

ALLEGAN COUNTY EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Category:	Employee Benefit Policy
Number:	509
Approved:	February 24, 2005, supersedes prior policy
Revised:	December 27, 2007
Subject:	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

GENERAL: To aid and encourage employees and elected officials to complete educational courses that are job related and/or deemed beneficial to their positions, Allegan County provides educational assistance for approved tuition, books and fees.

Eligibility: Non-represented full-time and part-time regular employees who have completed at least 12 months of employment and elected officials (defined as the Prosecuting Attorney, Treasurer, Clerk/Register, Drain Commissioner, Sheriff and their Chief Deputies, as well as the County Board of Commissioners) with the County are eligible to apply for educational assistance. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement are eligible in accordance with the terms of their current agreement. Courses must be taken from an accredited two (2) year or four (4) year institution. Seminars, workshops, and other training sessions, which do not provide credit, are excluded under this policy. Class attendance and homework assignments must be completed on the employee's own time. Paid Time Off may be used if authorized by the employee's department head.

Application: Employees must obtain prior written approval from their department head or supervisor and the Human Resources Director regarding the classes selected and eligible expenses for reimbursement. Elected officials shall submit their application directly to the Human Resources Department for processing. Requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the first day of class. Forms can be obtained in the Human Resources Department.

Reimbursement: Educational Assistance will be administered by the Human Resources Department. Reimbursement for a completed course will be at one hundred percent (100%) for tuition expenses, including book & lab fees, provided a grade of "C" or better is attained. For employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the maximum amount eligible for reimbursement per calendar year is specified in the appropriate agreement. For non-represented employees, the maximum amount eligible for reimbursement per calendar year is \$2,500. A request for reimbursement must be made within sixty (60) days of completion of the course and must include an official grade transcript and a receipt verifying that the tuition for the course has been paid in full. The County will not provide reimbursement if the tuition was covered by scholarship(s), grant(s), veteran's benefits, etc.

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Repayment: If an employee is voluntarily separated from County employment for any reason within twelve (12) months of reimbursement of tuition expenses, the employee will be liable for repayment of any educational reimbursement received. If an elected official has received tuition reimbursement and is subsequently defeated in an election, the repayment provision is waived. If, however, an elected official chooses not to run for re-election, they are liable for the repayment.