



CHAPTER: Career Development

SUBJECT: Tuition Reimbursement Program

POLICY NUMBER: 4.902

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RELATED POLICIES:

ENABLING RESOLUTION:

REVISION DATE(S):

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Fire District No. One

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DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: HUMAN RESOURCES

SPECIAL NOTES: This Policy/Procedures Manual does not in any way constitute an employment contract. SedgwickCounty reserves the right to amend this Manual at any time subject only to approval by the Board of CountyCommissioners and the Governing Body of Sedgwick County Fire District Number One.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to encourage employees to consider additional education for professional development purposes by providing a program of tuition reimbursement. For all employees of the Fire District, policies regarding tuition reimbursement will be in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the Fire District and Local 2612 IAFF.

II. Policy

- A. Permanent active full-time employees, who have completed two (2) years of service by the communicated application deadline, and who have satisfactorily completed any applicable initial probationary period, are eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement. This plan will exclude part-time employees, temporary employees, employees who are on leave of absence, have been affected by a reduction in force, or who have left the employment of Sedgwick County before the completion of the class(es).
- B. This policy is a benefit provided by the County and is not to be considered a right of the employee.
- C. The amount reimbursed will reflect the number of applicants in that semester. Funds will be allocated equitably amongst all qualified applicants, up to the maximum allowed reimbursement amount.
- D. Reimbursement is offered for classes required to complete degree programs, classes to enhance the skills related to the employee's current job or that may lead to opportunities for promotion within the County, or classes for the completion of a State approved GED program.

- i. University/College Classes**
 - a. Employees may receive reimbursement up to \$900 per calendar year for tuition costs and lab fees.
 - b. Tuition reimbursement will be limited to courses offered by universities and colleges accredited through accreditation agencies approved by the Department of Education and other universities and colleges whose credits are accepted and transferable within the guidelines of same accreditation agencies.
 - c. The Tuition Reimbursement Committee will approve correspondence programs through accredited universities/colleges on an individual basis.
 - d. The Tuition Reimbursement Committee will approve online programs through universities/colleges accredited through accreditation agencies approved by the Department of Education on an individual basis.
 - ii. Technical Training and GED Completion**
 - a. Employees may receive reimbursement up to \$300 per calendar year for tuition costs and lab fees.
 - b. Tuition reimbursement will be limited to courses offered by a technical school, or State approved GED testing site.
- E. Total maximum yearly reimbursement for an employee will be the actual cost of tuition and lab fees, not to exceed \$900 as pre-approved by the Tuition Reimbursement Committee pending budgetary constraints.
- F. No reimbursement for tuition shall be made from any source other than under the provisions of this Policy.
- G. The cost of textbooks will not be reimbursed.
- H. Travel and incidental expenses will not be reimbursed.
- I. Reimbursement will be awarded for a grade of “C” or better for undergraduate classes. A grade of “B” or better will be required for graduate classes. No reimbursement will be made for pass/fail classes or credit/non-credit classes.
- J. This reimbursement program does not cover costs for which an employee is covered by other reimbursement sources, such as the G.I. Bill, scholarships, or grants.
- K. The Division Director, Department Head or Elected Official will determine whether to permit an employee to take time off work to attend classes. Time spent by an employee attending classes on his/her own initiative will not be considered time worked for Sedgwick County and will not be paid.
- L. An annual review of the tuition reimbursement program will be conducted by the Division of Human Resources to monitor the effectiveness of the program.

III. Procedure

- A. The Division of Human Resources will distribute information to County employees concerning application procedures and deadlines.
- B. Employees must submit an application for tuition reimbursement to the Division of Human Resources through the electronic tuition reimbursement form found on E-line. Fire District employees must submit an application to the Fire Chief before registering for classes to be eligible for tuition reimbursement. It is the responsibility of the employee to make sure that the application form is on file.
 - i. The Application for Tuition Reimbursement must be submitted to the Division of Human Resources no later than the deadline set by the Division of Human Resources for each traditional school term.
 - ii. The class(es) will be approved by the Tuition Reimbursement Review Committee according to the criteria outlined above. Notice of the Committee decision will be returned to the employee.
 - iii. The Tuition Reimbursement Review Committee shall consist of a representative from Human Resources, the Career Development Officer, a representative from the Department of Finance, and a member appointed by the County Manager.

An applicant, whose request for tuition reimbursement has been denied by the Tuition Reimbursement Review Committee, shall have a right to appeal the denial to the County Manager, who will decide final disposition of the request.

- C. The Division of Human Resources will communicate a deadline each semester for submission of grades. It is the employee's responsibility to submit grades by the stated deadline. Failure to submit grades by the stated deadline will result in no reimbursement to the employee.

The Division of Human Resources will initiate the payment voucher to issue a reimbursement check to the employee, subject to the maximum limits and funds availability set forth in this policy.