

POLICY NUMBER:

APM- 4- 77

DATE:

10/28/14

ISSUED BY:

Daniel J. Alfonso
City Manager/Designee

Daniel J. Alfonso
SIGNATURE

CITY OF MIAMI



**ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY**

REVISIONS

**REVISED
SECTION**

Created
II. B
III. D
ALL
Revised

**DATE OF
REVISION**

10/25/77
02/16/01
02/16/01
08/19/02
10/23/14

SUBJECT:

TUITION REFUND PROGRAM

Purpose

To provide an official policy relating to tuition reimbursement incurred by executive, managerial/confidential classified and unclassified employees for participation in authorized educational programs.

Effective this date, this Administrative Policy supersedes all previous directives relating to this subject.

Policy

City of Miami employees may be provided with assistance in continuing their education to improve their job performance and increase their value to the City by pursuing courses of study directly related to their present job duties. The continuance of this plan is subject to budgetary limitations. All full-time executive, managerial/confidential classified and unclassified employees who have completed their probationary period, or one (1) year of employment (if executive or unclassified), are eligible.

**Administration
and
Responsibilities**

- A. The Department of Human Resources is responsible for the administration of the Tuition Refund Program. Approval as to participation in the program rests with the individual departments and the Department of Human Resources.
- B. The City Manager may, if in his judgment there is adequate participation and benefit to the City, add, revise, delete or grant exceptions to any provision in this plan.
- C. Department Directors are responsible for approval of training and insuring that employees are informed of the availability of the Tuition Refund

Program. In addition, Department Directors are encouraged to identify employees who demonstrate an ability to progress rapidly and who can improve their work productivity through additional educational training.

**Personal
Achievement**

- A. Employees are encouraged to take courses of study for personal achievement or for preparation for a promotional examination.
 - B. The City will pay 50% of straight tuition costs up to \$200 per semester. A maximum of \$300 per year may be reimbursed.
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**Job Related
Achievement**

- A. Employees are encouraged to improve their job performance and increase their value to the City by pursuing courses of study related to their job.
 - B. The proposed course, degree or license must be directly related to the employee's work or be in the nature of preparation for promotion with the City for the next higher position or one to which the employee may reasonably be expected to be assigned.
 - C. All course work must be taken from an accredited college, university or educational institution approved by the City Manager or the Director of the Department of Human Resources.
 - D. The City will pay straight tuition costs up to a maximum of \$4,000 per calendar year.
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**General
Standards**

- A. The participant must be a full-time, regular executive, managerial/confidential classified or unclassified employee, having completed their probationary period or one (1) year of employment (if executive or unclassified).
- B. Approval of the employee's Department Director and the Department of Human Resources must be secured before beginning the course of study. Approval shall not be given for courses already underway.
- C. In the event that a course of a general nature is offered at several area educational facilities, employees are expected to make a reasonable effort to enroll in a school that provides the desired training at a minimum cost.
- D. The City will require an employee to use other available payment plans such as employees covered by the G.I. Bill.
- E. The approved course must be completed with a passing grade of "C" or

higher, to be entitled to a reimbursement.

- F. Any job-related workshop, convention, conference, seminar or certificate program that an employee requests or is requested to attend may not be refundable through the Tuition Refund Program. Funds for these purposes should be included in the operating department's training budget.
- G. Employees must attend classes and complete assignments on their own time. When necessary, requests for leave to attend classes during work hours will be considered and may be authorized by the City Manager or the Director of the Department of Human Resources.

Procedures

- A. Employees desiring to take advantage of the Tuition Refund Program should discuss their planned course of study with their supervisor and/or the Department of Human Resources.
- B. The employee must apply for tuition reimbursement on the standard application (Exhibit "A" attached). Tuition Refund application forms will be made available through each Department. The employee will complete the application and submit it to their Department Director for initial approval.
- C. The Department Director will indicate their recommendation in the space provided and forward all copies of the application to the Department of Human Resources.
- D. Employees must submit their application prior to commencement of course work. Applications received after the specified time requirement will not be accepted.
- E. The Department of Human Resources will approve or disapprove the application, consistent with the policy, and notify the employee's Department Director. Forms, which lack the necessary information and the Department Director's signature, will be returned to the employee. On the application, justification must be specific to the point of containing assessments by both the employee and their Department Director of the expected benefits to be derived from the course.
- F. Upon receipt of the approval or disapproval, the Department Director will notify the employee.
- G. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Department of Human Resources of any change in their status relative to the reimbursement application. Failure to keep the Department of Human Resources abreast of any changes may result in the employee's disqualification for reimbursement for that semester or quarter.

- H. Employees will be responsible for the accurate completion of their tuition refund applications. If it is determined that an employee has falsified their application(s) for tuition reimbursement, the employee shall forfeit their privilege to further participate in the Tuition Refund Program, shall be required to reimburse the City the full tuition amount paid, and may be subject to disciplinary action.
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- Reimbursement**
- A. The employee, upon successful completion of the course work, must submit to the Department of Human Resources, through their Department Director the following:
1. Certificate of Satisfactory Completion.
 2. Invoice or receipt showing the amount paid for books, lab fees and tuition.
- B. Reimbursement will be limited to books, lab fees and tuition costs.
- C. Upon approval of the Application for Tuition Reimbursement, the Human Resources Department will forward it to the Finance Department. The Finance Department will issue payment for it in the employee's regular paycheck.
- D. Employees who leave the employ of the City within six (6) months immediately after being reimbursed for any single course shall refund the City the amount of such reimbursement.
- E. Employees who leave the employ of the City within twelve (12) months after obtaining a degree for which the employee has been reimbursed in all subjects taken must refund the City for the total amount of all reimbursements.
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- Priorities**
- A. The following priorities will apply to funding.
- B. In the event there are more requests for reimbursement than can be accommodated, a priority system for approving requests has been established:
1. First Priority: Courses which are directly related to the employee's present job or next normal promotional opportunity.
 2. Second Priority: Courses which are not job related but are part of a degree program that will better prepare the employee for future career opportunities with the City.
 3. Third Priority: Course(s) or degree program of a general nature that is not job related but which will aid the employee in their

personal growth and development.

- C. When funds are insufficient to cover all reimbursement requests, the Director of Human Resources and the City Manager may:
1. Establish a dollar limit for reimbursement of each employee during the year.
 2. Suspend the reimbursement of partial tuition for courses covered under other programs.
 3. Establish allocations and expenditure ceilings for semesters or other terms during the City's fiscal year.
 4. Take other appropriate action to assure equitable use of funds within the limits of appropriations.
- D. In the event that all funds have been committed and there are valid applications remaining, they will be approved conditionally. If funds previously allocated are not totally expended, applications conditionally approved will be reimbursed. If a choice must be made between two employees whose applications have the same priority, the request for training to complete the lower academic level will receive preference, all other factors being equal.
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