

# Placer Workforce Education and Training Policy & Procedures

## *Mission*

*The Placer Workforce Education and Training (WET) mission is to develop and support a diverse workforce capable of providing recovery-focused, person and family centered, wellness resiliency, and culturally responsive services. WET is in place to address identified public mental health occupational shortages and meet the education and training needs of the Placer County's public mental health system by recruiting, retaining, and strengthening the mental health workforce.*

## **Reimbursement and Scholarship Program**

### **OBJECTIVE**

The Reimbursement and Scholarship program is designed to provide individuals working in, or committed to working in, the Placer County mental health field the opportunity to continue their self-development by supporting their enrollment in accredited classroom courses, trainings, relevant workshops, paying for related training material and fees, and more. California Board of Psychology and Board of Behavioral Sciences licensing exam study materials are limited to a one-time reimbursement only.

- Offer the public mental health workforce opportunities for career advancement in their occupational field;
- Provide the public mental health workforce an opportunity to improve their skills and abilities in recovery oriented practice;
- Enable individuals to apply new concepts, methods, and ideas in their work and communities, and empower them to meet the changing responsibilities of the public mental health workforce; and
- Enable individuals to enter the mental health workforce, should they have limited or no resources to do so.

### **ELIGIBLE COURSES & TRAININGS**

Eligible courses and trainings will include components to enhance the individual's skills in recovery-oriented mental health services consistent with the goals of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

- Funds may be granted for tuition, books, licensing examination study materials, registration fees, and laboratory fees. Tuition for courses not directly linked to a major, certification, and/or accreditation but can be shown to be required, such as a general education requirement or prerequisite to enroll in a course, would be eligible.

- Funds received *from other sources* will be deducted from the cost to determine the amount paid for reimbursement (i.e. no double dipping).
- Placer County government employees are required to utilize funding opportunities provided by the County before applying for WET Tuition Reimbursement or Scholarship. WET funds cannot be used to supplant other available options.
- The WET Committee will only pay the maximum amount allowable of \$550 per fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>) regardless of the school or training attended. Tuition that exceeds the maximum amount will not be paid or reimbursed. All reimbursements are based on availability of funding.

## **PROCEDURES – Reimbursement**

- Applicant submits a completed WET Reimbursement Application with supporting documents to the WET Coordinator
  - Completed *Placer Workforce, Education & Training Scholarship and Reimbursement Application* form with applicant and supervisor signature and date.
  - All short essay question answers – not to exceed 250 words per response.
  - Receipt for courses, trainings, and all related materials paid by the applicant.
- Applicants have 60 days from the purchase date to submit their application for reimbursement. Any submission beyond 60 days will be denied.
- The WET Selection Subcommittee will evaluate applications and make a determination within 30 days of receiving the complete application and supporting documents.
- Approved applications will go to the Placer County Adult System of Care Director for authorization (may send prior to approval for timely processing).
- The WET Coordinator will contact the applicant regarding the outcome of the application. Upon approval, funding for reimbursements will be made to the applicant.
- Applicants without a vendor number on file will need to complete and return the Placer County Vendor Packet in order to process payments.
- Upon completion of the approved course or training, the applicant shall submit the following to the WET Coordinator (failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for future funding; not required for licensing examination study material reimbursement):
  - Final grade report, proof of completion, student transcript record, and/or signed certificate of attendance.
  - Upon completion

## Additional Guidelines for **Licensing Examination Study Materials**

- Reimbursement Applications for California Board of Psychology and Board of Behavioral Sciences licensing examination study materials for registered interns or associates will require the following additional items for consideration:
  - Proof/letter of exam eligibility for the specific license examination, such as the California Law & Ethics and/or the California Clinical exam.
  - Receipt for materials purchased within 60 days of submitting their application and/or within 60 days of becoming exam eligible.
- Important:
  - Registered interns or associates are only eligible to receive a one-time reimbursement up to \$550 for licensing examination study materials.
  - Participation in WET sponsored Licensing Examination Study Prep courses does not affect future eligibility to receive reimbursement for Licensing Exam Study Material.
  - Applicants for licensing examination study material reimbursement do not need to provide proof of passing any component of the licensing examinations due to the nature of exam scheduling, time to prepare/study for the exams, and potential need to retake the exams.

## **PROCEDURES – Scholarships**

Scholarships are competitive and require additional information to verify the level of need. Applicants are encouraged to apply for a reimbursement if eligible to do so.

- To apply for a W.E.T. Scholarship, applicants shall submit a completed Placer Workforce, Education & Training Scholarship and Reimbursement Application to the W.E.T. Coordinator (include answer to question #7)
- The WET Selection Subcommittee will evaluate applications and make a determination within 30 days of receiving the complete application and supporting documents.
- The WET Coordinator will contact the applicant regarding the outcome of the application.
- Approved scholarship funding will be paid directly to the vendor, school, entity, etc. (Entities or agencies to receive funds must be able to accept third-party payment.)
- Applicants are required to submit the following information to process payments:
  - i. Invoice for the class, materials, fees, etc.
  - ii. Contact information for the entity to receive funds
- Upon completion of the approved course or training, the applicant shall submit their final grade report, proof of completion, student transcript record, and/or signed certificate of attendance to the WET Coordinator. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for future funding.

## **APPLICATION SELECTION PROCESS**

A WET Selection Subcommittee made up of three members (two community partners and one County employee) will review and decide on all applications. The WET Coordinator supports the process but is not one of the three voting members of the Selection Subcommittee. Applications approved by the Subcommittee will be forwarded to the Director of Placer County Adult System of Care for authorization.

- In the event of a conflict of interest, or one of the voting members recuses themselves, the remaining votes must be unanimous, or the WET Coordinator becomes the deciding vote.

## **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

Applicants must be committed to working in the public mental health field and to using the skills learned through this program to enhance their ability to provide recovery-focused, person/family centered, wellness resiliency, and culturally competent services. Applicants must meet one or more of the criteria listed below to be eligible. Awards are subject to available funding at the time of application.

- Persons who work or volunteer in the public mental health field, including students or community members involved in public mental health services;
- Persons with lived-experience as defined by:
  - i. Experience with a serious mental illness;
  - ii. Experience as a primary non-professional care provider for an individual with a serious mental illness;
  - iii. Customarily discloses that experience in the performance of work assignments;
  - iv. Someone who has received and/or assisted others with accessing public behavioral health services;
  - v. Someone with personal experience pertaining to mental illness.
- Persons considered part of an under-represented population (as defined in the Placer County MHSA 3-year Plan);
- Bilingual and/or bicultural;
- Persons working towards hard-to-fill positions as identified in the OSHPD County Workforce Needs Assessment. As of 2015 these positions include: Psychiatrist, Child Psychiatrist, Psychiatric Nurse, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, experienced Supervisor/Management, and Nurse Practitioners;

## **REPORTING AWARDS**

The WET Coordinator and/or Selection Subcommittee will report on awarded funds at the WET Advisory Meeting's quarterly budget review.

## **GRIEVANCE/APPEAL**

- In case of a denial, the WET Coordinator will notify the applicant in writing the reason(s) for denial within 15 working days of the WET Selection Subcommittee's decision.
- The applicant can submit a written appeal to the WET Coordinator explaining how they meet the qualifications and should receive funding. The WET Coordinator will notify the applicant in writing of the WET Selection Subcommittee's final decision within 15 working days.