

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The City's Tuition Reimbursement program is designed to be mutually beneficial to both the City and its employees. The City invests in the development of its employees to enhance and upgrade their current work performance and to provide opportunities to advance in their chosen career field through the acquisition of new knowledge, new skills and abilities.

This program applies strictly to classes or courses at an accredited institution of higher learning. Requests for seminars, conferences, continuing education and/or other programs should be made to the Department Director and, if approved, funded through that Department's budget.

1. Eligibility and Approval

- a. All regular full-time* employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period are eligible to receive tuition reimbursement upon approval, provided the funds are available in the budget.
- b. Requests for tuition reimbursement should be submitted to the Human Resources Office for consideration by September 30th of each year for the following budget year. (i.e. employees intending to take courses in 2017 should submit their requests by September 30, 2016) so that requests can be planned for appropriately in the following budget cycle.
- c. Courses must be taken from an accredited institution, and the course must be taken on the employee's own time. An employee will not be permitted to attend courses during his/her working hours.
- d. Employees must attain a "C" or above to qualify for reimbursement.
- e. Eligible expenses for reimbursement include tuition and books only. Fees and/or other expenses related to taking courses and/or purchasing books, including, but not limited to, computer programs, subscriptions and lab fees will not be reimbursed.

* Regular part-time employees with the fire department are eligible to apply for reimbursement for classes leading to paramedic certification only.

2. Courses Eligible for Reimbursement from the Tuition Reimbursement Program

- a. Degree Plan Courses
 - i. Courses which are included in a degree plan which is directly related to an employee's current career field with the City are eligible for reimbursement.
- b. Courses which are included in a degree plan which is directly related to a City career and the employee is not currently in that career field, but there is a reasonable expectation by the City Manager that the employee will have an opportunity to move into that career field, are eligible for reimbursement.

City Career Field – a classification or classification series which is in the City's pay plan at the time reimbursement is requested; and, the employee requesting reimbursement is either in a position within the classification series or there is a reasonable expectation by the City Manager that the employee could move into the classification series within the foreseeable future.

- c. Employees enrolled in a degree program must submit the following items:
 - i. A statement of career goals.
 - ii. A degree plan description.
 - iii. An explanation of how the degree would benefit the employee's ability to perform their current job.
 - iv. A transcript of college work.
 - v. A statement of tuition and book costs.

Statement of Career Goals – A written document that contains the following items:

- Stated career goals with the City.
 - Current work assignment and how the assignment relates to stated career goals OR anticipated work assignment and how it relates to stated career goals.
 - Summary of tenure with the City which includes positions occupied with dates, departments/divisions, and supervisors of each position.
- d. Non-Degree Plan Courses
- i. Courses which are not in a degree plan but which are directly related to an employee's current work assignment are eligible for reimbursement.
- e. Employees planning to enroll in job-related courses must submit the following items with their request to the Human Resources Department
- a) A statement of career goals (See 2-c above).
 - b) A detailed description of current job duties.
 - c) A copy of the course description(s).
 - d) An explanation of how the course would benefit the employee's ability to perform their current job.
 - e) The cost of tuition and books.

3. Courses and Training NOT eligible for reimbursement

- a. Non-credit continuing education courses which contain the same or similar information as received in previous course (s) (repeat courses) are not eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- b. Audited courses are not eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- c. Continuing Education and/or Technical Training Courses. Requests for these programs should be submitted through the Employee's Department Director and paid through the respective training budget of the department.

4. Reimbursement Schedule

- a. Employees pre-approved for tuition reimbursement shall be reimbursed upon presentation of grade transcripts, receipts, etc. The amount of reimbursement per employee, per fiscal year will be established by the City Manager during the budgeting process. Employees applying for reimbursement will be notified of the amount once approved.
- b. The amount of reimbursement per course and books will be based on the following grade/rating schedule and may not be more than the total amount approved by the City Manager per fiscal year:

A	100%
B	85%
C	70%
D/F	0%
Audit	0%
Withdraw or Incomplete	0%

For courses where a letter-based grading scale is not used, the employee shall present a certificate or other verification they attended the entire class/session and successfully completed it for reimbursement. The reimbursement rate shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

- c. Reimbursements must be filed within 90-days of the final day of the course/class.

5. Resolving Issues Pertaining to Tuition Reimbursement

- a. Appeals shall be made to the City Manager regarding tuition matters. The City Manager shall render final decisions on those appeals in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

6. Reimbursement Payback Provisions

- a. An employee is indebted to the City and must return funds received under this program at the following percentages of reimbursed tuition if employment with the City is terminated within one (1) to four (4) years after the issue date of any reimbursement check(s).
- b. The amount of funds to be returned by the employee will be determined according to the length of time between the reimbursement check issue date and the resignation/termination date. The following scale will apply:
 - Less than one year = 100% return.
 - One year to less than two years = 75% return.
 - Two years to less than three years = 50% return.
 - Three years to less than four years = 25% return
 - Four or more years = 0% return
- c. If such funds are required to be returned by the employee, the City may deduct that amount from any monies due to the employee. Acceptance of funds signifies agreement and understanding of these terms and the employee's acceptance of the terms herein.

7. Policy Revision and Revocation

- a. The City Manager may revise, revoke or suspend this policy at any time for any reason or no reason at his/her sole discretion.