

**CITY OF RICHARDSON
INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

POLICY

The City of Richardson has a policy of providing the following tuition reimbursement program for all full-time employees who have completed the initial six (6) months of employment after hire and have successfully completed their probationary period.

Those eligible to participate must be:

- Taking college courses to obtain a degree toward skills required in performance of the employee's current job or to prepare for possible future jobs within the City (with a degree plan on file with an accredited college or university) or
- Taking college courses to acquire skills required in performance of the employee's current job and/or to prepare for additional responsibilities or other possible future jobs with the City and/or
- Studying to obtain a General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.), including the G.E.D. test fees.

PROCEDURES:

A. GENERAL

Courses eligible for tuition reimbursement must be taken at a college or university accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and/or the U.S. Department of Education (includes accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and The Higher Learning Commission), except for courses leading to a G.E.D. A maximum of 18 credit hours per calendar year from a college/university will be considered for reimbursement under this program.

The maximum reimbursable amount per employee, per calendar year, shall be \$4,000. The City will reimburse all mandatory fees except parking up to the maximum amount.

Courses must be approved by the employee's Department Head before reimbursement can be processed. For single and/or multiple college courses not leading to a degree, consideration will be given to performance in the employee's current job and the employee's capabilities. Approval of college courses to help prepare an employee for possible future jobs with the City does not in any way imply or guarantee availability of future additional work responsibilities or new jobs.

Any tuition reimbursement made for course study under any other program will void tuition reimbursement by the City of Richardson. (This includes Veterans' benefits, Federal and State Grants, scholarships, or other subsidies. Federal Student loans that must be repaid do not fall under this category, and are allowed.) It is the employee's responsibility to inform the Human

Resources Department if he/she is receiving financial assistance by another source. The City will not pay for any course tuition and/or laboratory fees for any employee who is exempted, from payment of those costs under Texas State Law (e.g., exemptions in Section 54 of the Texas Education Code applicable to state public institutions of higher education for fire fighters for courses offered as part of a fire science curriculum, and exemptions for peace officers for undergraduate criminal justice or law enforcement courses).

IRS regulations (Section 127 of the IRS Code) state that tuition reimbursements may be taxable. Reimbursements above the threshold (defined by the IRS for the year the course is completed) will be reported as taxable income and appropriate taxes withheld. The taxable amount is determined each year by the IRS and is subject to change. Hours counted toward the 18 hours per calendar year will be applied at the time the reimbursement request is submitted to the Human Resources Department.

Class attendance and coursework must be done during the employee's off-duty hours, unless allowed by written department policy.

B. COLLEGE QUALIFICATIONS

Course work leading to a degree must be directed toward an Associate, Bachelor, Masters or Doctorate Degree at a college/university accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and/or the U.S. Department of Education (includes accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and The Higher Learning Commission).

Single/multiple courses not leading to a recognized degree (see above) must also be taken at a college/university accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and/or the U.S. Department of Education (includes accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and The Higher Learning Commission).

C. GENERAL EQUIVALENCY DEGREES

Courses of study leading to a G.E.D. must be taken at an agency or institution offering approved G.E.D. courses in Texas.

D. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The employee must complete a Tuition Reimbursement Form, and forward it to his/her Department Head for approval for the proposed course(s) to be taken. (These forms are available in the Human Resources Department, and on line at www.cor.gov.) Once the form has been approved, the employee must retain it until completion of the course.
2. After completion of the course(s), the employee must submit the approved Tuition Reimbursement Form, the associated grade report, and an itemized tuition receipt to the Human Resources Department for reimbursement. Reimbursement will be included in payroll checks. Documentation must be submitted to Human Resources within 45

calendar days of the issuance of grades, or the end of the course. Requests submitted more than 45 calendar days of the issuance of grades or the end of the course will not be eligible to receive tuition assistance. Reimbursement will be made within 45 days of receipt of the request. NOTE: Tuition reimbursement documentation received in the Human Resources Department before December 20 of each year will be reimbursed in that calendar year. Those requests submitted after December 20 will be reimbursed in the following calendar year, and the course hours will be counted toward the 18 hour maximum of that following year.

3. In order to obtain reimbursement, employees must achieve a grade of "C" or better in undergraduate courses, and a grade of "B" or better in college graduate work. G.E.D. courses must be passed.
4. Following approval and processing of completed paperwork, Accounting will issue reimbursement within 45 days.

Signed by Dan Johnson on February 22, 2016

Dan Johnson
City Manager

Date