

CITY OF HARTFORD

HUMAN RESOURCES PROCEDURE

TO: Manual Holders
FROM: Human Resources Department
SUBJECT: Tuition Reimbursement Policy
CODE: T-3

EFFECTIVE DATE _____ REVIEW DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

PURPOSE:

To reimburse a percentage of tuition, registration and activity costs to eligible employees for coursework completed in approved, fully-accredited, educational institutions.

POLICY:

Contingent upon budget allocations, full-time City employees who meet specified criteria will receive financial assistance to attend educational courses at fully-accredited educational institutions in order to foster personal development in job-related areas as well as career advancement.

The percentage of reimbursement will normally range between 50% and 80%. However, this percentage range is subject to change depending upon the funding allocated for the fiscal year and the number of employees that apply and are eligible for reimbursement.

Because of financial limitations, tuition reimbursement will only be in effect for the Fall (September-December) and Spring (January-June) semesters. A Summer semester (June-August) is authorized for uniformed Fire Department personnel only.

This policy recognizes agreements between the City and uniformed Fire Department personnel for Tuition Reimbursement participation and reimbursement cost percentage.

Although most academic institutions have traditionally provided for educational learning during evening/weekend periods, employees who are precluded from registering for these offerings may attend one fully-accredited academic course offering during the work day. Written approval must be obtained from the immediate supervisor and department head. Written employee requests for such attendance must contain a revised work schedule to meet the weekly required hours of work and the needs of the organization in which the job is performed. A copy of the

approved request should be attached to the application for Tuition Reimbursement and sent to the Human Resources Department.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROGRAM:

1. Determination of Employee Eligibility

Eligible employees are full-time employees who have completed their initial employment probationary period, and are in good standing within their department. Employees who have transferred or have been promoted and are on probation are eligible for this program.

Employees who have been re-employed and are in their initial probationary period are not eligible for reimbursement.

Employees whose growth increments or general increases are being withheld or who are under some form of disciplinary action from the department head are not eligible for participation in the program.

Any employee who is eligible for tuition assistance payment or reimbursement from any other source must declare the source and amount on the tuition reimbursement application. The City will normally require an employee to use other available payment plans in preference to the City plan.

Veterans must exhaust their educational benefits before reimbursement can be approved. However, if educational benefits received do not cover the entire cost of coursework, the tuition reimbursement program may pay a percentage of the cost not reimbursed.

2. Courses and Programs Eligible for Reimbursement

Courses and programs eligible for reimbursement are limited to courses given by fully-accredited colleges and universities located in the State of Connecticut, adult education courses sponsored by the Hartford Board of Education and accredited by all appropriate national associating schools and colleges. Employees who submit applications and anticipate enrollment in a college/university located out of the state of Connecticut must provide accreditation status for that college/university. The aforementioned guideline also applies to online courses.

Any job-related workshop, convention, conference, seminar or certificate program that any employee requests or is requested to attend will not be eligible for the tuition reimbursement program. Individual departments are responsible for funding such training from their own budgets.

3. Procedures for Submission of Reimbursement Application

An employee must apply for Tuition Reimbursement on the standard application form, cd-11, provided by the Human Resources Department. This form must be completed and

signed by the appropriate department head and submitted to the Human Resources Department. Forms which lack the necessary information or the department head's signature will be returned to the employee. Both the employee and the department head must justify on the application the expected benefits to be derived from the course.

Employees must submit the completed application for the Fall Semester no later than the last Friday in August. After this time, applications will not be accepted. Employees will normally be notified of the status of their applications during the first week in September. At this time, the percentage rate that will be paid for reimbursement will be announced.

Employees must submit the completed application for the Spring semester no later than the first Friday in January. After this time, applications will not be accepted. Employees will normally be notified of the status of their applications during the second week in January. At this time, the percentage rate that will be paid for reimbursement will be announced.

Uniformed Fire Department personnel must submit the completed application for the Summer semester no later than the first week prior to the beginning of the course being offered in respective academic institution. Employees will normally be notified of the status of their applications two-three weeks after receipt. At this time, the percentage rate to be paid for reimbursement will be announced.

4. Criteria Used for Reviewing Reimbursement Applications

Priority as listed below will be given to employees who meet the criteria in the event of limited funding.

First priority will be given to employees taking courses which are directly related to their present job or to the next promotional opportunity, whether or not they are part of a degree program.

Second priority will be given to employees working towards an undergraduate degree. Within this category, undergraduate courses which are directly related to the employee's present job or next normal promotional opportunity will be considered first. Then courses which are part of a degree program that will better prepare the employee for future career opportunities with the City will be considered.

Third priority will be given to employees working towards a graduate degree. Within this category, employees will be able to receive reimbursement for only one graduate course per semester.

5. Reimbursement Qualifications

Employees, upon successful completion of the approved coursework, must submit a grade transcript and a receipt verifying payment for all reimbursable items. Any grade that is failing, incomplete, or withdrawn will not be considered as successful completion. Only tuition costs, registration and activity fees are eligible for reimbursement.

Employees will receive reimbursement up to 80% only if funds remain available. Also, employees who receive other benefits (ex. Veterans, grants, scholarships) or any form of

scholarship are entitled to reimbursement only after other benefits are fully exhausted.

If an employee resigns, is discharged, or is laid-off prior to completion of coursework and submission of his/her grades to the Human Resources Department, his/her application for tuition reimbursement will be voided.

The deadline for the receipt of course grades and verification of payment is February 1st for the Fall semester and June 30th for the Spring semester. Grade transcripts and verification of reimbursable costs will not be accepted after this date.

The deadline for receipt of course grades and verification of payment for uniformed Fire Department personnel participation in the Summer semester is September 1st. Grade transcripts and verification of reimbursable costs will not be accepted after this date.

APPROVED: _____

Santiago Malave
Human Resources Director