

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
February 25, 2016**

AMENDED IM 5268

TO: County Social Service Directors
Economic Assistance Policy Regional Representatives
Economic Assistance Policy Quality Control Reviewers

FROM: Carol Cartledge, Director, Economic Assistance Division

SUBJECT: **Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST) Program**

PROGRAMS: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

EFFECTIVE: January 1, 2016

RETENTION: Until Manualized

SECTIONS

AFFECTED: 430-05-40-55 – Basic Employment Skills Training Program (BEST)
430-05-40-55-10 – Exemptions from BEST
430-05-40-55-20 – County Procedures
430-05-40-55-35 – Participant Reimbursement

This IM is being amended to correct the transportation expense and to add information in number four; Participant Reimbursement – 430-05-40-55-35.

Effective January 1, 2016, the following policy changes are being made: The BEST program will again become operational in Burleigh and Cass Counties. The new contract has been awarded to Job Service North Dakota. All BEST referral forms completed and held between October 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 should be discarded. When those individuals complete the review process, a new determination must be made and a new referral completed to BEST, if appropriate.

1. 430-05-40-55 – Basic Employment Skills Training Program (BEST).
This section was changed to include:
 - Removed the word 'SNAP' from the first line of the paragraph.

Basic Employment Skills Training Program (BEST) - 430-05-40-55

The ~~SNAP~~ Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST) Program is intended to expose participating individuals to job seeking and retention skills. It is operational in Burleigh and Cass counties.

2. 430-05-40-55-10 – Exemptions from BEST. The number of Exemptions from BEST have been reduced from ten to seven.

Exemptions from BEST - 430-05-40-55-10

The following individuals are not required to participate in BEST (TECS coding on the WORE screen is listed):

1. Individuals exempt from work registration (EX)
2. Migrants in the job stream (MI)
3. Individuals exempt for good cause as determined by sound, professional judgment of the worker. The case must be thoroughly documented to support the exemption (GC)
- ~~4. Limited and non-English speaking individuals (NE)~~
4. Individuals who are participating in the Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) Program (PP)
5. Individuals where public transportation is limited because of where and when the public transportation is available (LT)
6. Individuals with a temporary disability such as a broken leg, illness, etc. (DI)
- ~~8. Pregnant women (PG)~~
7. Individuals who do not ~~have a fixed mailing address~~ have a permanent residence and are 'homeless' (MA)
- ~~10. Individuals who have been referred and the BEST coordinator determines the referral is not~~

~~appropriate. Justification for the exemption will be provided to the eligibility worker in writing. (IA)~~

3. 430-05-40-55-20 – County Procedures. The title of the SFN 679 was corrected to match the title on the document. The number and title of the notice to be sent to the client to begin the conciliation process was also added.

County Procedures - 430-05-40-55-20

The workers must carry out the following procedures:

- Determine if the work registrant is required to participate in BEST.
- If the work registrant is exempt, enter the exemption reason code and date exempted on TECS screen WORE.
- If the work registrant is not exempt, refer them to the Employment Communication orientation session using Form SFN 679, "~~Employment Communication Orientation Referral~~ Basic Employment Skills Training Program (BEST) Referral," e-form. Date, time and place of orientation sessions can be obtained from the local Workshop Coordinator.
- Inform the Workshop Coordinator of the referral by sending them a copy of the completed Form SFN 679, "~~Employment Communication Orientation Referral~~ Basic Employment Skills Training Referral," that was given to the participant.
- If notified by the Workshop Coordinator that an individual has failed to comply with BEST participant responsibilities begin conciliation procedures by sending the F803 – BEST Non-Compliance Conciliation Notice to the client.

4. 430-05-40-55-35 – Participant Reimbursement. This section was updated to reflect the change in the how participants may be reimbursed for complying with the program.

Participant Reimbursement - 430-05-40-55-35

~~BEST Program mandatory and voluntary participants are reimbursed a flat rate of ten dollars per day for transportation and other costs directly related to participation in the BEST Program, up to a maximum of \$50 per month.~~

Participant payments will be made to individuals who have been approved and have an open SNAP case up to a maximum of \$50.00 per month. Participants will be required to provide receipts for allowable expenses to the workshop coordinator by the close of business on the last working day of the month. Reimbursements will be made by the State Office directly to participating individuals during the month following participation and are excluded as income.

Allowable expenses include the following:

- Transportation (bus **fare/voucher and gas** taxi fare only)
- Clothing for job interviews
- Clothing required for a job – **as part of job retention component**
- Licensing or bonding fees for work
- Books – must be necessary to complete BEST training/educational coursework.
- Personal safety items – **must be necessary to complete BEST training/educational course work**
- Training materials – **must be necessary to complete BEST training/educational course work**
- Uniforms – must be necessary to complete BEST training/educational course work

~~Reimbursements are excluded as income.~~

~~Reimbursements will be made by the State Office directly to participating individuals during the month following participation.~~

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Representative.