

Tuition Assistance

The City recognizes the importance of employee educational growth to maintain and advance professional, technical, and managerial competence and to prepare employees for promotion or career change opportunities within the City.

1. Eligibility

The human resources department will administer the program subject to available funding. To qualify for tuition assistance, employees must meet the following conditions:

- a. The employee must have completed probationary status.
- b. The employee must be working for the City a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week.
- c. Pursue a degree, course, or certification in a field relevant to a position the city normally recruits for.
- d. All classes/courses must be offered by institutions accredited by one of the national or regional accreditation councils recognized by the U.S. Department of Education
<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>
- e. A letter grade of “C” or better must be achieved. In courses that are ungraded, satisfactory completion is necessary to qualify for tuition assistance.
- f. The employee must not have been required to repay funds under this program within six (6) months of a new request for tuition assistance.

2. General Policy

- a. Participants in the tuition assistance program will do so on their own time and are not to receive pay for time spent in attendance at course work authorized under this program.
- b. Irregular work schedules may be authorized by the supervisor upon review of the employee’s written request.
- c. Tuition assistance will only be provided for courses receiving prior approval from the employee’s immediate supervisor, department head, human resource department and mayor.
- d. The City authorizes tuition assistance for an approved course on the following basis:
 - i. One hundred percent (100%) for a grade of “C” or higher.
 - ii. Fifty percent (50%) for ungraded courses satisfactorily completed.

iii. Each employee who is qualified for this program will be eligible to receive up to a maximum of three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) in tuition assistance per calendar year.

e. Funds for this program are for tuition expenses actually incurred by the employee. Any financial assistance (monies received through grants or scholarships) should be deducted from the employee's tuition assistance amount.

f. Employees who leave city employment, for any reason other than layoff, within one (1) year of receiving tuition assistance are required to repay the total amount of tuition assistance received in the last 12 months of employment. Such repayment may be withheld from the employee's paycheck.

3. Procedure

a. The employee must submit a Tuition Assistance Program Application to the employee's immediate supervisor at least two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of the course. The request shall describe the educational institution, the course name, the cost of the course and the start/completion dates and must include an attachment of the invoice from the school and verification of classes enrolled.

b. The supervisor shall evaluate the request and forward it to the department head with a recommendation. The department head shall evaluate the request and forward it to the human resource department with a recommendation.

c. The human resource department shall review the request. If it meets all the eligibility criteria, the application shall be routed to the Human Resources Director and the Mayor for final approval.

d. Upon final approval, the finance department shall issue a check for the amount of the course up to the three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) annual limit, made payable to the employee.

e. Upon completion of the course, the employee shall submit proof of the earned grade to the human resource director within ten (10) working days after the course completion date. For the purposes of this section "course completion" shall mean the date on which the educational institution issues course grades. If the employee fails to submit proof of the earned grade within ten (10) days after course completion, the employee shall repay the City the entire amount of tuition assistance.

4. Funding

a. Funds for the tuition assistance program shall be contained in the budget of the finance department.

b. The mayor shall propose to the municipal council the amount needed to fund the program as a part of the budget package.

c. The municipal council shall fund the tuition assistance program.

5. Exclusions

a. Travel costs to and from the course, the cost of books and lab fees are not eligible under this policy.

b. The cost, including employee travel time and expenses, for any mandatory education courses and similar training which may be required of an employee by a department shall be paid in full by that department from its annual budget. The expense of mandatory education is not eligible under this policy.

c. Employees may not be reimbursed for tuition paid by another financial grant or scholarship.

Adopted 8/2024