

CITY OF CHICAGO TUITION REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

GENERAL PURPOSE: To increase the effectiveness of City services to the citizens of Chicago by encouraging the personal development of City employees through education and training, as well as by preparing employees for advancement.

I. EFFECTIVE DATE: This policy is effective January 1, 1997. Reimbursement for any course payable on or after this date will be subject to this policy statement.

II. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

A. Applicants

1. Applicants must be City employees currently on a City payroll. Employees of the Board of Education or other governmental agencies are **NOT** eligible for this program.
2. Applicants must be employed full-time (a minimum of 35 hrs. a week) or part-time (more than 17 1/2 but less than 35 hrs. a week). Emergency appointments, seasonal employees, student interns and other student employees are **NOT** eligible.

B. Colleges, Universities and Vocational/Technical Institutions

1. Applicant's school of enrollment must offer resident classroom instruction and be chartered by and be located within the State of Illinois.
2. Colleges and Universities must be accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.
3. Technical/Vocational institutions must be licensed by the State of Illinois or the Commission of the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools.
4. Courses offered at schools not so accredited may be approved by the Department of Human Resources, if such courses have been authorized by a licensing board and/or professional association.

C. Course of Study

1. Courses of study must be related to the employee's current work or probable future work with the City of Chicago.

III. CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON REIMBURSEMENT:

1. A maximum of two (2) classes will be reimbursed per semester, quarter or term.
2. Reimbursement is limited to a yearly entitlement amount set annually during the month of January by the Department of Human Resources except in the case of employees who are members of any employee union which has a collective bargaining agreement with respect to tuition reimbursement. The amount of reimbursement for such employees will be determined by the nature of the agreement between their union and the City of Chicago.
3. Reimbursement is for tuition only; costs of books, lab fees, late penalties, supplies and other special fees are **NOT** reimbursable.
4. Reimbursement will be limited by the amount of financial aid the employee receives from other sources.
5. Tuition fees paid to any City College of Chicago will **NOT** be reimbursed.
6. Review courses for licenses or degrees, such as the Bar Review or CPA Review, will not be reimbursed.
7. Reimbursement will be based on available funds.
8. All applications must be submitted to the Department of Human Resources within 30 days after the date classes begin.
9. The application must be approved by the employee's Department Head or designated authority and by the Department of Personnel.

IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

1. Complete two (2) copies of the Tuition Reimbursement Application form (PER-50).
2. Complete one (1) copy of the Release of Financial Aid Information form (PER-51).
3. Complete one (1) copy of the Notice of Tuition Repayment Requirements form (PER-52). (This form must be submitted only once and will be kept on file for every person participating in the Tuition Reimbursement Program.)
4. If you are first enrolling in a course or a degree program, you must prepare a letter to the Commissioner of Personnel which explains how the course or degree program relates to your present or future job duties. This letter is to be signed by the department head or designated representative. This letter will be placed on file and need only be filed once.
5. If you are taking individual university classes but not pursuing a degree, or if you are taking vocational/technical school classes but not pursuing a complete study program, you must prepare a letter as in 4. above at the beginning of each term to secure approval for such classes.
6. Immediately send one (1) copy of the PER-50 form, without the departmental signatures, the PER-51 form, and the PER-52 form (if not already submitted) to the Department of Human Resources, Tuition Reimbursement Section, City Hall—Room 1100.
7. Send the second copy of the PER-50 form through your department to secure the Department Head's or designated representative's signature. If a letter of explanation from you mentioned in paragraphs 4. or 5. above is required, this letter is to be attached. When the second PER-50 form and any attached letters are received by the Department of Human Resources, the application will be reviewed and you will be sent a letter accepting or rejecting your application.

V. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE:

A. Reimbursement Documentation:

Reimbursement is based on grades and granted upon submission of original grade reports and original receipts of payment to the Department of Human Resources. On-line statements of accounts and grades are also acceptable. Carbon, photo-static or Xerox copies of payment receipts and grade reports will **NOT** be accepted. Employees expecting late final grade(s) or for some other reason wishing to hold open their reimbursement request **must** promptly notify the Department of Human Resources. Unless this procedure is followed, reimbursement will not be paid.

B. Reimbursement Rates:

1. Undergraduate School
 - Grade "A": Full time—100%; Part time—50%
 - Grade "B" and "C": Full time—75%; Part time—37.5%
2. Graduate and Professional School
 - Grade "A": Full time—100%; Part time—50%
 - Grade "B": Full time—75%; Part time—37.5%
 - Grade "C" is **NOT** reimbursable at this level of study
3. Grades of "Pass" in a course graded on a Pass/Fail basis:
 - Full time—75%; Part time—37.5%

C. Repayment of Tuition upon leaving City service:

1. As of January 1, 1997, employees who participate in the Tuition Reimbursement program and subsequently leave City service will be required to repay any reimbursement they have received based on the following conditions:
 - a. If an employee commences an undergraduate or graduate degree program after January 1, 1997, obtains an undergraduate or graduate degree with the assistance of the Tuition Reimbursement program and then, within one (1) year of obtaining such degree voluntarily resigns from the employ of the City, **all tuition costs** related to such degree which have been reimbursed to the employee by the City **shall be repaid to the City**.
 - b. If an employee voluntarily resigns after one (1) year but less than two (2) years after obtaining the degree, **one-half (50%)** of the related tuition costs reimbursed to the employee shall **be repaid to the City**.
 - c. If the employee commences but does not complete a degree program after January 1, 1997, and then voluntarily resigns from employment with the City, **the employee shall repay 100%** of the tuition reimbursement received for any course completed within two (2) years prior to such resignation.

VI. FAILURE TO COMPLY with this policy will result in the disapproval of the application and non-payment of reimbursement. The Department of Human Resources will, in all cases, exercise the final judgment as to whether or not reimbursement will be granted and, if so, the amount of reimbursement.

The Department of Human Resources will administer the Tuition Reimbursement program without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or handicap.