



Local Policies – Administration and Governance

Ticket to Work Fund Request

Effective Date

6/24/2024, Revised 2/19/2025

Purpose

The Northeast Iowa Workforce Development Board (NEIWDB) establishes the following policy for the administration and utilization of Ticket-to-Work funds. The NEIWDB is committed to ensuring the proper and efficient use of Ticket to Work funds in accordance with established guidelines and regulations. All fund requests must undergo a thorough review and approval process to maintain transparency and accountability.

Background

The Ticket-to-Work program is a voluntary initiative by the Social Security Administration (SSA) designed to help Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients find employment, achieve financial independence, and reduce their reliance on disability benefits. The program offers a range of employment-related services, including career counseling, job training, vocational rehabilitation, job placement assistance, and ongoing support services. Participants work with Employment Networks (ENs) to receive these services. The program is available to individuals aged 18 to 64 who receive SSDI or SSI benefits due to a disability, and it ensures that participants are not at risk of losing their benefits simply by participating. By promoting self-sufficiency, the Ticket-to-Work program aims to enhance the quality of life for beneficiaries while also alleviating the financial burden on the Social Security system.

Funds generated to the Northeast Iowa Workforce Development Board (NEIWDB) through the Ticket-to-Work program primarily come from the Social Security Administration (SSA). The SSA makes outcome-based payments to Employment Networks (ENs) for the employment services they provide to beneficiaries. These payments are made when specific milestones and outcomes are achieved, such as the beneficiary finding a job or achieving a certain level of earnings. The funds for these payments come from the SSA's budget, which is derived from federal funds allocated to support disability programs.

The Northeast Iowa Workforce Development Board (NEIWDB) has flexibility in how they use these funds. We aim to support our partners and their initiatives effectively, leveraging Ticket-to-Work funds to enhance employment outcomes and services for individuals that are being served within the Northeast Iowa local area.

Policy

Purpose

To provide a structured and transparent process for the review, approval, and disbursement of Ticket-to-Work funds, ensuring these funds are used effectively to support workforce development initiatives. This policy outlines the procedures for the utilization of Ticket-to-Work funds by the Northeast Iowa Workforce Board (NEIWDB).



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Procedures

1. Proposal and Request Review
 - All proposals and requests for the use of Ticket-to-Work funds must be reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee of the NEIWDB.
 - Proposals should include a detailed description of the project (or items), budget, and expected outcomes.
 - See Criteria for Evaluating Ticket-to-Work Proposals below.
2. Approval Process/Submission Request
 - Upon approval, the NEIWDB Executive Director will work with the requestor on the process outlining the purchase. The requestor will follow policies and procedures outlined within their organization on purchasing the item(s) needed.
 - The requestor will ensure that the invoice and supporting documentation gets to the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for providing that information directly to the Fiscal Agent.
 - Appropriate documentation, including but not limited to receipts, invoices, or bills, must accompany the request.
 - Documentation of the committee/board meeting minutes that detail the approved action must be included with the request.
 - The Fiscal Agent will not pay the invoice until all supporting documentation is received.
3. Documentation Requirements
 - All requests must include thorough documentation to substantiate the use of funds.
 - Documentation should be clear, accurate, and provide a complete audit trail for all expenditures.

Fiscal Agent Review

The Fiscal Agent will review the submitted request and accompanying documentation. Any discrepancies or missing information will be addressed promptly with the NEIWDB and requestor to ensure completeness and accuracy.

4. Fund Disbursement
 - Upon approval, the Fiscal Agent will submit the invoice for payment once all supporting documentation has been received.
 - The NEIWDB will maintain records of all transactions and ensure that the funds are utilized strictly for the approved purposes.
5. Compliance and Accountability
 - The NEIWDB is responsible for ensuring that all Ticket-to-Work funds are used in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines.
 - Regular reports on the use and outcomes of the Ticket-to-Work funds will be provided to the NEIWDB to ensure transparency and accountability.
6. Policy Review



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- This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis to reflect any changes in procedures, regulations, or organizational needs.

By following this policy, the NEIWDB aims to maintain a high standard of financial stewardship and transparency in the utilization of Ticket-to-Work funds.

Criteria for Evaluation Ticket-To-Work Fund Proposals *(New 2/19/2025)*

The Northeast Iowa Workforce Development Board (NEIWDB) aims to use Ticket-to-Work funds effectively to support innovative initiatives, strengthen outreach, and enhance the work of WIOA core and required partners across Northeast Iowa. These criteria are designed to ensure proposals are purposefully considered and aligned with the broader mission of supporting workforce development efforts in the Northeast Iowa local area.

Approved on 2/6/2025

Evaluation Criteria

1. Alignment with Local Workforce Goals

- **Purpose:** Does the proposal support the overarching goals of improving workforce development, enhancing outreach, or addressing critical workforce needs in Northeast Iowa?
- **Collaboration:** Does the proposal promote or benefit multiple WIOA core and required partners, strengthening the Northeast Iowa local workforce system?

2. Outreach and Community Engagement

- **Impact:** Does the initiative expand outreach efforts or increase awareness of services among job seekers, employers, or other key stakeholders?
- **Inclusivity:** Will the project reach underserved or underrepresented populations within the Northeast Iowa local area?

3. Geographic Impact and Regional Flexibility

- **Regional Scope:** Does the proposal outline how its outcomes will benefit multiple counties or key stakeholder groups across the Northeast Iowa local area?
- **Localized Benefits with Broader Potential:** If the proposal is focused on a specific county or smaller community, does it include a plan for scalability or shared learning that can benefit the wider region?
- **Equity of Access:** Does the project address workforce disparities or gaps in underserved or underrepresented areas of Northeast Iowa?

4. Value to the Workforce System

- **Cross-Partner Benefits:** Does the proposal provide value or resources that benefit all partners and stakeholders in the local workforce system?
 - **Strategic Importance:** Is the initiative addressing a current gap or challenge in the workforce system?
5. **Innovation and Creativity**
- **New Opportunities:** Does the proposal introduce creative approaches to enhance service delivery, outreach, or workforce outcomes?
 - **Scalability:** Could the project be scaled or replicated to benefit additional partners?
6. **Financial Stewardship**
- **Cost Justification:** Is the budget for the proposal reasonable and clearly outlined?
 - **Impact vs. Cost:** Does the proposal demonstrate how the investment will create a meaningful impact relative to its cost?
7. **Feasibility and Execution**
- **Implementation Plan:** Is there a clear and realistic plan for executing the project?
 - **Capacity:** Does the organization submitting the proposal have the capacity to deliver on the proposed outcomes?
8. **Monitoring and Accountability**
- **Outcome Measurement:** Does the proposal include a plan for measuring its success or impact?
 - **Reporting:** Are there clear mechanisms for tracking fund usage and providing updates to the NEIWDB?
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Suggestions for Fund Utilization

To guide discussions and inspire purposeful use of these funds, the NEIWDB may also consider:

- **Outreach Campaigns:** Initiatives to promote awareness of workforce programs, job opportunities, and available services across Northeast Iowa.
- **Shared Resources:** Investments in tools or materials (e.g., marketing campaigns, outreach events, or technology upgrades) that benefit all core and required partners.
- **Innovative Pilot Projects:** Supporting projects that test new approaches or strategies for improving workforce outcomes in the local area.



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- **Capacity-Building Efforts:** Providing training or resources to strengthen the capacity of partners within the workforce system.
- **Balancing Regional and Local Impact:** Supporting initiatives that effectively balance regional benefits with localized innovation, ensuring funds create meaningful, lasting improvements in workforce outcomes throughout the 20-county local area.

Additional Information:

This criteria will be used to evaluate all proposals, with both committees collaborating to ensure the process is transparent, consistent, and effective.

The Executive Committee will periodically review the criteria, incorporating lessons learned and evolving priorities to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Feedback from the Finance Committee will be central to refining the process overtime.

This collaborative approach ensures that both the Executive and Finance Committee contribute their unique perspectives and expertise, resulting in well-rounded and effective guidance for the use of Ticket-to-Work funds. This emphasizes the broad flexibility of the funds while ensuring they are used strategically to support all partners and workforce initiatives in Northeast Iowa.