

TOWN OF OCEAN CITY
OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

PPM 300-10

SECTION: Personnel
SUBJECT: Tuition Assistance

The Town of Ocean City encourages its employees to achieve higher levels of performance in their present positions and continue their professional growth and development through voluntary enrollment in approved colleges, universities, and vocational-technical schools.

Eligibility:

Full-time employees who have completed a minimum of six (6) months continuous service are eligible to receive tuition assistance. Pre-approval is required for tuition reimbursement.

Amount:

One-half of the direct tuition cost, not to exceed \$1,500 in a calendar year per employee, may be granted provided the class is successfully completed.

Reimbursement DOES NOT include course registration fees, books, lab fees, travel expenses, or fees such as library, student activity, student union, parking, etc. Funding for tuition assistance shall be available to the extent appropriated in the operating budget of the Human Resource Department.

Special Requirements:

1. Employee must sign an agreement to serve as a City employee for one (1) year after completion of any course for which they have received tuition assistance. If an employee voluntarily leaves City employment (except for a layoff) before the end of this one-year period, any tuition assistance received must be repaid on a pro rated basis in full to the City before departing.

2. Academic courses approved must be of the nature that will contribute to an employee's professional growth and thereby benefit the City during the employee's employment. Courses that are required or optional as part of a degree program are also eligible for tuition assistance.

3. Special Professional Development courses that are not part of degree programs may also be included after approval by the respective Department Head and City Manager. Course participation may be voluntary or employer required and may be in such fields as engineering, information technology, public works, public safety, and recreation/parks; may be offered on-line or at-site; and lead to professional certifications and periodic re-certifications. Many courses require that the participant successfully pass an examination before certification is granted, either at the conclusion of the course or within a stipulated time frame. The Town will cover the exam costs; if separate, only one time. Re-takes will be at the employee's expense.

When the course and related expenses exceed \$1,500, the enrolled employee will be required to remain with the Town for two (2) years after program completion. If the employee voluntarily leaves Town employment before the end of this two (2) year period, all financial support received for the Professional Development course will have to be reimbursed to the Town prior to separation on a pro rated basis.

Funding for these special courses will be covered by the respective departments

4. Courses may be considered to be taken during the employee's regular working hours upon department recommendation and approval by the City Manager. The Department has the right to adjust work schedule so flextime can be applied when applicable.

5. Employees must complete "Application for Tuition Assistance" form and submit required information for appropriate consideration. Applications must be submitted through the employee's department head, forwarded to the Human Resources Department for review and approval by the City Manager BEFORE actual class sign-up.

6. Courses must be taken at accredited or State approved institutions.

7. Non-academic courses are excluded from tuition assistance except for job related technical, mechanical, trades courses or certification programs in accordance with item 3 above.

8. A copy of all receipts and grades must be submitted to the Human Resources Office when the courses are completed.

Procedure/Responsibility

Employee:

1. Complete "Application for Tuition Assistance" BEFORE course begins.
2. Forward application and copy of course description to Department Head.

Department Head

3. Review application for completeness and eligibility for tuition assistance.
4. If approved, sign and forward to the Human Resources Department.
5. If request is denied, inform employee of denial and forward all forms to the Human Resource Director. Attach statement citing reasons request was denied.

Human Resource Director

6. Review all forms for completeness and adherence to the provisions of the tuition assistance policy.
7. Verify that funds are available in the Human Resources budget account.
8. If approved, sign application and forward all forms to the City Manager.

City Manager

9. Review all forms and sign application if approved.
10. Forward all forms to the Human Resources Department for processing.

Human Resource Director

11. Forward a copy of the approved application to the employee by way of the Department Head.
12. Retain the approved application until the employee submits evidence of satisfactory course completion (grade slip) and a tuition receipt.
13. Assist Finance to prepare a check request for the amount of the approved reimbursement.