

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT: Tuition Reimbursement for Exempt Employees	PAGE <u> 1 </u> OF <u> 4 </u>
	NUMBER: 38-CED-01
RULE/CODE REFERENCE:	SUPERSEDES: 38-CED-01 dated 11/14/09
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 5, 2015
	APPROVED: <i>Ray MMA</i>

I. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 5120.01 which delegates to the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction the authority to manage and direct the total operations of the Department and to establish such rules and regulations as the Director prescribes.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and assist exempt employees in their pursuit of a post secondary, formal education where it is related to the achievement of the agency's mission and designed to enhance the skill level of Department of Rehabilitation and Correction management staff.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all full time exempt Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction employees.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Accredited College or University - Any of the more than 800 Community Colleges granting an associates degree, or the more than 1,400 Colleges and Universities granting bachelors, master's and/or doctoral degrees which have been regionally accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies.

Active Pay Status – Conditions under which an employee is eligible to receive pay, and includes, but is not limited to, vacation leave, sick leave, bereavement leave, military leave, compensatory time, holidays, and personal leave. For purposes of this policy, active pay status does not include full-time disability leave, workers' compensation leave, administrative leave, or other leave of absence except approved education leave or if working to supplement a leave at the time the Application for Reimbursement is submitted.

Grading Period - A quarter, semester, trimester, or other period of time specified by the accredited college or university during which coursework shall be initiated and completed for one or more credit hours.

Tuition Reimbursement Program Manager - The Tuition Reimbursement Program Manager, designated by the Deputy Director of the Office of Human Resources, is responsible for approving the application for Exempt Tuition Reimbursement to include determination of course eligibility,

notification to the employee of confirmation/rejection of the application, and the amount of the projected reimbursement.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to make available to its exempt employees a tuition reimbursement program. The program is designed to help them recover a portion of the costs incurred in pursuit of a formal education at a degree granting, fully accredited, post secondary level college or university. The coursework must be reasonably related to work in the field of corrections. Tuition for non-accredited correspondence course work is not reimbursable.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Fund and Reimbursement Amounts

Each eligible exempt employee who completes qualifying college or graduate level courses for credit may receive reimbursement for the actual tuition cost up to the amount of \$250 per employee for any individual grading period regardless of the number of classes taken. Total tuition reimbursements paid to any qualifying employee shall not exceed \$1,000 in any fiscal year (July 1 through June 30).

B. Applicant Eligibility

All full-time permanent exempt employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement who:

1. Have successfully completed their initial probationary period within the exempt service;
2. Perform their job duties in a satisfactory manner as demonstrated in their annual performance evaluation;
3. Are in active pay status throughout the duration of the course;
4. Have not received formal discipline within the past six months;
5. Submit their application for reimbursement consideration by the appropriate deadlines;
6. Submit their proof of satisfactory course completion by the appropriate deadlines;
7. Stipulate that the reimbursement for which the application is made represents uncompensated tuition costs to the employee, (i.e. some other grant, scholarship, reimbursement program etc., will not or has not covered the cost of that portion of tuition for which reimbursement is sought.).

C. Course Eligibility

In order for a course to qualify for tuition reimbursement, the course content must be job-related or reasonably related to employment opportunities within the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. The Department reserves the right to refuse approval for reimbursement of elective courses which it deems unrelated to the field of corrections. The final decision regarding individual course eligibility rests with the Tuition Reimbursement Program Manager.

If an employee is not in an active pay status for more than fourteen (14) days, then he or she shall be ineligible for tuition reimbursement for that particular term. Military leave is the only exception to this policy that shall not affect an employee's reimbursement.

D. Application Procedures

The Application for Exempt Tuition Reimbursement (DRC1745) must be received in the Office of Human Resources/EEO Section fourteen (14) days prior to the first day of any grading period. Applications must be correctly completed and include all appropriate attachments to be considered for approval. It is the responsibility of employees who seek reimbursement to ensure that coursework taken will in fact qualify for reimbursement under the requirements of this policy. Employees who are uncertain whether potential coursework will qualify for reimbursement shall consult with the Office of Human Resources/EEO Section for clarification. Within thirty (30) days of receiving the employee's application, the Tuition Reimbursement Program Manager shall confirm or reject the application and provide notice to the employee. If the application has been approved, the Tuition Reimbursement Program Manager's notification shall include the amount of the projected reimbursement.

E. Reimbursement

Within forty-five (45) days of successfully completing an approved course, the employee shall submit to the agency Chief Fiscal Officer or designee a Request for Payment of Tuition Reimbursement Packet to include the following documents:

1. A completed Request for Payment of Tuition Reimbursement form (DRC1746) with supervisor's signature;
2. An official copy of the final grade document;
3. Original paid receipt or other acceptable proof of payment; and
4. A copy of the approval letter from the Office of Human Resources/EEO Section identifying the projected amount of reimbursement.

Once the agency Chief Fiscal Officer or designee has approved the documents, the Request for Payment of Tuition Reimbursement Packet shall be returned to the employee. At that time, the employee shall create a Non-Travel Expense Report through the OAKS FIN Travel and Expense Module. The Request for Payment of Tuition Reimbursement packet shall be attached to the Non-Travel Expense Report. Payment shall be made to the employee through an Electronic Fund Transfer within thirty (30) business days.

F. Miscellaneous

An exempt employee who is approved for tuition reimbursement is not automatically approved for educational leave. The two programs are independent of each other. Educational leave is governed by Department Policy 38-CED-04, Educational Leave.

Related Department Forms:

Application for Exempt Tuition Reimbursement	DRC1745
Request for Payment of Tuition Reimbursement form	DRC 1746