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To: WED Area Directors
WED Regional Managers
Local Area Administrators
SC Works Operators

From: Nina Staggers, AED – Workforce Development

Subject: **GED Incentive Program**

Date: February 3, 2023

A GED is critical to a job seeker's ability to secure a higher paying job. Studies show that individuals who possess a high school diploma or GED earn more than those who do not have that credential by \$7,000 a year. Encouraging job seekers to earn a GED will increase their opportunity to secure sustainable wages, open the door to higher education, and decrease the number of unemployed/underemployed job seekers.

The GED Incentive Program is a partnership between the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) and the SC Department of Education, Office of Adult Education, whereby Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants can earn their GED through local Adult Education centers for free, have their job searches waived, and receive a \$500 incentive payment upon completion.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the \$500 bonus, the job seeker must:

- ✓ Be a South Carolina resident
- ✓ Be at least 19 years of age
- ✓ Have an established UI claim as of 6/25/2021
- ✓ Register for GED classes after 6/25/2021
- ✓ Lack a high school diploma or GED
- ✓ Earn their GED before June 1, 2023

This GED-training is considered UI-approved training—claimants who are actively participating in GED training through SC Adult Education can be waived from the work search requirement. The claimant must submit a waiver form each month while in training. See [State Instruction 20-04, Change 1: UI-Approved GED Wagner-Peyser Activity Code](#) for more information.

INCENTIVE PAYMENT INFORMATION

Eligible claimants will receive a one-time payment of \$500 dollars as an incentive for earning their GED. Incentives will be paid on a first-come, first-to-complete basis, for as long as funding is available. This incentive payment is processed through DEW, in conjunction with SC Adult Education, and is a physical check issued from the Comptroller General's office. The incentive payment is usually processed and mailed 3 – 4 weeks after a job seeker earns their GED. It is imperative for the individual to ensure that their mailing address in the My Benefits Portal/SCUBI is up to date prior to completion of their training.

NOTE: The local SC Works and Adult Education centers do not make the incentive payment, and the incentive payments cannot be made by direct deposit to a bank account or pre-paid debit card.

PARTNER ASSISTANCE

SC Works system partners can assist by promoting the program to their participants and clients and directing them to a local Adult Education center, a local SC Works center, our website at <https://dew.sc.gov/ged-free>, or our email at WorkforceDevelopment@dew.sc.gov.

RESOURCES

Contact: WorkforceDevelopment@dew.sc.gov

Visit: <https://dew.sc.gov/ged-free>

Learn: GED Incentive Program Webinar (available on Staff Online Resources)

Questions may be directed to PolnPro@dew.sc.gov.