



KENT COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Employee Tuition Reimbursement Program is to provide each employee with an opportunity to obtain an undergraduate or graduate degree that is related to the employee's regular assignment and/or professional growth for advancement within the organization. Administration for this program shall rest with the Human Resources Department and shall include budget preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the program, and in conjunction with Department Directors and/or supervisors, the review/approval/denial of tuition requests.

GENERAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- Full-time employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement after one year of full-time employment with the County.
- Course(s) must be:
 1. From an accredited college, university or institution and:
 - a. Part of a **degree** program related to your position (certificate and credentialing programs are not eligible)
 - OR –
 - b. Related to the employee's regular assignment and/or leading to career advancement within the County structure.
- Tuition Reimbursement is determined by the availability of funds made on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Employees are limited to a maximum of nine credit hours per fiscal year for reimbursement under this program.
- The County will only pay the actual institutional cost per credit hour, not to exceed \$265 per credit hour. The employee will be reimbursed for tuition only (no books, lab fees, etc.).
- It is the responsibility of the employee to reflect true and accurate tuition costs for reimbursement by this program. The employee must submit proof of course payment at the time of application. The employee will only be reimbursed the original approved amount requested.
- Any changes (course changes, cancellation, course closing) will require submission of a new application and approval by the Human Resources Department. The application should be accompanied by a written explanation for the requested change including a request to waive the usual guidelines for the submission of a timely application.

- Failure to submit a completed application and reimbursement form in a timely fashion will lead to the denial of the application and/or reimbursement.
- Courses are not to be taken during the employee's scheduled work hours and homework should be completed on the employee's own time.
- Employees must earn a grade of C or better (undergraduate courses) or a grade of B or better (graduate courses).
- Employees must sign an agreement stating that if they voluntarily leave the county's employment within one year of completing a reimbursed course, 100% of the tuition will be repaid to the county and 50% will be repaid if the employee leaves within two years of completing courses.
- Employees cannot apply for County tuition reimbursement if they are receiving another form of financial reimbursement for a course, i.e. scholarship, grant, etc.
- First-time tuition reimbursement submittals must be accompanied by a curriculum of anticipated coursework.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- A completed application form approved and signed by the supervisor or department director must be submitted to the Human Resources Department no sooner than seventy-five (75) days and no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the beginning date of the course.
- Submission of an application to the Human Resources Department does not guarantee approval for tuition reimbursement. Notification of approval or denial will be provided by the Human Resources Department in writing. Please contact the Human Resources Department if you do not receive written notification.
- Application requests denied may be appealed to the Human Resources Director. This appeal must be made within 14 days of notification.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

- The reimbursement form with acceptable documentation (report card and receipt of payment) must be submitted to the Human Resources Department within forty-five (45) days after the course has ended in order to be reimbursed. Any extensions must be approved in advance by the Human Resources Department in writing.
- Tuition reimbursement forms should be sent to MaryBeth Beighley in the Human Resources Department.
- All reimbursements will be distributed through your payroll check after the reimbursement form, report card and receipt of payment has been received by Human Resources. This will be listed on your check statement as "non-taxable education reimbursement".

Tuition reimbursement received up to \$5,250 during a school year is **tax-free**.

- Any questions regarding tuition reimbursement should be directed to MaryBeth Beighley at 632-7467 or by email at marybeth.beighley@kentcountymi.gov.