



Approved:

**City of Commerce, California  
Human Resources Policy and Procedure Manual**

*Michael Pasaboa*  
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Director of Human Resources

*[Signature]*  
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City Administrator

*Number: IV-3 Effective Date: 1/17/2017*

**SUBJECT: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM – PART-TIME  
EMPLOYEES**

**PURPOSE:**

To encourage City employees to take educational courses that will enhance and broaden the performance of their present duties and prepare them for advancement opportunities.

**POLICY:**

Efforts shall be made to provide training and educational assistance for all levels of employment in the City, from those requiring a minimum of specialized skills to those requiring higher education preparations. Completion of a training or educational courses shall not guarantee promotion or advancement of an employee, but is intended to expand skills and knowledge, thus providing the individual with higher levels of opportunity and performance.

The funds for the Tuition Reimbursement Program shall be budgeted in the Human Resources Department. Approval shall be limited to courses offered by accredited colleges, technical institutes or universities. Accredited courses offered “on-line” through distance learning are included. The course selected must be included in an Associate, Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree program.

The Human Resources Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for administering the Tuition Reimbursement Program and shall have the authority to

approve or deny a request based on funding availability.

When an employee is required by the department to attend a particular course or seminar, normally the expense shall be the responsibility of the respective department and employee.

As a general rule, time spent on approved educational courses should be outside of scheduled working hours and shall not be considered as time worked for the City.

Requests shall be reviewed and approved on an ongoing basis based upon approved funding availability. In the event of insufficient budgeted funds, approvals shall be tentative, placed on a waiting list, and subject to final approval upon the availability of budgeted funds. The waiting list shall terminate at the end of each fiscal year. Only courses that receive final approval shall be reimbursed. In no event will a course be reimbursed if there are insufficient funds.

City Council members are not eligible for the Educational Assistance benefit.

### **PART-TIME EMPLOYEES ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. To qualify for educational reimbursement benefits, the employee must be employed on a part-time basis (not temporary), must have received a standing satisfactory performance evaluation, must be employed at least 18 months and have worked an average of ten (10) hours weekly over the preceding twelve month period upon conclusion of the class for reimbursement eligibility. Employees must have received written approval from the Director of Human Resources and his or her Department Director before registering for the course.
- B. The tuition reimbursement will be limited to seven (7) years from the time the employee starts the program and will allow the employee a total of one Associate's Degree, one Bachelor's Degree, and one Master's Degree.
- C. If not available to work, the employee may not participate until the next school quarter or semester at which time he/she may request participation again, subject to funding availability.
- D. The course selected must be included in the Associate, Bachelor's or Master's Degree Program of an accredited college or university.
- E. As a condition to participate in the tuition reimbursement program for part-time employees, the work schedule of each participating part-time employee must be reviewed and approved by the Department Director and must not be changed without authorization from the Department Director.

- F. School attendance must be secondary to the employee's availability for City service.
- G. Each part-time employee desiring to qualify for reimbursement must attend the course(s) on his/her own time, complete the course(s) satisfactorily with at least a passing grade of "C" or its numerical equivalent, and if a veteran, must have exhausted educational benefits under the G.I. Bill and the California Veteran's benefits.

### **PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

- A. The tuition reimbursement policy for eligible part-time employees includes 100% reimbursement for actual tuition costs; and 50% of course required books and/or supplies.
- B. Reimbursements will be limited up to an amount equivalent to the highest full-time or part-time Cal State University tuition rate plus required fees based on the four academic sessions (Summer, Fall, Winter & Spring) at the California State University System.
- C. To request reimbursement, the employee must submit an Education Reimbursement Request for Payment Form, accompanied by confirmation of the grade received and paid receipts for the tuition, cost of books and supplies, to the Human Resources Department, with a copy of the course(s) syllabus no later than six (6) months after the completion of the courses(s) taken.
- D. Any requests for reimbursement submitted after the six-month deadline will not be honored for payment.
- E. The Human Resources Department will advise the Finance Department that the course(s) has been satisfactorily completed and payment is to be made.

Upon reimbursement, all textbooks and supplies will remain the property of the employee.

None of the preceding instructions will be construed as applying to training courses which may be taken by an employee at the written request of the City, or which the City may designate as a required course.

Employees are responsible for any income tax liability that may result due to reimbursement under this program.

### **PROCEDURE:**

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Action</b>
Employee	1. Completes and submits Education Reimbursement Program Authorization Application to Human Resources Department for pre-approval of funding availability.
Human Resources	2. Approves or denies application based upon eligibility requirements of part-time Education Reimbursement Program. 3. Approves or denies application based upon estimated funding availability for part-time Education Reimbursement Program. 4. Notifies employee of the approval or denial of funding and/or eligibility for part-time Education Reimbursement Program. 5. Submits approved application to respective Department Director for consideration.
Department Director	6. Approves or denies application to enroll or register in upcoming semester/quarter.  Returns original application to employee with signatures.
Employee	7. Submits Education Reimbursement Request for Payment Form with verification of grades, and all applicable receipts for expenditures to the Human Resources Department within six (6) months of course completion.
Human Resources Dept.	8. Processes approved Claim request for Education reimbursement in accordance with program guidelines and submits to Finance Department.

Finance Department

9. Makes reimbursement to the employee.

Attachments:

1. Education Reimbursement Program – Authorization Application
2. Education Reimbursement Request for Payment

