

Category: 300

Number: 344

Subject: **EDUCATIONAL REIMBURSEMENT**

1. PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to encourage all employees to further their education and training, in order for the employee to become eligible for career advancement and to become more knowledgeable.
2. AUTHORITY: The Saginaw County Board of Commissioners.
3. APPLICATION: The rules and regulations herein set forth apply to all employees paid by Saginaw County, pursuant to Policy # 301.
4. 4. RESPONSIBILITY: The Controller/CAO shall be responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy.
5. DEFINITIONS: NONE
6. POLICY:
 - 6.1 Policy. It is the policy of Saginaw County to encourage all employees to further their education and training, in order for the employee to become eligible for career advancement and to become more knowledgeable. The County shall reimburse employees for reasonable educational expenses (tuition ONLY). Funds for reimbursement may be allocated during the annual budget process. The amount of such funding is to be determined solely by the Board of Commissioners and any such amount allocated will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis by the Personnel Division of the Controller's Office.
 - 6.2 Eligibility and Restrictions. Courses must contribute to the employee's proficiency or self-improvement, as solely determined by the Personnel Division, upon recommendation by the employee's Department Head. The following rules shall specifically apply:
 - 6.2.1 Applicant must be a regular employee at the time the course is started and remain employed during the duration of the course.
 - 6.2.2 Class attendance and study must be during non-working hours (Schedules will not be altered to create non-working hours).
 - 6.2.3 Classes must be part of an accredited, County-recognized college curriculum or taken through an accredited advanced educational institution as solely determined by the Personnel Division.
 - 6.2.4 An employee shall not be reimbursed for any amount over \$1,500 in one calendar year.

6.2.5 Cost of books, travel, supplies, etc. are not reimbursable. Only tuition is reimbursable.

6.2.6 The employee's failure to maintain employment with the County of Saginaw for a period of at least three (3) years after receipt of tuition reimbursement, including termination for just cause, will require the employee to repay all tuition reimbursements received during the prior three years.

6.3 Tuition Reimbursement Limits. If the criteria in Section 6.2 of this policy are met and all procedures followed in Section 7, reimbursement will be made based on seventy-five percent (75%) of the tuition paid by the employee, subject to the availability of funds, which are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis by the Personnel Division.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

7.1 The employee must apply to the Personnel Division for reimbursement of tuition prior to the beginning of the class using appropriate County forms. The Department Head shall approve the application requesting reimbursement of a specific class and must certify that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria. The Department Head shall sign the form and forward it to the Personnel Division for review and approval. The Personnel Division shall develop a list of recognized higher educational institutions and make that list available to the Department Heads and Employees.

7.1.1 Funds to reimburse the employee for tuition become obligated, upon approval by the Personnel Division, if available. If funds are not available, the Personnel Division will advise the Employee and the Department Head.

7.1.2 Upon completion of the class (with at least a 2.0 grade or equivalent for undergraduate school and at least a 3.0 grade or equivalent for graduate school based on a 4.0 grade scale) the Employee must present the receipt for tuition payment and the grade report of the class to the Department Head, who will then send a copy of the receipt and proof of completion to the Personnel Division for reimbursement. The Personnel Division will approve those tuition reimbursements, which are eligible and forward the same for payment to the appropriate department.

7.1.3 The Employee shall sign a document authorizing the County to deduct from any source of payment any amount reimbursed the Employee for tuition during the three years prior to the Employee's termination, if the Employee terminates employment with Saginaw County, for any reason, including just cause.

8. CONTROLLER/CAO LEGAL COUNSEL REVIEW: The Controller/CAO has determined that this policy as submitted to the Board of Commissioners contains the necessary substance in order to carry out the purpose of the policy. County Civil Counsel has determined that this policy as submitted contains content that appears to be legal activities of the Saginaw County Board of Commissioners.

Approved as to Substance:
Saginaw County Controller/CAO

Approved as to Legal Content:
Saginaw County Civil Counsel

ADOPTED/AMENDED: April 23, 2002