

CITY PERSONNEL POLICY

COLLEGE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Policy # 5-00

Approved by Personnel Board: 10/29/98

Michele Frost, Personnel Director

Approved by City Council: 4/4/00

Council President Paul Koneck

Pursuant to the Omaha Municipal Code, Section 23-65, the following is declared to be the policy of the City of Omaha. Please check the City's e-mail system in the Public Folders under Personnel Department for the latest amendments to this policy.

This policy is issued in accordance with 23-383 of the Omaha Municipal Code which provides that department directors may set aside funds in their budgets for the reimbursement of college level tuition payments for their employees. The amount reimbursable is limited to 50% of such tuition, or such other amount as set by the Omaha Municipal Code.

ELIGIBILITY AND LIMITATION OF REIMBURSEMENT

Any full-time employee who is employed in a classified position and has completed the initial probationary period is eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement.

Any full-time employee who is employed in an unclassified position and has completed the initial probationary period is eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement if there is a policy granting tuition reimbursement for that unclassified position.

No reimbursement will be available to any employee who receives a grant, scholarship, a tuition payment, or a tuition reimbursement from any other program administered through or by the City of Omaha, the State of Nebraska, the federal government, the school, or any other source.

The maximum amount of tuition reimbursement which will be paid to any employee pursuant to this policy is \$600 per year. This policy applies to reimbursement of tuition only. The cost of parking, books, supplies, lab fees, printing, etc., is the responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed.

This policy does not apply to tuition reimbursement for sworn Fire Department employees for fire prevention technology courses. Those courses are covered by the Union contract and are administered by Fire Department policy.

It should be understood that this policy covers reimbursement for college level courses. Since this type of education is voluntary on the part of the employee, the times at which the course meets are not considered hours worked (i.e., are on employee's own time) and must not conflict with the employee's working hours unless pre-approved, in writing, by the employee's director.

Professional seminars/workshops are not covered by this policy. Such seminars are subject to approval by individual department directors.

HOURS/COURSES CONSIDERED FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Credit Hours

The maximum number of hours considered for reimbursement is limited to the following:

- Semester hours - 6 hours total per semester
- Quarter hours - 9 hours per quarter

Courses Eligible

Undergraduate and graduate courses, college-level vocational training courses, correspondence courses and adult education courses when the course(s) or the degree for which the course(s) are required relate to:

- The employee's present position, work assignment or areas of responsibility within the employee's department; or,
- A logical program of employee development and progression on a career ladder.

Both credit and non-credit courses will be considered for tuition reimbursement.

APPLICATION FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Each semester or quarter, the employee must complete the "Application for Tuition Reimbursement" form. This form is available in the e-mail system under Public Folders.

Additionally, the employee must attach to the application a copy of the form showing the cost of tuition/fees, a student schedule listing the course(s) to be taken, and any additional documentation needed to determine eligibility.

This application must be submitted to the department director **WITHIN THIRTY DAYS FROM THE END OF REGISTRATION FOR THE CLASS**. Failure to do so will render the application ineligible for tuition reimbursement. The employee may mail the application (regular U.S. Mail or inter-office) or deliver it in person. It is the employee's responsibility to get the application to the director on time.

After receiving the application, the department director will determine whether the employee and the course(s) are eligible for reimbursement. He/she may request additional information to help determine tuition reimbursement eligibility (e.g., college transcripts, program advisor approval, etc.).

The department director will then either approve or disapprove the request based upon availability of funds and compliance with this policy. If the application is approved, the director will assure that the required funds are set aside for payment pursuant to the application. The director will send a copy of the application (approved or disapproved) to the employee and the Personnel Department/Human Resources Development Division.

REIMBURSEMENT AFTER COMPLETION

After the completion of the approved course, the employee must submit to the department director proper documentation showing proof of successful completion. Such proof must show:

- A grade of “C” or better; or
- A “pass” on a “pass/fail” course; or,
- A certificate, or written statement of satisfactory completion, from the school or instructor when no formal grade is given.

Such documentation must be submitted to the director no later than sixty (60) calendar days from the end of the course. After sixty (60) days, no tuition reimbursement will be paid.

Upon receipt of the above documentation, payment shall either be approved or disapproved as appropriate. The approval/disapproval shall be communicated to the employee and the Personnel Department. If approved, the department director will take the steps necessary to pay the reimbursement to the employee.

MISCELLANEOUS

Incomplete Courses

Whenever a school or instructor allows an employee to complete course(s) in a semester or quarter other than the semester or quarter in which an employee applied for reimbursement, the employee must notify the department director pursuant to the above “Reimbursement” procedures. The employee shall state the reason for the Incomplete and request that the funds set aside for reimbursement be carried forward until a final grade is received. Generally speaking, no funds will be carried forward more than six months. The department director will either approve or disapprove the request and shall so notify the employee.

Course Changes

The department director must be notified of any modification in the course(s) taken (addition, changes, deletions, etc.). Failure to do so will result in the application being considered ineligible for tuition reimbursement.