

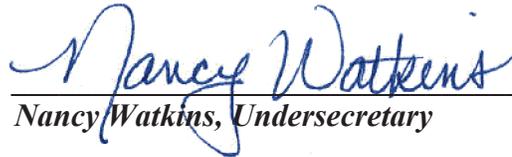
PPM #37

Policy Name: *Educational Leave and Tuition Reimbursement*

Effective Date: *May 21, 1998*

Revision Date: *December 1, 2011; February 14, 2018; August 17, 2020, February 26, 2021*

Authorization:



Nancy Watkins, Undersecretary

PHILOSOPHY

It is the expressed goal of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor (OLG) and Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (DCRT) to ensure an opportunity for continuing education to all permanent, full-time employees as appropriate and/or required in the fulfillment of job duties and responsibilities.

Civil Service Rule 11.24 outlines the provisions relative to educational leave and tuition reimbursement as follows:

- (a) Leave without pay for educational purposes may be granted to an employee for a period equivalent to the period of attendance at the educational institution.
- (b) Educational leave with pay may be granted to an employee for a maximum of thirty calendar days in one calendar year if the course of instruction to be taken is pertinent to the work of the employee in his Department. A permanent employee may be granted such leave for a maximum of ninety calendar days in one calendar year for special training as required by the Appointing Authority.
- (c) Employees granted educational leave without pay may request and be granted tuition reimbursement if there are funds available for that purpose.

APPLICABILITY

This policy shall be applicable to all sections of the Office of Lieutenant Governor (OLG) and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (DCRT).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An employee is eligible to request educational leave *or* tuition reimbursement if all of the following requirements are met:

- (1.) Attainment of permanent status;
- (2.) One year of employment with the department following attainment of permanent status; and
- (3.) A satisfactory performance rating.

EDUCATIONAL LEAVE REQUESTS

Requests to take educational leave with or without pay must be submitted in advance of the course start date in writing to the employee's immediate supervisor. The request must include the following:

- (1.) The title and number of the course to be taken;
- (2.) The educational institution where the course will be taken;
- (3.) Expected duration and time away from work;
- (4.) Whether the requested leave will be "leave without pay" or "educational leave with pay"; and
- (5.) Justification showing how the course relates to work and the potential benefits expected to be gained from the education for both the department and the employee.

The supervisor will review the request for job relatedness and forward the request to the Human Resources Director, who will review the employee's file to determine eligibility and make a recommendation. The Human Resources Director will forward the request and recommendation to the Appointing Authority who **may** approve the request and will make the final determination. The Appointing Authority will forward the decision to the employee, the employee's supervisor, and the Human Resources Director

Approved educational leave shall be entered by the employee in CATS during the pay period in which it occurred. Educational leave with pay will be coded "LEJR" if the leave is job related and coded "LEMA" if training is required by the Department. Educational leave without pay will be coded "LW".

NOTE: Workshops, seminars, conferences, and CPTP classes may be taken during the workday without the use of annual or educational leave, when applicable to an employee's job and upon approval. Examples include the required Sexual Harassment training, Ethics

training, IMPA conference, SHRM meetings, etc. The educational leave policy is applicable when an employee is requesting attendance to an accredited institution of higher learning.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Requests for tuition reimbursement consideration must be submitted in advance of the course start date in writing to the employee's immediate supervisor. The request must include the following:

- (1.) The title and number of the course to be taken;
- (2.) The educational institution where the course will be taken;
- (3.) Justification showing how the course relates to work and the potential benefits expected to be gained from the education for both the department and the employee.
- (4.) The estimated amount for reimbursement; and
- (5.) The scheduled dates and time(s) for the class.

The supervisor will review for job relatedness and forward the request to the Human Resources Director, who will review the employee's file to determine eligibility and make a recommendation. The Human Resources Director will forward the request and recommendation to the Appointing Authority who **may** give contingent approval for tuition reimbursement of the course. Tuition reimbursement will occur upon completion of the course after the employee successfully meets the following conditions:

- (1.) The employee must submit the approval document along with proof of a final grade of C or higher before a reimbursement can be processed.
- (2.) The employee must submit a final Fee Bill or Tuition Statement
- (3.) Reimbursement may apply to courses taken after hours as well as courses taken while on educational leave without pay.

NOTE: Approval of requests are subject to Civil Service Rules, available funds, and an adequate workforce within each agency. Reimbursement includes **tuition only** and does not include books, transportation, parking, or other miscellaneous costs.

POLICY

Given that tuition fees vary by university, each agency is advised to consider all the circumstances of individual requests. If the requested tuition is substantially higher than the same course being offered elsewhere, it may be appropriate for the Appointing Authority to suggest taking the course at a different university. If the course is only available at the institution with the higher tuition, or other valid circumstances exist, it is also appropriate for the Appointing Authority to establish an average reimbursement amount using the fee schedules of other universities in the area for comparison (downloaded from the university web sites).

NOTE: An employee is only eligible for leave with pay (Educational Leave) or tuition reimbursement. An employee receiving financial aid or grants from any government source or educational institution is ineligible for CRT reimbursement. Tuition reimbursement will not be allowed if annual leave is granted for the employee to attend the class. The intent of this policy is to permit an employee to obtain formalized training that will materially assist the employee in conducting his/her work. Educational leave or tuition reimbursement should not be approved if the educational or training opportunity is unrelated to the employee's work.

Summary of Changes: Added policy number, added OLG as being included in policy, reorganized content, incorporated HR Memo #03-088 (December 1, 2011). Secretary or designee is now final approver (August 17, 2020). Updated for clarification of request process and requirements (February 26, 2021).