closure for ABAWDs: Only FSD can close SkillUP ABAWD possible enrollments. The enrollment outcome will display in MoJOBS as "System Closed FSD inactive". Participants will not be enrolled in any additional SkillUP components. They can continue with WIOA services.

III. Enrollment

- a. Meet with the prospective participant and assess their needs, skills and abilities, including college and work readiness. Can be referred to DWD if participant already has skills necessary to begin a job search.
- b. Check to ensure the participant is enrolled in Food Stamps.
- c. Complete an OAS and IEP, and enroll participant in SkillUP within MoJOBS.
- d. Complete a FS5 form and submit to FSD.

- e. Enroll participant in the college training program
- f. Can apply for childcare assistance through FSD.

IV. SkillUP Case Management- SkillUP providers will only offer case management services to Food Stamp recipients that are enrolled in a qualifying service(s). An Employment Plan must be completed prior to a participant enrollment in any educational or training services.

All of the requirements for training services must be met and documented in MoJobs. The case file must contain a determination of need for training services as determined through the interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning supported by local labor market information. Explanations must include a clear description of the information, such as State or Federal labor market information to prove the training chosen by the participant is linked to an employment opportunity.

For ABAWDs, enter the service hours on the FS-5 based on the number of hours you expect the participant to participate, not on credit hours. Allow 1 hour of study time for each hour of class time. For example, if a participant attends Vocational Training for 6 hours per week, there is 6 hours of study time, the Vocational Training should show 12 hours per week.

Prior to placing participants into any SkillUP activities, the provider must assess the participant to determine they are able to successfully complete this activity and the activity must align with the EP.

- o The participant indicates they would like to obtain employment in XYZ industry and wants to complete a job search. XYZ requires a high school diploma or its equivalent, they cannot pursue job search until they have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- o The participant would like to begin a Community College program but doesn't have the basic skills needed to pursue the program. These skills should be gained first.

If a participant is already employable and able to perform the duties of a position, SkillUP cannot pay for additional training in another program. For example:

- * A participant has a degree in accounting and is able to perform the duties, the provider would work with them to obtain employment in the accounting field.
- * A participant is a construction worker, but can no longer perform the job duties due to a physical ailment; they may need training in a different program.

- * A participant is a CNA and can obtain employment that will support their family; the provider can assist them in obtaining employment as a CNA.
- * A participant is an OTR truck driver, but they can no longer be on the road on a regular basis; the provider can assist them in pursuing other employment opportunities.

If a potential participant states they are beginning training in a very short period of time (i.e. 1-3 days) and requests the training be paid for by SkillUP, the provider should explain to them that this may not be feasible. The provider should explain that there is an assessment process to determine if he/she is prepared for the training.

Note: There may be situations where an exception is allowed if a funding source has not already been identified and the provider believes the participant will be successful in obtaining employment after training

V. Student Files

A hard copy (or electronic versions) file for each program participant shall be created and maintained by each college training provider during the duration of the SkillUP grant. The file should be identified as a Grant program participant with the student's name.

The student file should include the following information:

1. Completed First Contact Form
2. Verification of eligibility
3. Copy of participant's Social Security card (social security number). While SSN's are not a grant eligibility requirement nor can grant services be denied if a participant refuses to provide the SSN, some programs of study do require ssn's for program admissions in order to perform background checks and drug testing for certain health occupations that require clinicals.
4. Copies of pertinent financial aid documentation – if applicable (e.g., FAFSA, etc.)
5. Identification of program/course/educational path being taken by participant/student
6. Any pertinent verification of employment documentation (i.e., copy of pay stub)
7. Video Release Form
8. FERPA Release Form
9. Anyone with access to MoJOBS can see any note in a participant's file. Since MoJOBS does not have a place for confidential notes, notes with confidential/sensitive information about Chemical Dependency, Mental Health,

Family Violence, or any medical condition or diagnosis must not be entered. These types of documentation must be kept in the case file and the file cabinet must be locked when not being accessed.

10. Final grade reports upon completion of training/education
11. WorkKeys/NCRC Scores
12. Copy of Certificate of Completion, Proficiency, etc. related to successful completion
13. Notations – Any pertinent comments applicable to the training participant (e.g., if they exit the program early potential reasons/issues as to why?)

All participant/student files will need to be stored in a secure environment due to the personal nature of the information.

Participant Case Notes Management

All participating colleges are required to maintain accurate, adequate and timely case notes on every grant participant. These will be monitored by MCCA and FSD. This monitoring review will involve college participant and MoJOBS files. Case notes record important details about grant services provided to grant participants. Case notes supplement and synthesize information on a participant's strengths and needs in a range of areas to provide a justification for specific services and activities provided. In addition, case notes can serve as documentation of factors affecting a participant's eligibility or other important information. Finally, case notes record details of a participant's participation levels in the SkillUP grant activities and progress toward his or her employment and educational goals. Purposeful, clear and consistent case notes are a must. Without these the grant is at real risk for questioned and potentially disallowed costs.

Refer to the DWD's Statewide Service Notes Policy for detailed instructions and examples to record notes for participants.

Case notes support:

- Eligibility determination
- Clearly define the grant participants educational plan and goals
- Describe the outcomes
- Maintain participants grant activities and services received
- Address participant's exit

Six elements of good grant participant case note:

1. Focuses on the participant.
2. Describes the service provided.
3. Identifies the next step and participant's involvement.
4. Tracks grant funding and non-grant funding associated with the participant.

5. Tracks grant staffing assigned to aid the participant in providing quality service.
6. Aids in grant compliance monitoring.

If a participant has moved from one area/region of the state to another and is enrolling in SkillUP in a new location, the provider should always check MoJOBS for components and/or notes regarding services the participant may have received in another region. Remember that any entry made may become public record, so make your notes both accurate and able to withstand public scrutiny.

SkillUP Allowable Components- Providers shall complete an Employment Plan (EP) of long and short-term goals in collaboration with each participant. The EP must be entered in MoJOBS. The EP shall clearly connect the services to be provided to each participant with the outcomes to be achieved. In coordination with the individual, providers shall place assessed participants in a component that is appropriate for their skill level, experience, and career goals. The qualified components shall be opened and closed based upon when the participant is actually in the service. The Provider must monitor the participant’s progress and document the progress in MoJOBS.

- IV.** Supportive Services are defined as those services necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under SkillUP. This policy provides guidelines for administering Supportive Services. Supportive Services should be made available to assist customers in removing or reducing barriers to participate in SkillUP activities.
Note: Payment of Supportive Services is contingent on available funding.

PLEASE NOTE: TANF funds should be used for volunteers: 16-24 with or without child(ren) or 25-59 with children, pregnant or non-custodial parent. FNS or 50/50 funds CANNOT be used to assist ABAWDS who require TRE/WRE assistance. If an ABAWD fits the guidelines for TANF funds (16-24 with or without children or 25-59 with children, pregnant or non-custodial parent) then TANF funds may be used to assist.

Supportive Services may include transportation related expenses and/or work-related expenses. The extent of Supportive Services provided will vary based on the customer’s needs and available resources.

WRE Items	Explanations
College Application and Entry Test Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowable for short-term training less than a year.

Criminal Background Check, Drug Testing and Fingerprints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be required by the employer for all employees in order to participate in a work activity.
Work and/or School Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work tools required by the employer. • School supplies if required for the class. • Computer software required for a specific class. • Text books if required for the class.
Work Clothes, Uniforms and Shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WRE funds are not intended to purchase an entire wardrobe. • Necessary clothing should be purchased at the most reasonable price. • There is not a stipulation on how many of any piece of clothing may be purchased since this is case specific and there are many possible combinations of needs. • Uniforms must be required and not provided by the employer.
TRE Items	Explanations
Gas Cards, Mileage and Bus Passes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant must submit weekly claim for expenses. • Participants must supply documentation to verify expenses. • Maximum is \$15 per day.

Supportive Services are only to be provided to customers who:

- Are participating in an allowable SkillUP component(s); and
- Are unable to obtain Supportive Services themselves or via their support network; and
- Are unable to obtain Supportive Services through other programs including community agencies that provide these services; and
- Demonstrate a need for assistance to enable participation in SkillUP components.

Supportive Service payments are requested individually for specific needs. Supportive Service payments are made on a case-by-case basis only when determined necessary and reasonable. A statement that a customer “needs” a Supportive Service will not justify the payment of these expenses. (i.e., “Customer states he needs tools for work.” The

payment cannot be authorized on this statement alone; but instead, must be related to the SkillUP component; based on customer need; and other resources must be sought first.). The Provider's determination of financial need must be documented through case notes in MoJobs. Because the payment process includes a review of these notes, it is imperative that they are clear, concise, and complete. Failure to properly document the case note in MoJobs may result in delayed payment or non-reimbursement.

Service notes regarding Supportive Service payments must include at a minimum all of the following:

- The type of Supportive Service paid (e.g., TRE, WRE, Education/Training);
- The amount of Supportive Service paid;
- The timeframe for which the Supportive Service was paid;
- The justification of need for the Supportive Service; and
- Lack of other community resources.

In all cases, staff must review case notes prior to making any Supportive Service payments to avoid duplicate payments and ensure payments remain reasonable and necessary.

Participant Reimbursements

FNS allows SkillUP to provide services needed to participate in the program or job retention. The Provider issues services directly to the participant up to the prescribed limits. These limits include the 50/50 match. You cannot allow employees to pay for client services or participant reimbursements with employee's personal funds, such as credit cards, even if you will reimburse the employee.

Tracking:

You must track all supportive services (participant reimbursements). Use the SkillUP TRE Log (Excel document) to track and use as backup detail for reimbursement submission. Use the Weekly TRE/WRE Claim Form for student attestation of receipt of services.

Refer to the SkillUP Handbook for additional details on how to administer and track these funds.

Records must contain:

- Copies of ticket and bus pass issuance or logs,
- Copies of receipts for all other participant reimbursements issued such as but not limited to:
 - books,
 - supplies,

- clothing, and
- tools
- Justifications for each issuance.

Transportation Related Expenses (TRE):

SkillUP participants who are participating in an allowable education or training component with a community college may receive a bus pass, gas card or mileage reimbursement. SkillUP participants engaged in an allowable employment, education, or training component may receive mileage reimbursement. It will be calculated based on the round trip mileage from the participant’s home directly to the training/work facility and back using a web-based mapping service such as Google Maps, MapQuest, Yahoo Maps, or a similar service. Verification documents must be obtained prior to payment. Participants enrolled in an educational program or training must submit the completed Weekly Claim for Transportation Related Expenses form (Appendix Q).

There must be a minimum of 10 miles for each TRE entry in MoJobs. The mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.37 per mile and should be paid with a prepaid gas card. SkillUP funds cannot be used to pay transportation expenses associated with “self-directed” job search activities. *Note: Payment of transportation related expenses is contingent on available funding.*

Work Related Expenses (WRE):

SkillUP participants engaged in an allowable employment, education, or training component may receive WRE if the expense meets all of the general supportive service eligibility criteria listed above and required in order to complete the necessary functions to perform a job or training. Example of exclusion would be dress clothes or dress shoes for an office job. *Note: Payment of work related expenses is contingent on available funding.*

SkillUP providers should follow their local WDB Policy when approving WRE payments.

SkillUP funds **cannot** be used to pay the following expenses:

- Automobile Purchase
- Automobile Tags, Title, or License
- Automobile Insurance
- Drug or Alcohol Counseling or Therapy

Do not use SkillUP funding to pay for participant reimbursements if the participant receives other funds identified to cover those costs. Examples of other sources of

funding include but are not limited to Federal Financial aid, grants, scholarships, private payments, etc.

- V. **Financial Aid** – Pell first. Cannot supplant any federal aid with E&T funding.
- VI. **Retention** – utilize college resources (tutoring labs, etc). Utilize WRE/TRE assistance. 30-day notes in MoJOBS on updated progress.
- VII. **Employment** – service does not end here. Colleges must assist participants with job search activities, or refer to their local job center.
- VIII. **Follow-Up** – As part of each community college’s contract, they agree to track participant employment outcomes for 30-60-90 days by contacting them via phone or email to verify length of employment, job type and wages. This information should be entered into MoJOBS within forty-eight hours of obtaining the information and before the end of the current month.
- IX. **Outreach and Recruitment** - Colleges are expected to conduct self-directed outreach and recruitment activities on their campuses and in their communities. MCCA can assist with these efforts.
- X. **Financial Reimbursement** - Colleges will submit, via email to vassb@otc.edu, a monthly invoice to Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) by the tenth of the month following the month in which services were provided. An invoice template, developed by FSD, must be used when invoicing for services provided. Invoices submitted by email must be sent by encrypted email. Providers will invoice per participant for actual costs and include a component list with the invoice. FSD reserves the right to hold payment if all required information is not submitted with the monthly invoice or if the information submitted is not sufficient. FSD will notify OTC if the information submitted is not acceptable.

Invoicing for expenditures for 50/50% matched funding, the invoice must include:

1. Contract Number;
 2. Contractor’s name, address and telephone number;
 3. Month for which services are being invoiced;
 4. Unique invoice number; and
 5. Breakdown of participant reimbursement including work related expense and transportation related expenses.
 6. Tuition report including participant name, DCN, program name, cost of program.
- This report MUST be password protected when sending via email. The report should be sent in one email and the password in another to prevent third parties from being able to

access. This Monthly Program Report can be obtained on the mccatoday.org/skillup resource page.

7. Detail for all admin (salary and fringe) being submitted, including time and effort reports signed by supervisor and any system logs documenting hours/wages/fringe.

XII. Disclaimer - In accordance with grant guidelines, all college employees involved in the SkillUP program must use the below confidentiality statement in their email signature block.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT: This message and any attachments are intended only for those to whom it is addressed and may contain information which is privileged, confidential, and prohibited from disclosure or unauthorized use under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient of this message, you are hereby notified that any use, dissemination, or copying of this email or the information contained in this message is strictly prohibited by the sender. If you have received this transmission in error, please return the material received to the sender and delete all copies from your system.