

## **Educational Assistance Policy**

### **Adopted: May 2, 2019**

#### Reimbursement

The County will reimburse an employee for 50% of tuition costs and other charges, up to a maximum of \$2000.00 per calendar year, subject to the availability of funds within the department's budget with the stipulation that the requested course meets the Internal Revenue Service allowable guidelines. The course(s) must be related to the employee's present position in the County as determined by the department head; or be a required course leading to a degree relating to the employee's present position. Reimbursement is for technical, undergraduate and graduate courses only. In order for an employee to be eligible, she or he must follow the application process that is outlined below herein. The course(s) must be taken outside of working hours. Only under special circumstances may a department head authorize an employee to attend classes during normal work hours; however, it is the responsibility of both the employee and the department head to ensure the employee makes up all lost work time. The tuition reimbursement program is available to regular full-time employees who have completed at least 12 months of employment.

#### Procedure

The employee must complete a Tuition Reimbursement Request Form, which is available in the Human Resources Office. Prior to enrolling in a course(s), signatures must be secured from the employee's department head or elected official, and the County Administrator. The course(s) must be technical, undergraduate or graduate courses, and taken at an accredited school. A college or university is considered to be accredited if it is contained in the United States Department of Education Database of Accreditation Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs.

The reimbursement request may include registration fees, tuition and laboratory fees. This does not include the cost of books. Where the cost of books is rolled into the overall tuition costs, employees will be asked to submit reasonable proof as to the cost of the book(s) to be subtracted from the tuition costs. In order to get reimbursed requests must be supported by an itemized paid receipt(s) and proof of a grade(s) of B or its equivalent or higher for the course(s). The completed Tuition Reimbursement Request Form must be signed by the department head and the County Administrator for verification of correct amount and passing grade. All documentation should be forwarded to the County Clerk's Office for payment.

In the event a department head requires an employee to enroll in a course(s), payment can be made in advance at up to 100%, however the same Tuition Reimbursement Form must still be completed prior to enrollment and the other provisions of the policy remain applicable. Formal education does not guarantee advancement in the County.

If the employee leaves on their own initiative or is discharged within 3 years of reimbursement, the balance of what is owed the County shall be deducted from the payout of all leave days. For

any amount remaining, the employee shall be required to reimburse the County in 1 lump sum based on the following schedule:

1. Return 100% of tuition reimbursement if employment ends within 1 year
2. Return 75% of tuition reimbursement if employment ends within 2 years
3. Return 50% of tuition reimbursement if employment ends within 3 years.