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GOVERNOR

ANGELE DAVIS
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

State of Louisiana

Division of Administration
Office of Human Resources

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

PERSONNEL POLICY NO. 8

EFFECTIVE DATE: **March 10, 1987**

REVISED DATE: **February 15, 1993; September 12, 1994; November 22, 2002; March 19, 2010**

SUBJECT: **Educational Leave and Reimbursement for Courses**

AUTHORIZATION: **Barbara Goodson, Deputy Commissioner**

I. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Division of Administration (DOA) to assist employees in obtaining any available education or training which will enhance their ability to perform the job duties of their present positions, and which are directly associated to their current job duties. Curricula not directly related to employees current job duties are not covered under this policy.

Employees may be granted educational leave and tuition reimbursement while enrolled and earning credit hours from an accredited college or university. A listing of accredited institutions may be obtained at: http://www.civilservice.la.gov/asp/AgencyAdmitNoteInquiry/RegionalAccreditingAssociations.html

II. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to describe the types of educational assistance available, the method for requesting the assistance, and the Appointing Authority's option in granting the assistance.

III. APPLICABILITY:

This policy is applicable to all employees of the Division of Administration in all sections, both general and ancillary appropriations.

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. Section heads are responsible for reviewing requests from employees in their sections regarding the use of educational leave and tuition reimbursement, and making a recommendation to the

Appointing Authority regarding approval of such requests. Section heads are also responsible for maintaining appropriate documentation as required for time and attendance purposes. For the purpose of this policy, two types of assistance may be granted:

1. **Educational Leave**: Civil Service Rule 11.24 (b) states, "Educational leave with pay may be granted an employee for a maximum of thirty calendar days in one calendar year if the course of instruction to be taken is pertinent to the work of the employee in his Department, provided that a permanent employee may be granted such leave for a maximum of ninety calendar days in one calendar year if the Department requires him to take special training."

   This educational leave may also be granted on a prorated basis whereby the employee takes the leave on an hourly basis but not to exceed the number of hours equal to 30 calendar days in one calendar year. In this fashion, an employee might be allowed two (2) hours of educational leave three (3) days a week over the course of one semester in order to attend a course.

2. **Reimbursement of Tuition Fees**: The Appointing Authority may approve reimbursement for tuition fees to an employee under the following conditions:

   a. The employee must complete courses that are directly associated with his current job duties, or enhances his ability to perform the job duties of his present position.

   b. The employee must receive a grade of "B" or better, or Pass (P) if the course is only offered on a Pass-Fail basis.

   c. Funds for this reimbursement must be available within the budget of the section, typically in the travel category.

   d. The employee must produce documented proof of successful completion of the course before reimbursement.

   e. Eligible reimbursement would involve only tuition, i.e., the direct classroom fee paid to enroll in a particular course of study. The reimbursement does not include registration fees, technology fees, parking fees, books and/or supplies necessary for the course. Reimbursement could apply to courses taken after hours as well as the courses taken while on educational leave.

   f. Reimbursement will be paid up to $145 per credit hour (or actual cost if less than $145 per credit hour) not to exceed six semester credits, or up to a maximum total of $870 per semester. If more than one course is taken, and a specific fee per course is not assessed, then the per semester hour costs will be prorated based on the total amount of tuition to the total number of semester hours taken and passed with a grade of "B" or better, or Pass (P) if the course is only offered on a Pass-Fail basis.

B. Educational leave and/or tuition reimbursement approvals must be sought by the employee prior to enrolling for course(s), if leave and/or reimbursement are desired. The following steps shall be followed when requesting leave and/or reimbursement:

1. **Initial Request for Educational Leave and/or Tuition Reimbursement**

   a. Requests for leave and/or reimbursement must be submitted in writing by the employee to his supervisor. Requests must include:

      - The course description (or course agenda/syllabus).
      - The course title and number, duration of the course, and the course fee.
      - The educational institution where the course will be taken.
      - The exact dates and times that the employee would be required to be absent from his position for participation in the course (if necessary).

   b. The supervisor must review the employee's request and forward it, along with his written recommendation, and the documents listed below to the section head for approval or denial:

      - A complete and thorough narrative explaining how the course work is directly associated with the employee's current job duties, and how participation in the course would enhance the employee's performance in his present position.
      - A copy of the employee's current position description, SF-3.

   c. If the section head approves the request, the original documentation must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources (OHR) for review.

   d. Once reviewed for policy compliance, the OHR will forward the documentation to the Appointing Authority for review and obtain approval or denial.

   e. The OHR will notify the section head of the Appointing Authority's decision and the original signed request will be forwarded back to the section head for his records. Copies of requests will be kept in the OHR.

   f. The section head or his designee must notify the employee of the final decision regarding the request.

   g. A copy of Educational Leave requests will also be forwarded to the Employee Administration (EA) Unit of OHR to create a leave quota in ISIS.

2. **Requesting Payment for Tuition Fees**

a. After successfully completing approved courses, an employee seeking tuition reimbursement must provide his supervisor with a transcript indicating the credit hours and grades earned for that particular semester.

b. Supervisors must review the documentation provided for compliance with policy and forwarded it to the section head.

c. The section head or his designee must forward the following documents to the OHR:

- The "initial" approved tuition reimbursement documentation.
- A justification letter addressed to the Appointing Authority requesting the actual tuition reimbursement amount.
- A transcript indicating credit hours and grades earned for that particular semester.

d. OHR will review the documentation to ensure compliance with the policy. Afterwards, the reimbursement request will be forwarded to the Appointing Authority for review and approval.

e. Once approved by the Appointing Authority, the request will be initialed by an OHR representative and forwarded to the Office of Finance and Support Services (OFSS) for payment.

V. RESPONSIBILITY:

Deputy/Assistant Commissioners and equivalent are responsible for:

Holding section heads under his supervision accountable for adhering to all aspects of this policy.

Section Heads are responsible for:

Reviewing requests from employees in his section regarding the use of educational assistance and making a recommendation to the Appointing Authority.

Forwarding leave and/or reimbursement requests to the OHR for review.

Ensuring funds are available within the section's budget prior to recommending approval to the Appointing Authority.

Notifying employees of the Appointing Authority's decision regarding requests.

Maintaining appropriate documentation as required for time and attendance purposes.

Supervisors are responsible for:

Reviewing leave and/or reimbursement requests for policy compliance prior to making a recommendation to the section head.

Employees are responsible for:

Submitting requests and appropriate documentation through the supervisor for educational leave and/or tuition reimbursement for courses prior to enrolling in the course.

Documenting educational leave on his timesheet.

Timekeepers are responsible for:

Entering approved educational leave in ISIS from timesheets.

Office of Finance and Support Services (OFSS) is responsible for:

Issuing tuition reimbursement checks to employees.

Office of Human Resources is responsible for:

Reviewing requests for leave and/or reimbursement for policy compliance and making a recommendation to the Appointing Authority.

Creating a leave quota in ISIS for educational leave requests.

Forwarding approved tuition reimbursement requests to the OFSS for payment.

Ensuring that this policy and subsequent revisions are provided to section heads.

VI. VIOLATIONS:

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken.

VII. QUESTIONS:

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS:

Requests for exceptions to this policy shall be justified, documented and submitted to the Appointing Authority for consideration.