

PUBLIC POLICY AUTHORIZING WAGE PAYMENTS TO ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN PAID WORK EXPERIENCE, TRANSITIONAL JOBS, AND INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19

I. INTRODUCTION

The Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Wanda Vázquez Garced, issued Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-020 on March 12, 2020, declaring a state of emergency regarding the impact of COVID-19. Subsequently, on March 15, 2020, Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-023 was issued to order the closure of governmental and private sector operations to combat the spread of COVID-19 from March 15 to March 30, 2020. To extend measures controlling the risk of contagion, Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-029 was issued on March 30, 2020, extending government closures through April 12, 2020, or until further notice. Thereafter, on April 12, 2020, Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-033 extended the closure through May 3, 2020, or until further notice.

These executive orders applied to public employees not providing essential services. One-Stop Career Centers and the services provided within the system were not designated as essential services. The Local Board, in coordination with the Chief Elected Official, is responsible for ensuring the proper use and administration of funds for youth, adult, and dislocated worker activities, as well as the One-Stop Delivery System of the Local Workforce Development Area.

II. LEGAL BASIS

- Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-020, issued by the Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Wanda Vázquez Garced, on March 12, 2020.
- Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-023, issued by the Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Wanda Vázquez Garced, on March 15, 2020.
- Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-029, issued by the Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Wanda Vázquez Garced, on March 30, 2020.
- Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-033, issued by the Governor of Puerto Rico, Hon. Wanda Vázquez Garced, on April 12, 2020.
- Section 679.370(i) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Regulations.
- ETA Coronavirus (COVID-19) FAQs issued via WorkforceGPS, updated on April 13 and 14, 2020.

III. PUBLIC POLICY

Wage payments are hereby authorized for participants in **Paid Work Experience, Transitional Jobs, and Internship activities** suspended or cancelled due to COVID-19.

Prerequisites:

- An executed employer contract and a signed Participant Appointment Form must have been in effect prior to the government shutdown order issued via Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-023 on March 15, 2020.
- Payments shall cover unpaid balances specified in the Participant Appointment Form, consistent with the master contract.

Disbursement Schedule:

- **First Disbursement:** A retroactive payment covering the period from March 16, 2020, through the approval date of this policy.
- **Subsequent Disbursements:** Biweekly payments issued until government closure orders are lifted and the participant returns to the workplace, or until the contract end date, whichever occurs first.

Note: This policy does not apply to unpaid payrolls for periods preceding the shutdown order of March 15, 2020. Prior outstanding payrolls shall be processed through standard administrative procedures.

IV. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy was approved by the Executive Committee of the Local Board during a virtual meeting held on **April 24, 2020**. Given the urgency of its implementation, it will be communicated electronically to all members of the Local Board. The policy takes effect immediately upon approval. The Executive Director of the Local Board shall be responsible for informing staff immediately upon approval and sending copies electronically.

In witness whereof, we sign this public policy today, **April 24, 2020**, in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico.



JOSÉ A. JUSTINIANO RODRÍGUEZ
Chair, Local Workforce Development Board

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