



UNIVERSAL STATE PERSONNEL SYSTEM POLICY

Tuition Reimbursement

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Statement of Policy

Tuition reimbursement programs are an important strategy to enable recruitment, enhance career paths, and secure organizational loyalty. To ensure consistent application of this strategy across the Executive branch, principal departments that institute tuition reimbursement programs must structure those programs within the as defined below.

General Parameters

State agencies must have a documented tuition reimbursement program defined and communicated to all employees prior to issuing any reimbursements. The program should include an application procedure, documented criteria for review of applications, and information about the agency approval process.

State agencies may reimburse only permanent employees for job-related coursework (including online courses) completed in pursuit of an undergraduate or graduate degree, or toward professional certification.

Approval for reimbursement will be dependent on the course and its relevance to the employee's current position or future potential position. Relevance for future potential positions must be determined in the context of agency succession plans and/or anticipated staffing needs.

Approval for reimbursement must be obtained prior to commencement of any course and approval for one course does not guarantee future approvals. Reimbursements are limited to available funds.

Stipulations

- Employees must be in good standing to be eligible (i.e. no corrective/disciplinary actions in the past 12 months.)
- Employees must have at least one year of state service to be eligible.
- Undergraduate and graduate coursework must be completed at an accredited college or university, with preference for state institutions of higher education.
- Training courses, such as continuing legal education, are not covered by this policy.
- Students must achieve grade of "B" or higher, or "P" for classes graded as pass/fail.
- Departments may require employees who receive reimbursement for a degree or certification to remain employed with the department for a reasonable period of time after obtaining the degree or certification.
- Reimbursement is limited to:
 - Expenses incurred for tuition, required course materials, and mandatory fees less educational funding given through scholarships, military coverage or non-repayable grants or stipends
 - 50% of eligible expenses up to \$2000 per employee, per fiscal year (\$5250 is the federal maximum that can be exempted from withholding tax) regardless of the number of departments or divisions the employee works for during the fiscal year.
- Administrative leave may be authorized in extraordinary circumstances to allow an employee to attend class. Departments should develop policies to ensure administrative leave for educational purposes is consistently authorized.
- Policies and procedures must be communicated to all employees within the department.

