

City Manager's Directive 26

Tuition Reimbursement Program



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

POLICY

The purpose of the Tuition Reimbursement Program is to provide eligible employees of the City of Santa Clara with educational benefits in the form of reimbursements for educational courses which maintain and improve employees' skills in their current positions and/or for potential promotional opportunities.

The City may provide tuition reimbursement for all permanent regular full-time employees, who have completed their probationary periods, but excluding all other as-needed and temporary employees. Employees shall be limited to a maximum reimbursement of \$2,000 per employee per fiscal year using available funds in Departments' budgets.

Tuition reimbursement applies to education or training which employees choose to take and complete on their own time. The course work must improve the employee's skills and knowledge as required by the employee's present position; benefit the employee's professional development as a City employee; or enhance the employee's career development with the City of Santa Clara. Tuition reimbursement should not be used for courses which an employee is required to complete by the City. Courses which the employee is required to complete by the City are to be paid for by the City and must be completed on paid work time.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA

The City will apply the following criteria to requests for tuition reimbursement:

(1) An employee may receive a maximum of \$2,000 per fiscal year under the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

(2) At least four (4) weeks prior to the first day of class, the specific course or training must be approved in writing by the employee's department director or designee, and by the Department of Human Resources. The Department of Human Resources must approve the class as eligible for tuition reimbursement in accordance with this policy.

(3) Employees must apply for approval under the Tuition Reimbursement Program prior to enrollment. In the event that the class is full or cancelled or the employee drops the class, or does not complete the class for any reason, then the employee will provide written notification to his/her department director and to the Department of Human Resources, so that funds reserved under their approved tuition reimbursement application may be released and made available to other employees. The City will not provide funding, in whole or in part, for any class not successfully completed by the employee, except upon

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a showing of good cause. The Tuition Reimbursement Program is contingent on available funding within individual departments' budgets, and applications will be processed in the order in which they are received.

(4) Employees participating in the Tuition Reimbursement Program agree to comply with all applicable terms and conditions set forth by the approved course or institution. If the employee fails to fulfill the terms and conditions of their selected program or institution, the employee will no longer be eligible for the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

(5) Documentation of course completion and receipts must be provided to the Department of Human Resources within three months of the date of course completion before reimbursement for expenses will be authorized.

(6) Employees must achieve successful completion of the approved courses, which includes receiving a passing grade or designation of 70% or higher from the instructor. If the employee does not receive a passing grade that meets these requirements, they will no longer be eligible for the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

(7) Training must be given by an accredited or otherwise qualified educational institution. An eligible educational institution would be a college, university, vocational school or other post-secondary educational institution which maintains a regular faculty and curriculum, including accredited online programs or institutions. Other organizations providing job-specific skills training or professional certification classes may also be eligible and are considered on a case-by-case basis. The Department of Human Resources determines eligibility.

(8) Reimbursement may count towards or cover fees for tuition, registration, textbook and any course-required materials only. Parking and any other incidental fees or costs are not covered.

(9) Only unreimbursed eligible expenses will be reimbursed under this policy. Any additional funds received towards educational expenses must be claimed by employees applying for tuition reimbursement. This includes grants, scholarships or other State/Federal educational assistance. If the sum of that assistance is equal to or greater than the employee's educational expenses, the employee is not eligible for the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

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PROCEDURE

(10) In the event that the employee leaves the employ of the City during the period of their course or program, they will no longer be eligible for the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

The procedure for tuition reimbursement follows a two-step process, which are both initiated by the employee: 1) request for pre-approval as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for processing to ensure approval is received four weeks prior to course start date, and 2) claim of eligible expenses following successful course completion.

(1) Request for pre-approval a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to course start date. It is recommended that the employee submit their request for pre-approval as soon as possible, but it must be completed at least four (4) weeks prior to the course start date. Confirmation of a space in class is not required to start the pre-approval process. An employee who is waitlisted without guarantee of a space in class should still submit their request as recommended above.

(2) Claim of eligible expenses following successful course completion. Following successful course completion the employee must submit a claim and evidence of their educational expenses within three (3) months of course completion to receive a pre-approved reimbursement.

Reference:

Tuition Reimbursement Program Steps
Tuition Reimbursement Program Request form



Responsibility	Action
<u>Pre-Approval:</u> Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Initiates Tuition Reimbursement Program Request form prior to beginning of course. 2) Submits completed form, including course description, to Department Director.
Department Director	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reviews form and confirms availability of funds. 2) Recommends approval or disapproval and states reason. 3) Submits completed form, including course description, to Human Resources Department.
Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reviews form for completeness and consistency with City policy. 2) Approves or denies request. If approved, completes necessary sections regarding tuition reimbursement. 3) Returns copy of the form to the employee. If request is denied or altered, an explanation is attached and a copy of the Tuition Reimbursement Policy is also provided to the employee.
<u>Upon Course Completion:</u> Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Resubmits initial Tuition Reimbursement Program Request form to Human Resources within three months of course completion, along with evidence of course completion (transcript, grade report or certificate) and receipts for course related-fees and book expenditures.
Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reviews Tuition Reimbursement Program Request form and supporting documents for completion. 2) Calculates and records amount of reimbursement on appropriate form. 3) Forwards reimbursement request to Accounts Payable for processing.
Finance Department (Accounts Payable)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Processes reimbursement, which will be issued by check to the employee. 2) Returns copy of Tuition Reimbursement Program Request form with amount of reimbursement to employee and Human Resources Department.



Employee Information

Full Name: _____ Date: _____
Last First
 Classification: _____ Department: _____
 Work Phone: _____ Email: _____

Course Information

Degree seeking:
 ASSOCIATE BACHELOR GRADUATE DOCTORATE JOB-RELATED/NON-DEGREE
 Major: _____ Name of Institution: _____
 Institution Address: _____

List the course numbers and titles as they appear in the school catalog. Attach course descriptions.

Course Number	Course Title	Units	Start Date	End Date

Cost of Tuition:	\$
Cost of Books or Materials:	\$
Education Assistance Received from Outside Source	- \$
TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED:	\$
YTD – Reimbursement Received (HR will complete):	\$
Reimbursement Approved for Payment (HR will complete):	\$

Initial Approval

Approved **Denied – Reason:** _____
 Department Director: _____ Date: _____
 Account Number to be Charged: _____
 Approved **Denied – Reason:** _____
 Human Resources Director: _____ Date: _____

Payment Approval (to be filed after course completion)

HUMAN RESOURCES

Approved **Denied – Reason:** _____
 Human Resources Director: _____ Date: _____
 Date Forwarded to Finance: _____

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Processed By: _____ Date: _____
 Reimbursement Check #: _____

