


LRS CHAPTER 4, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & GUIDANCE MANUAL

 LOUISIANA WORKFORCE COMMISSION <small>The Department of Labor</small>	Part	Name	Effective Date
	411.1	Period of Performance, Authorizations, Payments and Validation	*2/1/2023**
Authorization Federal Register, Volume 81, Department of Education, 34 CFR 361, Part VI, State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program; 34 CFR 363; 2 CFR 200.67; 2 CFR 200.71; 2 CFR 200.77; 2 CFR 200.320; EDGAR 34 CFR 76.707; Louisiana Act 864 of 2014; & Louisiana Executive Order Number JBE 2020 - 21.			

I. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Period of performance is the time period that LRS is allowed to obligate funds for services provided. It is based on the federal fiscal year (October – September). After the end of a period of performance, the Rehabilitation Services Administration allows for a liquidation period to complete payments for any services rendered during the prior period of performance (October – September).

A. Paying for Services Rendered During a Period of Performance/Federal Fiscal Year

Staff must observe the liquidation period timelines when processing payment. The timelines for each grant period/period of performance are detailed in I.C. below.

B. Paying for Services Using Carryover Funds

Carryover funds are funds from the prior grant period that are still available to be used for payment of services in the current grant period. In the event that LRS has carryover funds, refer to the guide in I.C. below regarding adjusted timelines for making payments with these funds.

C. Period of Performance Authorization Timelines

Effective until *September 30, 2023**		
Authorization Issue Date	Award Year	Note
Prior to or on September 30, *2021**	*2021**	The award is closed. Send any invoices received for original authorizations issued prior to October 1, *2021** to the LRS Financial Administrator.
*** October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2023	2022 or 2023	The award is open. Invoices received for original authorizations issued between October 1, 2021 thru September 30, 2023 can be paid.

II. AUTHORIZATIONS & PAYMENTS

A. Authorizations

1. There are three types of authorizations available in AWARE to purchase needed services for participants: vendor, direct and recurring.
 - a. A vendor authorization is made payable to a vendor other than the participant.
 - b. A direct authorization is made payable to the participant.
 - c. A recurring authorization is made payable to the participant and payment is sent to the participant at a frequency and begin and end date set by the field user. Recurring authorizations are only used for maintenance and transportation services.
2. For Direct or Recurring payments, a Direct Deposit form (RS_DD) should be completed by the participant. This form is found on the Share drive, under the LRS folder, in Documents, _LRS Forms, VR Forms, RS_DD_Direct Deposit. The Counselor/RCA will scan or attach a copy of the completed form to LRSAWARE by email for further processing and file any hard copy originally signed forms received in the hard copy case record.
3. All three types of authorizations are available as options to set up in draft status in AWARE. While an authorization is in draft status, no monetary obligations are subtracted from the budget and no payments can be made. Upon receipt of necessary approvals, the draft authorization is issued and funds are obligated. The authorization amount is subtracted from the available budget for the selected reporting structure and current period of performance/federal fiscal year.

B. Secondary Approval Process for Authorizations

In order to adhere to state purchasing requirements, secondary approval will be required to authorize and pay for services provided. Prior Approval procedures in Chapter 10, Part 1.1 Prior Approval should still be adhered to and Prior Approval should be obtained for those purchases indicated before beginning the following process to obtain secondary approvals.

1. Vendor Authorizations \$4,999 or Less:

All authorizations in the amount of \$4,999 or less require District Supervisor approval before the authorization can be issued. In AWARE, once the draft authorization is entered and before it is issued, the District Supervisor will be required to approve it as a secondary approver.

To approve vendor authorizations in AWARE, Approvers will go into the Financial Module, and under Layout select Secondary Approval – Approver Queue, select the authorization number to review, review attachments and when ready to Approve/Disapprove, in the Secondary Approval table, under Approver Action, click Approve or Disapprove. Approvers will need to check daily to see if they have any authorizations waiting for approval. Once all required Approvers have approved, then the RCA can issue the authorization and send a copy to the vendor by selecting Actions, Issue Authorization.

In order to check which authorizations have been approved and are ready to be issued, LRS staff can pull up the Secondary Approval – Requester Queue Layout in the Financial Module in AWARE.

2. Vendor Authorizations \$5,000 - \$24,999:

All authorizations in the amount of \$5,000 - \$24,999 require secondary approval by the District Supervisor and LWC Procurement before the authorization can be issued. In AWARE, once the draft authorization is entered it will go through the secondary approval process so that the District Supervisor and LWC Procurement reviews and approves it. Once all secondary approvals have been received the RCA will be able to issue the vendor authorizations and services can be provided.

Once the draft authorization is entered into AWARE and all of the justifying documentation is attached that approvers will need to view, such as price quotes, tuition cost from school websites, etc., then select Actions, Request Approval and AWARE will ask if you would like to proceed with moving the authorization into the Secondary Approval Process, click o.k. and you will see in the Secondary Approval table, under Approval Status, that Secondary Approval is pending.

To approve authorizations in AWARE, Secondary Approvers will go into the Financial Module, and under Layout select Secondary Approval – Approver Queue, select the authorization number to review, review attachments and when ready to Approve/Disapprove, in the Secondary Approval table, under Approver Action, click Approve or Disapprove. This will queue the authorization for the next approver to review. The approvers will need to check daily to see if they have any authorizations waiting for approval. Once all Approvers have approved, then the

authorization can be issued and a copy sent to the vendor by selecting Actions, Issue Authorization.

In order to check which authorizations have been approved and are ready to be issued, LRS staff can pull up the Secondary Approval – Requester Queue Layout in the Financial Module in AWARE.

3. Vendor Authorizations \$25,000 or More:

An authorization will not be entered in AWARE for amounts of \$25,000 or more as these will need to be completed in the LWC 761 system and sent to the Office of State Purchasing (OSP) to issue a purchase order. The required Approval for these will be completed in the 761 system and include the District Supervisor, Regional Manager, LWC Procurement and OSP. Once OSP approves and issues a Purchase Order (P.O.), they will send it back to LWC Procurement who will notify LRS State Office and State Office will notify the LRS Regional Office that the IPE/Plan can be written and services provided. Once the invoice is received from the vendor, it should be forwarded to State Office for processing of payment. State Office staff will enter the service & payment information back into AWARE after payment is made.

The person in each regional office who enters 761s will enter the required information into the 761 system along with attachments listed below:

- Completed Form 761(A)
- Price quotes received
- PDF section of vendor manual material, if price quotes not received and service is being provided by a vendor
- Fee schedule if it is a high cost tuition authorization
- Any other supporting documentation such as assistive technology assessments

NOTE: To ensure confidentiality, any personal identifying information must be redacted before scanning into 761. The AWARE personal identification number shall not be redacted for internal tracking of the 761.

When entering into 761, the Object Code 3840 – Other Charges – Participant Payments – Section 110 should be chosen under number 17) Object.

17) Object
3840 - Other Charges - Client Payments - Section 110

4. Direct or Recurring Authorizations \$4,999 or Less:

There is no process in AWARE to allow for secondary approvers on Direct or Recurring authorizations, however, secondary approval is still required by the District Supervisor. Create the draft authorization in AWARE, then select Actions, Print Draft Authorization and create a PDF draft authorization that can be signed electronically. This can be emailed to your supervisor to approve and sign electronically, then the approved copy must be attached to the authorization in AWARE.

5. Direct or Recurring Authorizations \$5,000 - \$24,999:

There is no process in AWARE to allow for secondary approvers on Direct or Recurring authorizations, however, secondary approval is still required by the District Supervisor and LWC Procurement. For these authorizations, the draft authorization is created, then in AWARE select Actions, Print Draft Authorization and create a PDF draft authorization that can be signed electronically. This can be emailed to your supervisor to approve, and sign electronically, and then forwarded to LWC Procurement. Once LWC Procurement signs, they will forward back to the District Supervisor and the authorization can be issued. The approved copy must be attached to the authorization in AWARE.

C. Payments

1. The Counselor/RCA must verify that the authorization is being paid from the correct period of performance/federal fiscal year budget. When an invoice is received from an authorization issued in another period of performance/federal fiscal year, the Counselor/RCA should follow the process in I. A. above.

2. Payments on authorizations that are over the originally approved amount must have additional approvals as follows:

a. For Payments \$4,999 or Less:

If an authorization under \$4,999 needs to be increased, the increase will require the approval of a District Supervisor. If the additional increase will cause the total amount of the authorization to be over \$5,000 and over, the authorization must be canceled and a new one drafted to submit for the required secondary approvers to review and approve based on the new total amount of the authorization. See 2.b. and 2.c. below listing required approvers.

- b. For Payments \$5,000 - \$24,999:

If the amount of a payment exceeds the original amount approved on the original authorization, the District Supervisor's and LWC Procurement's approval is required for the increase. The original authorization must be canceled and a new one drafted to submit for the required secondary approvers to review and approve based on the new total amount of the authorization. If the additional increase will result in the payment being \$25,000 or over, the process in II.B.3. must be followed to request approval.

- c. For Payments \$25,000 or More:

Payments \$25,000 or more will be made by LWC Procurement/Fiscal. After the counselor verifies that the participant is satisfied with services received, invoices received requiring payment must be forwarded to State Office for processing and payment. Per II.B.3, payment for items/services over \$25,000 that was approved by OSP cannot be increased without LWC Procurement/OSP approving the increase. If an increase in the payment amount over the amount approved by OSP needs to be requested, contact State Office on how to proceed.

III. VALIDATING AND RELEASING PAYMENTS

The validation process ensures that payments are being made to the correct vendor, for the correct participant, for the correct service, for the correct payment amount and that the billing invoice and any other required documentation is attached.

- A. The same staff person who entered the payment request cannot validate and release the payment request. A different staff person must validate and release payment.

NOTE: Pay special attention not to validate/release payments entered by Supervising Counselor/team that may show up on the report. Simply indicate "Supervising Counselor to validate and release" next to the name on the validation report.

- B. The information on the invoice should be compared to what is entered into AWARE to verify that there are no discrepancies and that it is correct. The invoice date cannot precede the service delivery date.
- C. Verify that the date on the invoice is on or after the authorization service date on the payment authorization. It cannot be before. For example: If a bill comes in

with a date of 06/09/21 and the authorization service date is 06/12/21, return the payment documents to the counselor for correction.

- D. Sign and date the Payment Validation Report and Payment Authorization form electronically and file appropriately.

IV. VALIDATING AND RELEASING PAYMENTS – VENDOR PORTAL PAYMENTS

The validation process ensures that payments are being made to the correct vendor using the Portal, for the correct participant, for the correct service, for the correct payment amount and that the billing invoice and any other required documentation is attached to the Vendor Portal Payment Request. At this time, Universities, Colleges, Post-secondary schools and school Bookstores are **not** using the Vendor Portal due to the significant amount of consumers served and dealings with LRS Liaison Officers. Vendors providing Medical Records are not to use the Vendor Portal either.

No Payment Request should be rejected unless the invoice, progress reports, etc., are incorrect, or the consumer information is incorrect. The dates and amounts should be corrected by the RCA.

- A. The staff person who entered the payment request cannot validate and release the payment request.
- B. The information on the invoice attached to the Vendor Portal Payment Request must be compared to what is entered into AWARE to verify that there are no discrepancies. The invoice date cannot precede the service delivery date.
- C. Verify that the date on the invoice is on or after the authorization service date on the payment authorization, it cannot be before. If the vendor incorrectly enters an invoice date in the portal that does not match the invoice date on the attachment, and the actual invoice date is on or after the authorization service date, the RCA will be able to correct this and move forward. If the actual invoice date is before the authorization service date, the payment request should be rejected.
- D. When the Payment is ready for Release, there will be no Validation Reports to be printed since the Vendor Portal is a paperless system.