



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT: PARTIAL TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Number: 07-1.02

Date: February 24, 2000

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Revised: July 30, 2009

AUTHORITY

Collective bargaining/labor agreements and approved coordinated compensation plan.

ISSUE

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), as evidenced by its own vision and commitment statement, recognizes the value of education and the role that professional development plays in creating a fulfilled and productive work force. The DEQ also recognizes that it has limited financial resources given the ongoing need to reevaluate expenditures and trim costs because of the current operational constraints. To that end, it is important for the DEQ to have a policy to provide information about partial tuition reimbursement and establish guidelines that are consistent across the DEQ.

DEFINITIONS

None.

POLICY

The DEQ sponsors a partial tuition reimbursement program for department employees who seek to further their education through job-related and department-related courses. Classes for which tuition reimbursement is approved shall be those that will enhance an employee's job or career within the DEQ.

All coursework is subject to department, bureau/division/office, and Office of Human Resources (OHR) approval. Tuition will be reimbursed up to \$1,200.00 per fiscal year pending department or bureau/division/office allocated funds.

All applications/requests shall be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Applications/requests may be denied due to lack of funding. In such cases, applications/requests will be reconsidered if funding becomes available; however, they shall be limited to the fiscal year in which the request was originally submitted.

Employees who are requesting partial tuition reimbursement under this policy must disclose all educational benefits to include grants, payments, professional development funds, scholarships, stipends, or other forms of tuition reimbursement applied for or



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received from any business(es), corporation(s), foundation(s), institution(s), partnership(s), and state or federal government, at the time reimbursement is requested.

Misrepresentation of monies received from other sources may result in corrective/disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Employees must refer to their respective collective bargaining/labor agreements for eligibility requirements. The terms and conditions outlined in this policy shall take effect if the collective bargaining/labor agreements are silent or when a collective bargaining/labor agreement does not apply, i.e., nonexclusively represented employees (NEREs).

Employees must have status (i.e., satisfactorily completed the initial probationary period) in a classified Civil Service position. See Civil Service Rule 3-6 by linking to: http://michigan.gov/mdcs/0,1607,7-147-6877_8155---,00.html.

Employees must occupy a permanent position (i.e., full-time classified, part-time classified, permanent-intermittent classified, or limited-term if the employee held a prior permanent position). Unclassified employees may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Employees receiving **full** tuition payments to include grants, professional development funds, scholarships, stipends, or other forms of tuition reimbursement are NOT eligible to participate in the DEQ's partial tuition reimbursement program.

Employees receiving **partial** payments to include grants, professional development funds, scholarships, stipends, or other forms of tuition reimbursement may be eligible for reimbursement of up to 50 percent provided the total amount to be received from all parties does not exceed 100 percent reimbursement.

Eligible employees may enroll in courses at any accredited school, academy, college, university, trade or technical school, or any other institution licensed, authorized, or approved by the Michigan Department of Education.



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Conferences, educational centers, workshops, or other training programs not otherwise accredited, licensed, authorized, or approved by the Michigan Department of Education shall not be eligible for reimbursement under this program.

Law, medical, dental, Ph.D., or doctoral degrees are not eligible for partial tuition reimbursement. However, employees may request partial tuition reimbursement for coursework relating to these areas with bureau/division/office chief approval if it can be substantiated that the coursework is directly related to the employee's current position.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applications/requests for partial tuition reimbursement must be received by the OHR prior to the start of the course or within thirty (30) calendar days immediately following the start of the course(s).

Reimbursement shall not be paid for any part of admission/matriculation fees, registration fees, parking, or travel and subsistence, or apply to those employees receiving full grants, professional development funds, scholarships, stipends, or other forms of tuition reimbursement.

If an employee's application/request for partial tuition reimbursement is approved, the employee's assigned bureau/division or office will pay up to 50 percent of tuition reimbursement for up to two courses per term or semester.

An employee must submit the approved application, a copy of grades showing satisfactory completion (i.e., C (+/-) for all undergraduate courses and a B (+/-) for all graduate courses) of the course(s), and proof of the applicable course(s)/book/lab fees for final consideration before reimbursement can be made.

NOTE: The DEQ's 50 percent tuition reimbursement may include books and lab fees for NEREs; all other employees must refer to their collective bargaining/labor agreements to determine eligibility for book and lab fee reimbursement.



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EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL REIMBURSEMENTS

Example A (Less Than 50 Percent Reimbursement)

A Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Scientific & Engineering (S&E) bargaining unit member is enrolled at ABC University and is scheduled to take Restoration Ecology (BIO 545) and Analytical Methods (PADM 6060) next semester. BIO 545 and PADM 6060 are both three credit classes and the cost per credit hour is \$425.00 (total credit cost = \$2,550.00); books are an additional \$150.00, and lab fees for BIO 545 are \$200.00. The employee has applied for and is expecting to receive \$1,000.00 in professional development funds (PDF).

Total Course Costs = \$2,900.00 [*Total Credit Cost (\$2,550.00) + Books (\$150.00) + Lab Fees (\$200.00)*]. **The approved reimbursement amount is \$1,200.00, assuming all eligibility requirements are met, as this is the maximum reimbursement allowed per policy per fiscal year.** PDF monies are recognized, but not factored into this equation because the anticipated award of \$1,000.00 plus the approved \$1,200.00 is still less than the total course costs.

Example B (50 Percent Reimbursement)

A NERE is enrolled at ABC University and is scheduled to take Environmental Law (ACR 846) next semester. ACR 846 is a three credit class and the cost per credit hour is \$425.00 (total credit cost = \$1,275.00); books are an additional \$73.80, there are no lab fees. The employee neither applied for nor is expected to receive any other educational benefits (scholarships, grants, stipends, etc.).

Total Course Costs = \$1,348.80 [*Total Credit Cost (\$1,275.00) + Books (\$73.80) + Lab Fees (\$0.00)*]. **The approved reimbursement amount is \$674.40 or 50 percent of \$1,348.80 assuming all eligibility requirements are met.**

Example C (100 Percent Reimbursement)

A SEIU S&E bargaining unit member is enrolled at ABC University and is scheduled to take Watershed Assessment and Related Tools (ACR 842) next semester. ACR 842 is a four credit class and the cost per credit hour is \$425.00 (total credit cost = \$1,700.00), books are \$200.00, and lab fees are \$100.00. The employee has applied for and is expecting to receive \$1,000.00 in PDFs.



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Total Course Costs = \$2,000.00 [*Total Credit Cost (\$1,700.00) + Books (\$200.00) + Lab Fees (\$100.00)*]. **The approved reimbursement amount from DEQ is \$1,000.00 or 50 percent of \$2,000.00 assuming all eligibility requirements are met, plus an additional \$1,000.00 or 50 percent in PDF monies from the union.**

PROCEDURE

Responsibility

Action

Employee

1. Completes and submits the Partial Tuition Application/Request Form, EQ-1021E, prior to the start of the course, or within 30 calendar days immediately following the start of the course, and submits the form to their immediate supervisor.

Immediate Supervisor

2. Signs the form, indicates approved or denied, and the job or career relatedness of the course(s). Applications/requests for partial tuition reimbursement are then forwarded to the bureau/division/office chief.

Bureau/Division/Office Chief

3. Signs the form, indicates approved or denied, and explains the rationale for their decision. Applications/requests are then forwarded to the OHR for review and/or further consideration.

Office of Human Resources

4. Reviews the application/request for compliance with eligibility requirements and then approves or denies the request. The employee is notified of the decision and is given instructions on how to obtain reimbursement (if applicable).



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All applications/requests, whether approved or denied, necessitate a signature from the immediate supervisor, the bureau/division/office chief, and OHR (if appropriate). Employees whose applications/requests are denied by the immediate supervisor, bureau/division/office chief, or the OHR may appeal the decision to the OHR director or designee prior to implementing applicable grievance procedure(s). The OHR director or designee will send a notice of the findings to the employee and all signing supervisors within 30 calendar days of receipt.

Employee

5. Within 90 days of satisfactory completion of the course(s), submits the approved application, a copy of grade(s), proof that she/he paid for the course(s) (i.e., receipt of tuition payment), and receipts for applicable book and lab fees to their immediate supervisor for final consideration before a 50 percent reimbursement payment can be made.

Immediate Supervisor

6. Reviews the receipts and report of grades. Signs/initiates final approval of the tuition reimbursement payment by forwarding all documentation to the appropriate accounting staff within the bureau/division/office.

Bureau/Division/Office Accounting

7. Processes the tuition reimbursement payment for the qualified tuition expenses by way of a direct payment voucher, then provides the OHR with written notice that



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payment has been made, to include the amount and date paid and all relevant/corresponding program cost accounts and index numbers.

8. Processes all payments and maintains all related documentation.

Office of Human Resources

9. Maintains all partial tuition reimbursement requests.

Approved: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Chitt', is written over a horizontal line.

Date: _____

7-23-09

QUESTIONS: Contact Office of Human Resources at 517-335-1100.