



**COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Topic: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT
Section: TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT
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**REIMBURSEMENT FOR TUITION AND NON-REQUIRED LICENSES/CERTIFICATES
GENERAL REPRESENTATION UNIT**

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the General Representation Unit, monies may be set aside for reimbursement to employees in the General Representation Unit for tuition costs and/or costs of non-required licenses/certificates; and for reimbursement for dues for professional associations that are inseparable from certification and/or licensure. A total of \$16,000 for the MOU contract years of 2002-2005 has been set aside for tuition reimbursement and for the reimbursement of non-required licenses/certificates. Monies are available on a first-come, first-service basis, in accordance with the criteria and procedures below.

A. ELIGIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES

Only employees occupying budgeted positions in the General Representation Unit are eligible for reimbursement under these provisions.
Extra-help employees are excluded from eligibility.

B. ELIGIBILITY OF COURSES, NON-REQUIRED LICENSES AND CERTIFICATES, AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION DUES

The following criteria shall be used for approval of courses and non-required licenses/certificates:

"Non-required licenses/certificates" are those licenses/certificates issued by a Federal or State agency which are not required by Federal, State, or County laws, or a requirement stated in the County of Santa Cruz class specification for the employee's job classification.

1. Course/licenses/certificates must be of direct value to the County and relevant to employee's field of work or promotional opportunities that are approved in concept by the Department Head and the Training Task Force, and approved by the Personnel Department.
2. Courses/licenses/certificates will be limited to those providing knowledge and skills that cannot be acquired through available in-service training.
3. Courses/licenses/certificates must cover subject matter not sufficiently encompassed in the employee's previous education and experience.

Licenses/certificates must be obtained and courses must be attended outside of the employee's scheduled work hours.

4. Courses must be taken for collage credit or meet other criteria approved by the Training Task Force.
5. Professional Association Dues are for professional associations for which dues are inseparable from certification and/or licensure and are not reimbursed under any other MOU provision.

C. REIMBURSEMENT PROVISIONS

1. The maximum yearly reimbursement which may be received by each employee is \$175.00 for tuition reimbursement. The maximum yearly reimbursement which may be received by each employee for non-required licenses/certificates is \$175.00 (revised 12/13/99). The maximum yearly Professional Association Dues reimbursement received by each employee is \$175.00.

These maximum amounts were determined by the Training Task Force by taking into account the total monies available, the anticipated number of employees who may take advantage of the program, and other factors. Funds available for reimbursement are limited to that amount budgeted in the Personnel Department for this specific program.

2. Costs incurred for books, supplies, parking, mileage, meals and other incidental costs are not reimbursable. Only course enrollment fees and fees for licenses/certificates are eligible for reimbursement.
3. No reimbursement will be provided under this program for courses/licenses/certificates that are eligible for reimbursement under other provisions of the General Representation Unit Memorandum of Understanding (i.e., Article 15.3 – Required licenses).
4. **COURSES** Reimbursement for courses shall be made to the employee upon completion of the course with a minimum final grade of "C" or its equivalent for an under-graduate course, or "B" or its equivalent in a graduate course, or a "Pass" if the course is offered only on a Pass/Fail or No Credit basis.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATES Requests for reimbursement for licenses/certificates must be accompanied by a copy of the license identifying the licensing agency, the date the license was issued, the date of payment for the license/certificate, and a written explanation describing the direct value to the County, the relevancy to the employee's field of work or promotional opportunity that the license/certificate possess.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION DUES Requests for reimbursement for professional association dues must be accompanied by a copy of the association's dues application form from the association, a paid receipt indicating the date the dues were paid, and a written explanation describing the direct value to the County or the relevance to the employee's field of work.

5. If the requested amount of tuition reimbursement exceeds the annual maximum, the balance MAY be carried over to be applied in a subsequent year, depending on availability of funding and other factors to be considered by the Training Task Force. The employee is responsible for initiating appropriate claims to receive reimbursement.

D. REQUEST PROCEDURE

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the Personnel Department on form PER 1360. Final approval will be made by the Personnel Department under general policies established by the Training Task Force.

E. TAX IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

Reimbursement under this program may be subject to Federal and/or State taxes and courses may be subject to additional IRS requirements to avoid payment of taxes for reimbursement for courses. Reimbursement for non-required licenses and certificates are probably subject to Federal and State taxes. As waivers for taxes may occur after the fact (e.g., in February for the preceding tax year), employees should check with a tax consultant regarding their liability for any reimbursement.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Fill out an employee Tuition Reimbursement Request Form (PER 1360).
2. Attach a course outline (college catalogue descriptions are acceptable). Verify that the license/certificate, course, or dues that you seek reimbursement for under this program is not a requirement for your position.

For reimbursement of a non-required license/certificate fee, an employee must write an explanation to the Training Task Force Committee describing the direct value to the County or the relevancy to the employee's field of work or promotional opportunity that the license/certificate possess, together with:

- a copy of the license identifying the licensing agency, the date the license was issued, the date of payment for the license/certificate
- proof of payment.

3. Submit application to Personnel Department.
4. Applications will be reviewed each January, April, July and October. Applications will be accepted in advance of courses and for courses taken within the last three months of the request.
5. Applications for reimbursement are NOT GUARANTEED to be accepted.

Notification of Acceptance: The request will be reviewed by the Personnel Department and the Training Task Force for compliance with Tuition Reimbursement Program provisions. Notice of approval or rejection will be forwarded to the employee in writing.

REIMBURSEMENT

- A. The employee is required to submit the following to the Personnel Department after completing an approved course, obtaining a license/certificate, or paying professional dues not reimbursed under any other MOU provisions.
 1. A claim form signed by the employee and supervisor (AUD-7B).
NOTE: The department head is not required to sign the AUD-7B.
 2. A dated grade certificate.
NOTE: A minimum final grade of "C" is required for undergraduate courses, a final grade of "B" is required for graduate courses or a "pass" is required for courses offered only on a pass/fail or no credit basis.
 3. Proof of payment of tuition, fee, or dues.
- B. Amounts Exceeding the Annual Maximum

Amounts which exceed the annual maximum MAY be carried over into the next calendar year. The Training Task Force will consider carry over requests and MAY approve additional reimbursement after considering availability of funds, the anticipated number of employees in the program and other factors. The employee is responsible for initiating appropriate claims to receive reimbursement. Employees will be notified in writing of approval or disapproval and the amount to be reimbursed for carry over requests.

EMPLOYEE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORM

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

To be eligible for the Santa Cruz County Employee Tuition Reimbursement Program, you must;

1. comply with the requirements and procedures set forth in Personnel Administrative Manual Section VIII.6.; and
2. complete this form in full; and
3. send this form and a copy of the course description, license/certificate information, or professional dues information to the Personnel Department.

Once you have been accepted for the Tuition Reimbursement Program, you will receive a completed copy of this form. Following your completion of the course or upon obtaining the non-required license/certificate, please submit an AUD-7B form to the Personnel Department with a dated grade certificate of completion of the course in question and proof of tuition or license/certificate fee payment. If the grade meets rule requirements for courses, your claim will be processed.

Date: _____

Name: _____ Employee Number: _____

Department: _____ Work Phone: _____

Job Title: _____

Course Title: _____

School: _____

License/Tuition Cost: \$ _____

How will this course help you in your work as a County Employee? For licenses/certificates, explain its relevance/value. For Professional Dues, explain its relationship to certification/licensure.

REMINDER: For courses, you must attach a copy of the course description from the college catalogue. For licenses, you must attach a copy of the license/certificate and proof of payment.

I hereby certify that this course/license/certificate or these professional dues are not required for my position, not reimbursed by my department in any other way, and that I am not eligible for reimbursement from the County for license/certificate under any other MOU provision. If I am reimbursed through this program and reimbursed for the same license/certificate/dues through my department, I will repay the full amount to the Tuition Reimbursement fund _____ (please initial).

I hereby certify that the above information is correct, that I will comply with the requirements for this program.

Signature _____

Date _____

Approved by Training Task Force Date