

## SECTION 10. EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

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### **10.1 Purpose of Reimbursement**

Continuing education is important in the personal and career development of employees. To assist and encourage employees' development, the city shall provide limited financial assistance for approved educational courses and required textbooks.

### **10.2 Employee Eligibility**

Education financing assistance shall be available to full-time employees of the city who satisfy all of the following requirements:

- A. Minimum of one year (365 calendar days) of full-time service with the city at the date that the course(s) begins.
- B. Achievement and maintenance of at least an "average" performance evaluation rating in the employee's current position.
- C. The employee must not have used more than ten sick days for the previous twelve months (365 calendar days) excluding sick days which were documented by an acceptable statement from the employee's health care provider, births, deaths in the family or vacation/compensatory time used in lieu of sick time.
- D. With the exception of counseling or a written reprimand, an employee shall not have received any disciplinary action during the past twelve months (365 calendar days) prior to the date that the course(s) begins.

### **10.3 Course Eligibility**

Eligible courses include those that:

- A. Are related to the employee's current position with the city;
- B. Will maintain and/or improve the employee's job performance;
- C. Will contribute to the employee's career development with the city;
- D. Serve to strengthen basic literacy skills such as reading, writing or mathematics; and
- E. Help the employee to fulfill the requirements for attaining a high school diploma or GED certification.

### **10.4 Eligible Institutions**

- 1. Institutions, if applicable, must be accredited by the state or other generally recognized accrediting agency.
- 2. All courses and institutions shall be evaluated by the Department Manager on an individual basis, and approved by the Human Resources Director or designee.

### **10.5 Management Approval**

- 1. In order to be considered for reimbursement and comply with IRS guidelines, prior written approval must be obtained from the employee's Department Manager, and the Human Resources Director or designee.

2. The Department Manager shall be responsible for verifying eligibility of the employee, qualifying courses and the accreditation of the institution, and submitting the recommendations to the Human Resources Director or designee.

**10.6 Reimbursement Schedule**

1. The tuition assistance benefit is established as a reimbursement program to help cover the partial cost of tuition and laboratory fees. The maximum amount of educational assistance is limited to two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per calendar year per employee. Unused tuition assistance is noncumulative, running from January 1 through December 31. Any unused benefit shall be forfeited for that year. At the end of the course, the employee shall submit a grade transcript and a receipt for payment from the institution.
2. Textbooks required for the course(s) are a reimbursable expense. Textbook reimbursement shall be at 100% upon successful completion of the course(s). Request for textbook reimbursement shall be accompanied by a receipt and title of textbook.
3. There shall be no reimbursement for transportation, meals or time spent in the classroom. Request for reimbursement shall be filed within ninety calendar days following successful completion of the course. In the event it becomes necessary to change or modify the program, the appropriate Department Manager shall be notified of the proposed change and the effective date. Any course which is in progress and has been previously approved shall be honored.
4. Tuition reimbursement shall be determined as follows:
 

A	100%	D/F	0%
B	90%	Audit	0%
C	75%	Withdraw or incomplete	0%
Pass	75%		
5. Course for which no grade is assigned (i.e. - pass/fail) by the institution may be reimbursed at 100% if passed.

**10.7 Obligation of Employment**

1. To receive reimbursement for a course and textbooks, the recipient shall agree to remain a full-time employee of the city for a period of thirty-six months (1,095 calendar days). Employment credit shall commence on the first day of the month after the completion of the course. If for any reason, other than lay off, the employee fails to complete the thirty-six month obligation, all reimbursement expenses shall be repaid on a pro-rated basis by the employee. Such repayment shall be deducted from the employee's final pay. If the employee's final pay does not cover the financial obligation, the city may make an effort to recover the unpaid amount.
2. Upon termination of employment, the employee shall be required to pay the remainder of the unexpired reimbursement obligation in full or by agreement as may be approved by the Safety/Service Director. The Safety/Service Director shall have the right to waive the reimbursement obligation for employee(s) retiring as a result of a work related disability.