Minnesota Department of Corrections

Policy:	**104.310**	**Title: Membership in Professional Organizations**
Issue Date:	**6/21/16**	
Effective Date:	**7/5/16**	

AUTHORITY: Applicable labor agreements and compensation plans

PURPOSE: To define eligibility for payment of memberships in professional organizations.

APPLICABILITY: Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC); department-wide

POLICY:

A. The department may pay for agency memberships to professional organizations when doing so provides a benefit to the department.

B. The department does not pay for or obtain memberships to:
   1. Private clubs or fraternal organizations;
   2. Organizations that directly influence department policies;
   3. Organizations that exist primarily for social reasons;
   4. Organizations that have a primary purpose for the advancement of employee interests; and
   5. Organizations that restrict memberships on the basis of gender, race, or religion.

C. The department does not reimburse or pay for individual memberships to professional organizations unless one of the following conditions exists:
   1. Required by labor agreement;
   2. Specifically required for job certification training; or
   3. Provides a benefit to the department, such as reduced rates for conferences or publications and the organization only allows individual memberships.
      a) Payment under C.3 is rare and done only under unique circumstances. For example, the DOC may authorize a membership to an organization that does not allow group memberships and the agency receives benefits from having access to services the organization provides. Multiple individual memberships in an organization are not authorized (e.g., Minnesota Corrections Association).
      b) Requests for approval must follow the procedures listed within this policy.

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

A. The employee must determine whether an agency membership in the professional organization exists.

B. If the membership is required by labor agreement or specifically required for job certification, that must be noted on the electronic inter office requisition (EIOR) and completed in accordance with Policy 104.300, "Purchasing." The requester must identify the category under which the membership is authorized on the EIOR. If not completed by EIOR, it must be noted on the employee expense report and submitted for reimbursement in accordance with Policy 104.461 "Employee Travel and Reimbursement of Expenses."

C. If agency membership does not exist and the membership is not required by labor agreement or specifically for job certification training, the requesting employee must submit a written request to his/her supervisor using the DOC Individual Membership form (attached). The request must be completely filled out, with approvals signed in the order listed. All individual memberships, regardless of cost, require executive approval.

D. If the employee's supervisor determines membership would provide a benefit to the department and approves the request, the supervisor signs and forwards the written request to his/her warden or central office budget activity manager for approval.

E. If the warden or central office budget activity manager approves the request, he/she signs and forwards the request to the appropriate assistant or deputy commissioner for approval. The warden or central office budget activity manager may request or recommend multiple agency memberships (e.g., one for each facility or one for each district office) if feasible and cost-effective. If the request is not approved, it is returned to the employee with a written reason for disapproval.

F. If the assistant or deputy commissioner determines membership would provide a benefit to the department and approves the request, he/she returns it to the requestor. The requestor must then complete an EIOR and attach the signed approval form.

G. Financial services staff obtain additional information from requesting employee, if needed, and process the payment to join the professional organization. Records detailing approval and payment of memberships to professional organizations are retained in financial services.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. Documentation of approvals and payments are retained in financial services.

REVIEW: Annually

REFERENCES: Policy 104.300, "Purchasing"
Policy 104.461, "Employee Travel and Reimbursement of Expenses"

SUPERSESSION: Policy 104.310, "Membership in Professional Organizations," 3/31/15.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: DOC Membership Approval form (104.310A)

/s/
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services

Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services