



TUITION REIMBURSEMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR NON-UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

RULES

ELIGIBILITY:

Any full-time, non-uniformed employee subject to the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Contract between the City of Columbus and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Ohio Council 8, Locals 1632 and 2191; Columbus Municipal Association of Government Employees/Communications Workers of America, Local 4502 (CMAGE/CWA); Fraternal Order of Police, Ohio Labor Council (OLC); or the Management Compensation Plan (MCP) and who has completed one (1) or more years of continuous active service prior to the start of the course(s) shall be eligible for tuition reimbursement in courses of instruction voluntarily undertaken.

No employee on an unpaid leave of absence, unauthorized leave of absence, disability leave, or injury leave may apply for tuition reimbursement.

COURSEWORK ELIGIBILITY:

There must be a correlation between the employee's duties and responsibilities and the courses taken or the degree program pursued (for AFSCME employees, there must be a correlation between the employee's duties and responsibilities or courses that may lead to career advancement within the City and the courses taken or the degree program pursued). Conformity of an employee's application to this provision shall be certified by the Appointing Authority. An employee seeking approval of a degree program (as opposed to individual courses) must present certification from the educational institution of acceptance to the specific degree program for which approval is sought. The employee may be required to submit additional certification to demonstrate that an individual course is approved by the educational institution as a part of the degree program previously approved. Coursework must be taken at accredited colleges, universities, technical and business institutes or at their established extension centers. Institutions must be located or course instruction must be given in Franklin County or adjoining counties. Certain seminars, conferences and workshops are covered as continuing education classes for employees who are members of the CMAGE/CWA and OLC bargaining units. **Otherwise, the tuition reimbursement program does not cover such educational and training activities.** Courses taken via the Internet may be approved by the Department of Human Resources on a case-by-case basis.

All courses must be scheduled outside the employee's regularly scheduled work hours. All scheduled hours for courses of instruction must be filed on a tuition reimbursement application with the Appointing Authority or designee who will forward the application to the Department of Human Resources. All courses are subject to approval by the Department of Human Resources. All scheduled times must be approved by the Appointing Authority or designee. Any situation that, in the discretion of the Appointing Authority or designee, would require an employee's presence on the job, shall take complete and final precedence over any times scheduled for courses.

PROCEDURES

1. The employee completes a tuition reimbursement application, which may be obtained in the department/division business office or at the City's Internet web site:
<http://hr.ci.columbus.oh.us/labor.htm>
2. The completed application is then submitted to the department/division business office for approval by the Appointing Authority or designee and by a process established by the Appointing Authority. Courses for which application is made must be the same courses for which reimbursement is ultimately sought; the employee cannot switch classes without prior approval of the Appointing Authority or designee who will notify the Department of Human Resources.
3. Applications for approval of institutions and courses must be filed with the Appointing Authority not more than thirty (30) calendar days (60 calendar days for AFSCME employees) or less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the start of the course(s) and forwarded to the Department of Human Resources. Employees must notify the Appointing Authority or designee when canceling a class after the application has been approved; the Appointing Authority or designee will notify the Department of Human Resources.
4. Reimbursement for the approved course(s) will be based upon successful completion of the course(s). Successful completion shall mean performance sufficient to satisfy the standards of the educational institution. If a course is passed, then the City will pay tuition as outlined in paragraph 7 herein. If the course is failed, the City will not pay any tuition. If an employee is separated from City employment during the duration of the course(s), the City will not pay reimbursement for tuition.
5. Applications that are disapproved by the Department of Human Resources will be returned to the department/division with an explanation for the denial, prior to the course start, if possible. The reason for denial will be communicated to the employee and a department/division representative.
6. Reimbursement for tuition will be made when the employee presents to the Appointing Authority or designee the following documents from the institution: a) an official certificate or a grade report confirming satisfactory completion of the approved course; b) an itemized statement of account. These documents must come from the institution. Submission of these documents should be done within four (4) weeks of course completion. The department/division business office will forward this information to the Department of Human Resources, which will verify the information and return it to the department/division with a form indicating approval for payment processing. The approval form must accompany the payment paperwork through the payroll process.
7. Reimbursement for instructional fees will be based upon successful completion of the course(s) in conjunction with the respective collective bargaining contract or MCP guidelines. The maximum reimbursable amounts for instructional fees are as follows:

Bargaining Unit	Undergraduate	Graduate	Continuing Education	Comments
AFSCME	\$3000	\$3600	N/A	See Note (a)
CMAGE/CWA	\$3000	\$3600	\$1500	See Note (b)
OLC	\$2000	\$2200	\$1500	See Note (c)
MCP	\$3000	\$3800	N/A	

Notes:

- (a) Effective January 1, 2009, the reimbursement levels were increased.
- (b) Tuition for CMAGE employees includes reimbursement for course fees for continuing education required as a condition of maintaining a license or certification which the employee is required to maintain as a condition of employment as provided in the Civil Service Commission classification specification.

- (c) OLC employees may apply for reimbursement for continuing education (seminars, conferences and workshops) voluntarily undertaken by the employee that is directly related to the employee's job duties.

No reimbursement will be granted for books, paper, supplies of any nature, transportation, meals or any other expense connected with any course. Reimbursement shall be for the cost of instructional and lab fees only.

8. The benefit year for tuition reimbursement is based on a calendar year. Reimbursement is made based on completed quarters/semesters, etc. The yearly reimbursement amount is determined based upon when the school term is completed, not when an employee receives the reimbursement. As an example, an employee is eligible for yearly reimbursement of \$2,000. Winter Quarter ends on December 18th. The employee has received his/her grades and submits documentation for reimbursement. The employee has received \$1,500 in reimbursement for that calendar year. The total amount of tuition for the quarter was \$800. The employee will be reimbursed \$500 from the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program. The balance of \$300 owed for the Winter Quarter is the responsibility of the employee.
9. If an employee is eligible to receive financial assistance from any governmental or private agency, whether or not applied for and regardless of when such assistance may be received, that amount shall be deducted in the entire amount from the full tuition reimbursement the employee is eligible to receive from the City. If an employee's tuition is fully covered by another governmental or private agency, then the employee is not entitled to any payment from the City.
10. Any employee participating in the tuition reimbursement program who resigns or retires or is discharged for cause must repay the City the tuition reimbursement paid by the City for courses completed less than two (2) or three (3) years prior to the date of termination or discharge. This amount will be deducted from the employee's terminal leave pay or final paycheck. If the employee's terminal leave pay is not sufficient to cover the charge of reimbursement, the employee will be billed the difference (see the following table for further information on repayment obligations).

Bargaining Unit	2 year Standard	3 year Standard
AFSCME	Any program	Not Applicable
CMAGE/CWA	Undergraduate/Graduate	J.D./Ph.D. studies
OLC	Continuing Education/ Undergraduate/Graduate	J.D./Ph.D. studies
MCP	Undergraduate	Graduate

Questions should be directed to the department/division tuition reimbursement coordinator.

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATION
INSTRUCTION SHEET**

GENERAL INFORMATION – *Detach the instruction sheet from the application before sending the application to the Department/Division Coordinator.*

Your application must be submitted to the Department/Division Coordinator between ten (10) to thirty (30) days prior to course start date. Incomplete or denied applications will be returned to the applicant with an explanation of the reason for return.

SECTION A – APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Enter name in order of Last, First, Middle Initial. Your Social Security Number is used as a unique identifier in the payroll system. See Table # 1 on Page 2 of the Instruction Sheet for a listing of Department and Division Numbers. Enter numbers as shown in the Table.
2. Enter your official Classification Title rather than a working title for your job. Enter your hire date rather than your date of rank unless they are the same.
3. See Table # 2 on Page 2 for a listing of Bargaining Unit Codes. Contact your Human Resources Section if you are not certain of your bargaining unit assignment. Work hours refer to start and end time of your shift. Use days of the week to identify days off (Example, Monday = Mon, Tuesday = Tues, etc.) Firefighters should list their Unit designation (1, 2, or 3) if not on a 40 hour schedule and their Kelly day under days off.

SECTION B – SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. See Table # 3 on Page 2 of the Instruction Sheet for a listing of School Codes. Use code # 999 for any school not listed. Enter the name of the college, university or organization offering the coursework rather than the location where classes will be conducted. See Table # 4 on Page 2 for a listing of Course Type Codes. (Note: Course code for Continuing Education is for CIMAGE/CWA members only.)
2. Answer yes or no to the question asked. Please note the requirement for submission of a letter of acceptance for a first application related to enrollment in any degree program (Associate, Bachelor, Master, etc.) If no, attach a justification memo to support a first application for any coursework unrelated to your current job classification or job classification series. Second and subsequent applications need not be supported by justification information unless the degree being pursued changed.
3. Answer yes or no to the question asked. Enter your degree and major.
4. Answer yes or no to the question asked.
5. Enter all information requested for identification of course work for which you are seeking reimbursement. Please remember that your application must be submitted ten (10) to thirty (30) days prior to the start date of any course you plan to take. Questions relating to timely filing standards should be referred to your Department/Division Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator or your union representative. See Table # 5 for examples of allowable fees. Students enrolled in Internet courses with no scheduled days or hours for class work should enter the letters "INT" in the column headed "Day/s of Week."

SECTION C – ASSURANCES

1. Applicants who are eligible for scholarships or grants must declare the dollar value of such as it would be available during the time period covered by any application for tuition reimbursement. The City of Columbus follows the principle of being a "last payer of benefits."
2. Check your collective bargaining agreement or compensation plan document for information regarding your ability to be released from work to attend educational activities covered by the tuition reimbursement program. Applicants seeking release time from work to attend classes must attach a memo explaining how work requirements will be satisfied should the Appointing Authority agree to release time.

SECTION D – DIVISION/DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL *All entries in this section shall be made by authorized representatives of the Appointing Authority.*

1. Check each block to indicate that the application has been reviewed and is acceptable to the Department/Division. Note any exceptions on the line provided or attach an explanatory memo.
2. Affix signatures and date signed for Division and/or Department authorization.

Table # 1 – Department/Division List

2001	City Council
2201	City Auditor
2202	Income Tax
2301	City Treasurer
2401	City Attorney
2404	Real Estate Division
2501	Municipal Court – Judges
2601	Municipal Court – Clerk
2701	Civil Service
3001	Public Safety Department
3002	Communications Division
3003	Police Division
3004	Fire Division
4001	Mayor
4002	Community Relations Commission
4003	Equal Business Opportunity
4004	Education
4401	Development Department
4402	Economic Development Division
4403	Building Services Division
4405	Neighborhood Services Division
4406	Planning Division
4410	Housing Division
4500	Finance Department
4501	Finance and Management
4505	Fleet Management
4507	Facilities Management
4601	Human Resources Department
4701	Technology Department
4702	Information Services Division
5001	Health Department
5101	Recreation and Parks Department
5103	Golf Course Division
5901	Public Service Department
5902	Refuse Collection Division
5910	Division of Mobility Operations
5911	Division of Planning & Operations
5912	Division of Design & Construction
6000	Public Utilities Department
6002	Operational Support
6005	Sewerage and Drainage Division
6009	Power and Water Division

Table # 2 – Bargaining Unit Code

A	Management Compensation Plan
B	Boards and Commissions
C	AFSCME Locals 1632 & 2191
D	CMAGE/CWA Overtime Eligible
E	CMAGE/CWA Overtime Exempt
F	IAFF (Fire)
J	Ohio Labor Council, FOP
P	Fraternal Order of Police (Sworn)
W	Executive Police
X	Executive Fire

Table # 4 – Course Type Codes

A	Adult Education
C	Continuing Education (CMAGE/CWA Only)
G	Graduate
L	Law (J.D. or LL.M)
P	Doctorate (Ph.D.)
U	Undergraduate (Associate or Bachelor)

Table # 3 – School Code List

058	AMERICAN INTERCONTINENTAL (#)
042	AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY (#)
027	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
047	ASHLAND UNIVERSITY
015	AXIA COLLEGE
050	BOSTON UNIVERSITY
051	BRADFORD SCHOOL
013	CANYON COLLEGE
041	CAPELLA UNIVERSITY (#)
004	CAPITAL UNIVERSITY
001	CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
037	CENTRAL OHIO TECHNICAL COLLEGE
030	CLEVELAND INSTITUTE OF ELECTRONICS (#)
043	COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY (#)
016	COLUMBUS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
002	COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
006	DEVRY UNIVERSITY
003	EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
028	EXCELSIOR COLLEGE
007	FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY
020	GRANT MEDICAL SCHOOL
054	HOCKING COLLEGE
035	HONDROS COLLEGE
014	JONES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
045	KELLER GRADUATE SCHOOL (DEVRY)
024	LIBERTY UNIVERSITY (#)
048	MOUNT VERNON NAZARENE UNIVERSITY
008	OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY
019	OHIO FIRE ACADEMY (REYNOLDSBURG)
009	OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
011	OHIO UNIVERSITY
010	OTTERBEIN COLLEGE
012	PARK UNIVERSITY
029	PENN STATE
044	PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
018	SOUTH EAST CAREER CENTER
021	STATE FIRE SCHOOL (BGSU)
049	TIFFIN UNIVERSITY (LAW ENF MASTERS)
053	UNION INSTITUTE
017	UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI (#)
036	UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
034	URBANA UNIVERSITY
026	UTICA COLLEGE
040	WALDEN UNIVERSITY (#)
039	WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY (CLIMB PROGRAM)
999	OTHER SCHOOLS NOT LISTED ABOVE

NOTE: (#) Distance Learning or Internet based courses offered.
School list is subject to periodic update.

Table # 5 – Fees (Below are examples only. Refer to applicant's collective bargaining agreement for specifics.)

<u>Allowable</u>	<u>Not Allowable</u>
General	Parking
Instruction	Laptop Use/Purchase
Lab	Matriculation/Graduation
Technology	COTA Bus
	Tuition Deferral Fee
	Book Use Fee

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATION
PLEASE LEGIBLY PRINT ALL INFORMATION**

SECTION A - APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. NAME _____ (L, F, MI) SSN ____/____/____ DEPT # ____ DIV # ____ (Table 1)
2. WORK PHONE ____-____ CLASSIFICATION _____ HIRE DATE ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YY)
3. BARGAINING UNIT CODE: _____ (Table 2) WORK HOURS _____ to _____ DAYS OFF ____/____ FIRE ONLY Unit # _____

SECTION B - SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. SCHOOL CODE # _____ (Table 3) SCHOOL NAME _____ COURSE TYPE CODE _____ (Table 4)
2. PRIOR ENROLLMENT IN TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM? ____ (Y or N) (See Note 1 below)
3. SEEKING A DEGREE? ____ (Y or N) WHAT IS THE DEGREE? _____ MAJOR? _____
4. COURSE WORK IS RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT WITH THE CITY OF COLUMBUS ____ (Y or N) (See Note 2 below)

5. Course Title	Course #	Required for Degree (Y or N)	Credit Hours	Course Start Date (MM/DD/YY)	Course End Date (MM/DD/YY)	Course Cost With Fees (See Note 3)	Course Schedule Day/s of Week Hours (Start - End)	

- Notes:** (1) - First application for any degree program must be accompanied by a letter of acceptance from the school
 (2) - First application for course work unrelated to present employment must be accompanied by a justification memo – see instruction sheet
 (3) - See instruction sheet for information regarding allowable fees

FOR HR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

HR DEPARTMENT TIME STAMP HERE

REVIEW DATE ____/____/____ REVIEWED BY _____ APPROVED ____ (Y or N)

REASON FOR DENIAL _____

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATION
PLEASE LEGIBLY PRINT ALL INFORMATION

SECTION C – ASSURANCES

- 1. I AM ELIGIBLE FOR GRANTS OR SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS ____ (Y or N) IF YES, ENTER DOLLAR VALUE \$_____
- 2. COURSE SCHEDULE CONFLICTS WITH MY WORK SCHEDULE ____ (Y or N) IF YES, EXPLAIN ARRANGEMENTS THAT WILL ALLOW PARTICIPATION UNDER TERMS OF YOUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT OR COMPENSATION PLAN.

Explanation note _____

I understand that payment initially will be made at my expense. I certify that I will not receive duplicate payment from Veteran's Assistance, military tuition benefits or any other source of grant or scholarship funds for the course/s listed on this application. I understand that I must submit my official grade report and the original of a paid receipt or unpaid bill, if authorized. If I am participating in a deferred tuition payment option with my school I may submit an original of the unpaid statement from the school provided my collective bargaining contract or compensation plan allows for payment deferral. I understand that any changes to the information listed on this application form must be submitted in writing through my division/department tuition reimbursement coordinator to the Department of Human Resources within ten (10) to thirty (30) days of the start of the course. I understand that approval of this application is subject to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement covering my employment. If I am not a member of any bargaining unit I understand that my participation in this program is governed by the Management Compensation Plan or other administrative directive. I understand that I may be required to repay the City of Columbus for all or part of any reimbursement I receive while participating in the tuition reimbursement program pursuant to the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement or applicable management compensation plan.

All information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YY)

SECTION D – DIVISION/DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL Enter an X for each requirement satisfied by the applicant

- ___ The applicant has sufficient continuous service time to be eligible for the tuition reimbursement program.
- ___ The course/s or degree program listed is related to the applicant's current job with the City.
- ___ The educational institution listed in this application conforms to the specifications of the applicant's collective bargaining agreement (or applicable management compensation plan).
- ___ The applicant's work schedule and course schedule do not conflict.
- ___ The application was submitted within specified time requirements.

For Division/Dept. TR Coordinator Use:
 Entered in System ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YY)
 Entered by _____

Division Authorization _____ Date ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YY)

Department Authorization _____ Date ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YY)