

## Tuition Benefit Administrative Guidelines

- ☑ The reimbursement is based on courses taken during the calendar year (*January - December*) and is **always** applied to the year in which a course **begins**.
- ☑ Applications should be submitted ***as soon as possible***, but within four (4) months of completing a course, seminar or conference. For *Membership Dues, Licenses or Certifications*, the application must be submitted ***as soon as possible***, but within four (4) months of paying the fees.
- ☑ **"On City-Time" Use of Tuition Benefit**  
Some unions and employee groups are eligible to take *CRITICAL, JOB-RELATED COURSES* on City-Time. Courses must be approved by their Supervisor or Department Head and Employee Relations. ALL other courses, seminars and conferences must be taken on the employee's own time. Please call 286-3387 with any questions, or send email to [aknick@milwaukee.gov](mailto:aknick@milwaukee.gov).
- ☑ **Part-Time Employees** are eligible to receive prorated Tuition Benefits provided they work a **minimum** of 40 hours per pay period.
- ☑ **A valid receipt must be provided** for any course, seminar, convention, conference, membership dues, license, and certification reimbursement requests. However, courses offered in Employee Relations' **Training Bulletins** do not require a receipt, as the registration is paid up-front by Employee Relations.
- ☑ **Definition of an Acceptable Receipt**  
Receipts MUST show that payment was made, as well as the amount paid. Examples of acceptable receipts include: cash register receipt, canceled check (*copy of both sides required*), money orders, credit card statements, or official receipts provided by the school or organization. Bank statements are only acceptable when accompanied by a copy of the front of the check or check carbon.
  - **Unacceptable receipts include** *invoices or registration forms requesting payment, receipts that show payment was made by another person, or receipts that are not legible.*
- ☑ **Taxes** -- ALL courses, seminars, conferences, membership dues, licenses and certifications are **nontaxable**. The reimbursement is added to your gross total, but not to taxable earnings and **no** withholdings will be taken.
- ☑ **Approval Determinations for Courses** -- If you want to know in advance if a course will be approved for reimbursement, please call 286-3650, or 286-3387. Courses must be taken at accredited institutions, schools or organizations approved by Employee Relations.
- ☑ **Approval Determinations for Membership Dues**  
If you want to know in advance if a membership will be approved for reimbursement, please call 286-3650 or 286-3387. Not all bargaining units are eligible for membership dues. Organizations MUST be nonprofit, nonsectarian and established for the expressed purpose of providing information, resources and programming that benefit its members in their professional specialties. Membership dues are **always** applied to the year in which the enrollment period begins. Membership dues reimbursement DOES NOT include union dues or journal subscriptions.

**Grade Reports and Completion Statements**

All courses, seminars or conferences of more than three (3) weeks in length, require proof of **successful completion**. Please submit a copy of a grade report or completion statement with the application.

- A grade of "C" or higher is **required** for undergraduate-level courses.
- A grade of "B" or higher is **required** for graduate-level courses.
- When grades are not given or a course of study taken is non-credit and more than three weeks in length, a certificate or written statement from the school or organization is required.
- "Mid-Term" grade reports are NOT acceptable.
- Conferences, conventions and seminars of less than three (3) weeks in length do not require a grade report or completion statement.

**Tuition Reimbursement and Membership Dues Benefits Do Not Cover**

Non-required textbooks, union dues, finance charges, sales tax, licenses, certifications, examinations, shipping/handling charges, late and administrative fees, travel expenses (*IE: lodging, meals, mileage*), parking fees, magazine/journal/ periodical subscriptions, equipment or supplies.

- **Only** certain bargaining units are eligible for **REQUIRED** equipment and supply reimbursement. See the "Tuition Benefit Amounts Chart" or labor contracts for details.

**Seasonal Layoff and Unpaid Leaves of Absence**

If you started a course prior to going on seasonal layoff or an unpaid leave of absence, you will receive your reimbursement check when you return to work. You must still send in the application, receipts and completion statements within four (4) months of the end of the course. However, if you start a course while on an unpaid, involuntary Leave of Absence or Layoff, you are not eligible to receive tuition reimbursement.

**Resignations from City Employment**

Employees must remain in service for a 6-month period after the successful completion date of approved courses, seminars or conferences or the amount reimbursed will be **deducted** from the employee's final paycheck. For Membership Dues, Licenses or Certifications employees must remain in service for a 6-month period after reimbursement of such fees or the amount reimbursed will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Employees will not receive reimbursement if they leave prior to completion. *Employees of Local 215, MPFFA, must remain in service for a 1-year period.*

- **Exceptions are:** *Retirements, transfers to MPS, positions eliminated due to budget cuts, or tuition reimbursement used by employee at the department's request.*