
Policy Number: 103.430
Title: Tuition Reimbursement
Effective Date: 1/21/20

PURPOSE: To support the agency’s talent management strategy through provision of opportunities and financial support for employees to pursue education that will improve their skills and also will enhance the quality of department services through the recruitment of highly qualified candidates. To ensure the agency develops, maintains, and updates an effective process to provide financial support opportunities to existing and to prospective employees.

APPLICABILITY: Department-wide

DEFINITIONS:

Lane change – teacher increase in pay, achieved by completion of approved graduate credits or local credits and achievement of specified benchmarks (e.g., Master’s degree, 15 credits, etc.)

PROCEDURES:

A. Eligibility for Tuition Reimbursement

1. All employees on work status are eligible to receive tuition reimbursement if:
 - a) The college courses are job-related and/or part of a degree program that is required for any occupation represented within the Department of Corrections (DOC);
 - b) The employee is not receiving financial aid from other sources to pay for the requested tuition reimbursement;
 - c) The coursework is not required to maintain licensure/accreditation and/or for lane changes; and
 - d) The courses are taken through a regionally-accredited college, university, technical college, or school.
2. Reimbursements to part-time employees and student employees are pro-rated

B. Reimbursement Limits

Employees approved for tuition reimbursement are reimbursed at a rate of 100% of the cost of tuition with a maximum reimbursement cap of \$2,000 per employee per fiscal year. The maximum reimbursement cap may be lifted at the discretion of senior executive leadership based on total participation. The agency is not responsible for and does not assume any responsibility for tuition costs beyond the reimbursement rate or annual reimbursement cap. If additional funds remain at the end of the fiscal year, senior executive leadership may allocate additional funds, but the employee does not need to request such additional reimbursement. Reimbursement is for tuition, lab fees, student fees, books, etc., but not for activity fees or parking. Reimbursements are made when a Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form (attached) is submitted prior to the beginning of the course and approved by the facility training director and/or department training manager.

C. Limitation of Funds

Funds available for tuition reimbursement are limited to a cap approved by senior executive leadership per fiscal year. Therefore, reimbursement is handled on a first-come, first-served basis

unless otherwise approved by senior executive leadership. Any funds not disbursed to employees up to the cap may be split among employees with approved paperwork up to their full cost of tuition, pending approval by senior executive leadership.

D. Fiscal Year (July 1st – June 30th) Considerations

If an employee completes paperwork in one fiscal year but the class ends in the following fiscal year, the employee is reimbursed with funds from the fiscal year in which the class ends (e.g., a class the employee starts in May but finishes in August is reimbursed with the funds available in August rather than the funds available in May).

E. Class Cancellation

If the employee or the school cancels the class, the employee must immediately notify central office employee development. The agency is not responsible for, and does not assume any responsibility for, tuition or any other fees incurred from a cancelled class.

F. Employees requesting reimbursement must complete a Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form (attached) and submit it to central office employee development a minimum of 30 days prior to the beginning of class. Waivers to this 30-day policy must be requested from the employee development director.

G. Employee development staff research the applicant's eligibility, give preliminary approval or disapproval, and submit the request to the employee development director for final approval or disapproval. If the request is not approved, employee development staff retain a file copy of the form and return the original request to the applicant with an explanation. Appeals can be made to the employee development director.

H. When approval is granted, it is only for the specified class requested. A class change, for any reason other than cancellation, requires the employee to submit a new Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form. The employee should note that funds that were available for the original request may not be available when the new request is submitted.

I. Upon the successful completion of the course, and within 45 days following the end of the class, the requesting employee must submit the following documents to central office employee development:

1. A copy of the paid itemized receipt; and
2. A copy of the proof of completion marked either with a "pass" (if a pass/fail course), or a letter grade of "C" or above.

J. The employee development director/designee determines whether all the paperwork has been submitted and is compliant with this policy.

K. The employee development director/designee retains copies of the approved/disapproved final paperwork and uploads the originals back to the employee for approval by the employee's direct management.

L. The employee development director/designee approves the request on-line and uploads the paperwork electronically to central office financial services. The expenses are logged under the approved six-digit account code, and financial services retains an electronic version of the Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form according to the retention schedule.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

- A. The employee development director/designee retains copies of the approved/disapproved final paperwork and submits the originals electronically to central office financial services. The expenses are logged under the approved six-digit account code.
- B. An electronic version of the Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form is retained by central office financial services.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-4093, 1-ABC-1D-17, 2-CO-1D-09, 3-3099, 2-7057

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. §§ [43A.09](#), [43A.21](#)
[Policy 104.460, "Special Expenses"](#)
[MMB Administrative Procedure 21](#)

REPLACES: Policy 103.430, "Tuition Reimbursement," 7/1/18.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Tuition Reimbursement Authorization form (103.430A, on the [Employee Development Tuition Reimbursement iShare site](#))

APPROVALS:

Deputy Commissioner, Community Services

Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services

Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support

Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services