
Category: HUMAN RESOURCES**TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY****I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Tuition Assistance Policy is to support the professional development, educational advancement, and career growth of SVCE employees. As a result, the agency will benefit from improved employee performance, higher levels of workforce engagement, and increased numbers of qualified internal candidates for promotional opportunities.

II. SCOPE

All regular full-time employees who have served a minimum of six months with the agency.

III. DEFINITIONS

“Coursework” means any required curriculum or materials from accredited college classes, certificate programs or online classes.

“Reimbursement” means the amount that is paid to the employee to offset the cost of completing coursework.

“Repayment” means the obligation of the employee to repay the entire amount of the reimbursement benefit paid to them if they voluntarily separate from the agency within 12 months of receiving the benefit.

“Verification of Completion” means attainment of a grade of “C” or better for graded classes. For non-graded classes, employees must provide proof of attendance and satisfactory completion of the course. For example, a certificate of completion or letter in the name of the employee and signed by the instructor would be considered acceptable.

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IV. POLICY**A. Funding**

1. The availability of funding for the Tuition Assistance Program is subject to the annual budget process and may be augmented as needed by the Chief Executive Officer during the mid-year budget review process.

B. Eligibility

1. Employee must pay for any expense upfront and will receive reimbursement of approved and eligible expenses upon successful completion of coursework and submission of required documentation within 60 days of course completion.
2. Coursework must be aligned with and support SVCE's core mission, the employee's current duties, or future opportunities within the agency.
3. Employee must provide a written justification for coursework to their supervisor.
4. Employee is strongly encouraged to obtain approval for coursework **PRIOR** to enrollment. Should employee **not** obtain the required approvals prior to enrollment, there is no guarantee that they will receive reimbursement for their expenses.

C. Limitations

1. Individuals classified as temporary, consultant, or interns are not eligible for tuition assistance.
2. Tuition assistance may not be used for dependents.
3. All coursework should be taken during non-work hours.

D. Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to: (1) tuition; (2) required course books; (3) required course software or online materials; (4) registration fees; (5) lab fees; (6) non-resident fees; (7) examination and certification fees; (8) matriculation fees; (9) college preparatory and/or bridge classes; (10) tutoring fees; (11) official transcripts; (12) college application fees.

Category: HUMAN RESOURCES**E. Non-reimbursable Expenses**

Non-reimbursable expenses include, but may not be limited to: (1) Equipment such as calculators, computers or other related hardware, lab equipment, etc.; (2) Parking and/or travel related expenses; (3) Room and Board; (4) Late registration fees; (5) Direct payment of student loans to financial institutions; (6) Interest on credit card for eligible expenses.

F. Documentation

Employee must submit all required documentation to the Administrative Services Manager within 60 days of course completion. Below is a list of the required documentation:

- Proof of payment – must include itemized expenses on receipt/s.
- Confirmation of Registration – must include employee's name on the registration.
- Proof of completion – For graded courses, an unofficial transcript with employee's name is acceptable and must show a grade of "C" or better or "Pass." For non-graded courses, a signed certificate of completion from the institution is acceptable.

G. Training Required by Management

Employees ***shall not be*** required to use tuition assistance for continuing education or training required or approved by management to perform their existing duties. In these instances, expenses must be paid for the agency and employee may use work time to attend the required coursework, subject to advance approval.

H. Maximum Reimbursement Amount

Employee may be reimbursed up to \$5,000 per fiscal year (October 1-September 30) to offset the cost of coursework.

I. Payment & Taxation

1. The Administrative Services Manager will administer the payment request process. Reimbursement will take

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approximately 1-2 pay periods after receipt of all required documents.

2. Approved reimbursements will be included (pre-tax) with the employee's regular paycheck.
3. Any tax ramifications for receiving tuition assistance shall be the responsibility of the employee. Employees are advised to consult a tax attorney or tax accountant for questions on taxation.

J. Re-payment Obligation

1. Employee must agree that if he or she voluntarily leaves the agency, the employee will repay the full amount (100%) of any tuition reimbursements received during the twelve-month period preceding the employee's separation date.
2. To the extent allowed by law, the agency may deduct the amount of any Tuition Repayment Obligation from any compensation due and owing to Employee at time of separation from employment. The agency may withhold from your final paycheck monies up to the amount due the agency.

K. No Guarantee of Employment or Promotion

Completion of coursework is no guarantee for promotion to the employee for any specific classification, period, or duration.

L. Termination:

Employee ceases to be eligible for tuition assistance upon notice of termination of employment. No reimbursements will be made to former employees or employees who have given notice of resignation.

