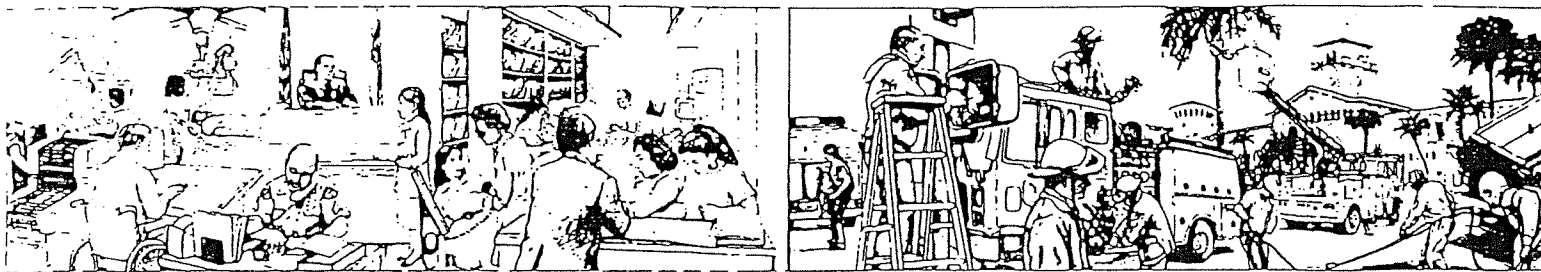


COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA



ANN GOODRICH
Director

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

Training & Staff Development Division
105 East Anapamu Street, Room 102
Santa Barbara, California 93101
(805) 568-3270
FAX (805) 568-3272

Deborah A. Karoff
Assistant Director

Theresa Duer
Deputy Director

August 24, 1993

TO: ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS

FROM: Deborah Karoff, Assistant Personnel Director *DAK*

RE: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Attached are revisions to the policy and procedures for the Tuition and Textbook Reimbursement Program effective September 1, 1993. Please ensure that your employees are notified immediately of these changes to the program.

Currently the annual maximum amount available to employees for reimbursement has not changed under this program as it is predetermined by M.O.U.s or Board resolution. The maximum amount is not guaranteed to employees but rather is subject to fund availability. The funding level for fiscal year 1992-93 was \$45,000. Thus far, the recommended level for FY 1993-94 has been reduced to \$30,000 due to budgetary constraints. As a result, revisions to the tuition reimbursement eligibility requirements are deemed appropriate in order to keep the original integrity of the program operational. We will notify you immediately if the funding level changes again.

The significant changes are in the eligibility criteria for courses taken. In general, courses must relate to the employee's job assignment or be job-oriented; OR be part of a formal certificate or degree program (aimed at achieving a specific educational/career development goal for a position within County employment); AND be offered by a qualified academic institution (typically, those accredited by national or regional accrediting agencies for college level or graduate coursework; accredited coursework is usually transferable to other academic institutions).

The following training is no longer covered under the tuition reimbursement program: Professional skills building workshops, correspondence courses, institutes, seminars or any other training offered by professional organizations (e.g. Calif. Public Defenders Assn; Society of Auditor-Appraisers; Natl. Businesswomen's Leadership Assn., etc.) **Continuing education which is necessary for retaining certification or licensure is also not eligible for reimbursement** through the tuition and textbook reimbursement program.

Thank you for your cooperation in disseminating this information to your employees.

DAK:nv

cc: Training Advisory Committee
Employee Organizations

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES
TUITION AND TEXTBOOK REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

POLICY

The Tuition Reimbursement Program is established to:

1. Encourage eligible employees to continue their education in order to meet present and future needs of County services;
2. increase effective work performance and employee efficiency;
3. improve retention and facilitate promotion from within the County; and
4. attract to County service, persons of superior ability and potential for advancement.

PROCEDURES

1. Application:

Advance approval is optional. Eligible employees are, however, encouraged to seek advance approval to ensure that a course is eligible, and that funds will be available for reimbursement. Requests for advance approval (Form PE-7) must be submitted to the Personnel Department at least five working days prior to the beginning of the course.

Department head signature is required if the course is taken on County time. A signature from the Department head is also required if the employee has a less than satisfactory performance rating. Final determination of eligibility for reimbursement resides with the Personnel Director.

If advance approval is received and the employee does not complete the course, the Training and Staff Development Division must be notified as soon as possible so that funds may be released to reimburse other eligible employees.

2. Claim for Reimbursement:

If advance approval was obtained, claims may be filed anytime up to four months of completion of an eligible course. If prior approval was **not** obtained, then claims must be filed within four months of completion of the course, and, must be **within the same fiscal year as the course was completed.**

To obtain reimbursement, the employee shall submit to the Personnel Department the following:

- a. A completed Auditor-Controller's Claim Form (AC-126).
- b. Appropriate evidence of satisfactory completion of the course; i.e., grade "C" or better, certificate of completion, or letter of attendance.
- c. Receipt for payment of fees for tuition, eligible textbooks, and any other required fixed charges.
- d. If advance approval was obtained, the employee's copy of an approved application (Form PE-7); if advance approval was not obtained, any information necessary to determine course eligibility must be submitted at the same time as the claim request.

DEFINITIONS

Eligible Employees:

1. All regular employees are eligible. Employees who are initial probationers, extra-help or contractors are not eligible for tuition reimbursement.
2. Employees eligible for reimbursement from other sources (State funding, G.I. Bill, Leep, scholarships, etc.) are not eligible for reimbursement from the County program except for portions not covered by those sources.
3. Employees with an unsatisfactory performance rating may only receive tuition reimbursement funds upon approval of their Department head.
4. Permanent part-time employees are eligible for a pro-rated reimbursement based on their part-time percentage.

Eligible Courses:

1. In general, courses must relate to the employee's job assignment or be job-oriented, or be part of a formal certificate or degree program (aimed at achieving a specific educational/career development goal for a position within County employment). Continuing education which is necessary for retaining certification or licensure is not eligible for reimbursement through this program.
2. The courses must be offered by a qualified academic institution. Typically, qualified academic institutions are those accredited by national or regional accrediting agencies for college level or graduate coursework. Accredited coursework is usually transferable to other academic institutions.

3. The following training is not covered under the tuition reimbursement program: Professional skills building workshops, institutes, seminars or any other training offered by professional organizations (e.g. Calif. Public Defenders Assn; Society of Auditor-Appraisers; Natl. Businesswomen's Leadership Assn; etc.)
4. Only courses with tuition and textbook charges of \$15.00 or more are eligible for reimbursement.
5. Only courses offered within the state of California are eligible for reimbursement.

Eligible Textbooks: Textbooks are eligible for reimbursement when it can be shown that the textbooks are required for a course that meets the criteria for tuition reimbursement under this program.

Required Fixed Charges: Charges eligible for reimbursement under this program include only those required to take a course, including tuition, required textbooks, laboratory fees, and course registration fees.

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
TUITION AND TEXTBOOK REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES

PRE-APPROVAL PROCEDURES:

NOTE: Advance approval by the Personnel Department is not required, however, employees are strongly encouraged to seek advance approval in order to ensure that a course meets program criteria, and that funds will be available for reimbursement.

1. A PRE-APPROVAL FORM (FORM PE-7) should be submitted to the Training and Staff Development Office at least 5 days prior to the beginning of the course.
2. DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED unless the course is being taken on County time or you received a "less than satisfactory" rating on your last Employee Performance Report.
3. Any documents which will help to determine course eligibility should be submitted along with the Pre-Approval Form.
4. If you are requesting textbook reimbursement then you must submit a course outline/syllabus or other documentation to show the textbook is required in order to have your textbook costs approved for reimbursement.
5. After review, a copy of the PRE-APPROVAL FORM will be returned to you. Once approved, the amount approved will be held for you pending your Claim for reimbursement.
6. If you receive pre-approval and do not complete the course, please notify the Training and Staff Development Division as soon as possible so that funds may be released to reimburse other eligible employees.

CLAIM PROCEDURES:

1. If prior approval was obtained, then claims can be filed anytime within four months after completion of the course; if prior approval was not obtained, then claims must be filed within four months after completion of the course and within the same fiscal year as the course was completed.
2. To file a claim, you should submit the following to the Training and Staff Development Office:
 - a. A County Claim on the Treasury (Form AC-126) with the top half (only) filled out (the Department should be Personnel) and your signature; AND
 - b. Appropriate evidence of satisfactory completion of the course, i.e. a grade of "C" or better, a Certificate of Completion, or a Letter of Attendance from the institution or instructor; AND
 - c. A receipt for payment of tuition/textbook/other eligible charges (e.g. a written receipt, credit card slip or statement); AND
 - d. Your copy of the Pre-Approval Form (Form PE-7). IF YOU DID NOT GET PRIOR APPROVAL FOR YOUR COURSE, you may still be eligible for reimbursement, but you must also submit at this time any information necessary to determine course/textbook eligibility.

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY:

1. You must have permanent status in your position (or in some other Santa Barbara County position immediately preceding employment in your present position). Employees who are initial probationers, extra-help or contractors are not eligible for tuition reimbursement.
2. You must have been rated "satisfactory" or better on your last Employee Performance Report. If your last rating was "unsatisfactory", you may receive tuition reimbursement funds only after obtaining the approval of your Department head.
3. If you are eligible for reimbursement from another source (State funding, G.I. Bill, Leep, scholarships, etc.) then you are not eligible for reimbursement from the County program except for portions not covered by those sources.
4. If you are a permanent part-time employee, you are eligible for a pro-rated reimbursement based on your part-time percentage.

COURSE ELIGIBILITY:

1. In general, the course must relate to your job assignment or be job oriented; OR be part of a formal certificate or degree program (aimed at achieving a specific educational/career development goal for a position within County employment); AND be offered by a qualified academic institution (typically, those accredited by national or regional accrediting agencies for college level or graduate coursework; accredited coursework is usually transferable to other academic institutions).
2. Courses must be offered within the State of California.
3. The following training is not covered under the tuition reimbursement program: Professional skills building workshops, institutes, seminars or any other training offered by professional organizations.
4. Continuing education which is necessary for retaining certification or licensure is no longer reimbursable through the tuition and textbook program.

TEXTBOOK ELIGIBILITY: Textbooks are eligible for reimbursement only when required for a course that meets the criteria for tuition reimbursement under this program.

OTHER FIXED CHARGES: Only those charges required to take a course (including tuition, required textbooks, and laboratory fees) are eligible for reimbursement under this program. Total charges must amount to at least \$15.00 to be eligible for reimbursement.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS: The annual (fiscal year) maximum amount available to you for reimbursement under this program is predetermined by employee agreement or Board resolution. Additionally, the maximum amount is not guaranteed to you but rather is subject to fund availability.

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
105 E. Anapamu St., Room 102, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
PHONE: 568-3270 FAX: 568-3272

TUITION AND TEXTBOOK REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM
PRE-APPROVAL FORM

Name _____ Job Classification _____
Department _____ Division _____
Phone # _____ Bargaining Unit _____

COURSE INFORMATION:

Title _____ Units/CEUs _____
School/Organization _____ Location _____
Date Course Begins _____ Ends _____ Hours/Session _____
Tuition/Fixed Charges \$ _____ Required Textbook Charges \$ _____

Course Description:

Is this course part of a formal degree or certificate program? _____

Are you eligible for reimbursement of these costs from another source? _____

Are you a permanent employee? _____ How many hours a PAY PERIOD do you work?

APPROVAL BY DEPARTMENT HEAD:

Are you taking this course either wholly or partially on County time? _____

Did you receive an unsatisfactory overall rating on your last EPR? _____

If yes to either of these two questions, then Department Head signature required:

Date

Signature of Department Head (or Authorized Representative)

APPROVAL BY DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL:

Amount approved for tuition reimbursement \$ _____ textbook reimbursement \$ _____

Remaining amount for which applicant is eligible this fiscal year \$ _____

Date

Authorized Signature/Personnel Department

PLEASE COMPLETE SIDE 2 OF THIS FORM

COURSE ELIGIBILITY.

1. Please describe how this specific course relates to your current job assignment or is related to your job class: _____

2. How does this course relate to a specific educational/career development goal for a position within County employment? Please be specific. _____

Please return to:

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