



City of Pittsburgh  
Operating Policies

<b>Policy: Tuition Reimbursement Program for Union &amp; Non-Union Employees</b>	<b>Original Date: 9/30/09</b>
	<b>Revised Date:</b>

**PURPOSE:** This policy is issued to provide a uniform system of administering the City of Pittsburgh's Tuition Reimbursement Program for all eligible Union and Non-Union employees.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** All eligible Union and Non-Union employees are to follow this policy when requesting tuition reimbursement for courses that will enhance their job performance. NOTE: If an employee submits an initial Pre-Approval Form for Tuition Reimbursement and the employee is working towards completion of a degree/program (i.e.: Associate's, Bachelor's, etc.), once the program is approved as "job related" all of the required course work for the program/degree will be approved as job related.

*Disclaimer: No statements in this policy are intended or set forth as contractual commitments or obligations of the City to any individual employee or group of employees, or to establish an exception to the employment-at-will doctrine beyond that specified in the Civil Service Statutes and Rules or pertinent collective bargaining agreement. If there are differences between the various collective bargaining agreements and this policy, the pertinent collective bargaining agreement takes precedence.*

**THE PROCEDURES FOR THIS POLICY WILL BE SEPARATED INTO THE FOLLOWING THREE SECTIONS:**

- 1. FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PARAMEDIC (FAPP) EMPLOYEES. (Pages 2 – 7)**
- 2. AFSCME LOCAL 2719, AFSCME LOCAL 2037, AND PJCBC UNION EMPLOYEES. (Pages 8 – 13)**
- 3. NON-UNION EMPLOYEES. (Pages 14 – 18)**

**PLEASE REFER TO THE APPROPRIATE SECTION.**

## **SECTION 1: Fraternal Association of Professional Paramedic (FAPP) Employees**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

- A. To be eligible to request participation in this Program, the employee must:
1. Have completed one (1) year of employment with the City of Pittsburgh as a full time regular employee from date of hire, rehire or reinstatement, AND
  2. Have completed the probationary period and be employed in a full time regular position covered by the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Pittsburgh and the FAPP at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request form, AND
  3. Not be on Disciplinary Probation, Workers' Compensation, Short Term or Long Term Disability, Sick Leave, Parental Care Leave or other paid or unpaid leaves of absence at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request, AND
  4. Be a current FAPP covered employee of the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services at both the time of submission of his/her request for reimbursement and receipt of reimbursement.
- B. An eligible employee must complete a Pre-Approval Request Form B and submit it, along with all required supporting documents to his/her Department Director as early as possible but at least ten (10) work days prior to the date the course starts.
- C. The employee's Bureau Chief must submit the Pro-Approval Request Form B, with all required supporting documents and the Bureau Chief's recommendation for approval or disapproval, to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission (P&CSC) as soon as possible but at least five (5) work days prior to the date the course starts.
- D. The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission may require additional information or documents from the employee before approval or disapproval. Failure of the employee to provide the requested additional information to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission prior to the date the course starts will preclude approval and the Pre-Approval Request will be disapproved.
- E. The City may revoke pre-approval at any time prior to the employee's payment of tuition and lab fees becoming irrevocable.
- F. Eligible employees who have received approval of the Pre-Approval Request will receive 50% reimbursement of tuition and lab fees upon the successful completion of a college, university, technical school, trade school or certified apprenticeship course which is job related. (i.e.: will improve the employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements, as established by the Civil Service Commission, for promotion within the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services) Courses (credit or noncredit) must be taken at an accredited college, university, technical or trade school or as part of a certified apprenticeship program and must be credited toward a degree, certificate or license. Correspondence courses will not be eligible for consideration. Courses which qualify an employee for employment only in another allied health profession are not reimbursable.

G. Successful completion of a credit or noncredit college, university technical/trade school or certified apprenticeship course is defined as achievement of a "C" grade or better for all undergraduate, technical/trade or certified apprenticeship coursework completed, and achievement of a "B" grade or better for all graduate level work completed. Attainment of a "C-" for undergraduate, technical/trade or certified apprenticeship coursework or a "B-" for graduate coursework does not constitute successful completion of a course.

H. Reimbursement will be made only after the employee completes a Tuition Reimbursement Program Reimbursement Request Form verifying the successful completion of a pre-approved course. Reimbursable costs will be for tuition and lab fees only. Fees for registration, school activities, deferred payment, university, computer, administrative or late fees, graduation, books, instruments, transportation, meals, etc. are not reimbursable under the program.

I. Reimbursement will be treated as ordinary income, and as such may be subject to Federal, State and/or Local taxes based on IRS requirements in effect at the time of the request.

J. If an employee receives other available tuition assistance, such as a grant and/or scholarship from government, college/university and/or private funds, the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program will reimburse 50% of the difference between such other available tuition assistance and the amount of the tuition and lab fees.

K. Employees must attend class on their own time. Participation in the Tuition Reimbursement Program must not interfere with the employee's work responsibilities or hours of work.

L. Approvals of both Pre-Approval and Reimbursement Request Forms under this Program are subject to and contingent upon City Council appropriating sufficient funds for the Program. The funds appropriated to each department for the Program shall be used to cover tuition and lab fees incurred by any department employee, regardless of bargaining unit status. Once the amount of pre-approved requests equals the allotted funds for a department in any given year, no further approval will be given to employees who enroll in courses during that year. If the funds allocated to a department for any given year are insufficient to pay for all requests for reimbursement, then the Bureau Chief shall determine which requests to approve. Pre-approval for courses which carry over to or begin in the fiscal year following pre-approval are contingent upon the City appropriating sufficient funds to cover the tuition and lab fees.

M. Employees who transfer to another City department or bureau after they have received an approval on a Pre-Approval Request are ineligible for reimbursement of that course.

N. An employee who resigns or is terminated from employment for any reason prior to completion of a pre-approved course will not be eligible for reimbursement.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **A. Pre-approval Procedures**

1. Employee's Request – Part 1 of Tuition Reimbursement Program Pre-Approval Request Form B.

a. A Pre-Approval Request Form B must be completed for each proposed course. The form must be typed and submitted to the employee's Bureau

Chief at least ten (10) work days prior to the date the course starts. Forms are available in all Bureau offices. Additional copies can be obtained from the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission by calling x2710.

- b. Part 1 of the Pre-Approval Request Form B includes:
  - Identifying employee data
  - Name and address of accredited institution or certified apprenticeship program
  - Grants, scholarships, awards or any other non-repayable financial assistance received for tuition costs (e.g., PHEAA, PELL, etc.)
  - Title of the proposed degree (including major), certificate or license program
  - Course number
  - Title of course
  - Number of credits for the proposed course, if applicable
  - Tuition costs for the proposed course
  - Lab fees, if any, for the proposed course
  - Starting and ending dates for the proposed course
  - Calculation of requested 50% reimbursement
  - Description of why the proposed course is job related. (i.e.: will improve the employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements as established by the Civil Service Commission for promotion within the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services)
  - Employee's signature verifying an understanding of and agreement to the General Guidelines and Procedures of the Program.
- c. The employee must attach to the Pre-Approval Request Form B a copy of the institution's formal description of the proposed course and confirmation from the institution of the tuition and lab fee costs associated with the course/s, source/s, and amount/s of any scholarships, grants, etc.
- d. Eligible employees are SOLELY responsible for providing supporting documents for each proposed course to the satisfaction of his/her Bureau Chief and the Director of the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission to receive full consideration under the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program. Failure to do so within the time frame specified in the PER shall result in the disapproval of the employee's request.
2. Bureau Chief Action - Part II of Pre-Approval Request Form B.
  - a. Upon receipt of the Pre-Approval Request Form B with Part 1 completed, the Bureau Chief will review the request to verify that the request has been submitted in a timely basis and that all required information and supporting documents are complete and accurate.
  - b. The Bureau Chief will review the request to determine if the employee meets the following qualifications for consideration under the Tuition Reimbursement Program:
    - Is the employee eligible as defined in Section I.a ?

- Is the employee's identifying data (e.g.: job title, start date, etc.) accurate?
  - Is the college, university or technical/trade school where the course will be taken accredited, or is the program a certified apprenticeship program?
  - Is the course a non-correspondence course towards a degree, certificate or license?
  - Is there money available in the appropriate code account to cover this request?
  - Does the course qualify the employee for employment in another allied health profession?
  - Is the proposed course job related? (i.e.: will improve the employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements, as established by the Civil Service Commission, for promotion within the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services)
- c. The Bureau Chief will complete 7a. in Part II (typed only) describing how the course and/or degree, certificate or license program is job related. The Bureau Chief will also complete Part II of the Pre-Approval Request Form B (typed only) recommending approval or disapproval of the proposed course. If approval is recommended, the Bureau Chief will sign the form. If disapproval is recommended, the Bureau Chief must state his/her reason/s for recommending disapproval and sign the form. Any modification, change, correction, etc. made to Part I of the form must be initialed and dated by the Bureau Chief or his/her designee.
- d. The Bureau Chief will forward the completed Pre-Approval Request Form B and all accompanying documents to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission for review for approval/disapproval at least five (5) work days prior to the date the course starts.
- e. The Bureau Chief is responsible for ensuring that the Pre-Approval Request Form B and supporting documents are complete and accurate before forwarding them to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission.
3. Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission Action – Part III of Pre-Approval Request Form B.
- a. The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will review the Pre-Approval Request Form B, and all accompanying materials and the recommendation from the appropriate Bureau Chief.
- b. The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will complete Part III of the Pre-Approval Request Form B indicating approval/disapproval of the request and state the reason(s) for the final approval or disapproval of the request. All decisions of the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission shall be final.

c. The yellow copy of the completed Pre-Approval Request Form B will be returned to the originating department and must be maintained on file. The pink copy will be returned to the employee.

**B. REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

1. The employee is responsible for initiating the reimbursement request process. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted in a timely fashion and no later than thirty (30) days after completion of a pre-approved course. Departments must accurately note the date the reimbursement request was received and the form must be initialed by the person who receives it.
2. To be eligible for reimbursement consideration the employee must:
  - a. Be a current employee of the City covered by the FAPP bargaining unit agreement at both the time of submission of his/her request for reimbursement and receipt of reimbursement.
  - b. Complete the Reimbursement Request Form which includes employee identifying data, course title, course number, name of institution, whether the course is a graduate, undergraduate or other level course, verification of cost incurred (copy of paid invoice, receipt or cancelled check) and an official transcript to be sent to his/her Bureau Chief.
3. Upon receipt of the official transcript validating that the employee has successfully completed the course that has been pre-approved, the Bureau Chief will complete the section of the Reimbursement Request Form entitled FOR DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY.
4. Reimbursement may occur only upon successful completion of a pre-approved course and the availability of sufficient funds for allocation for tuition reimbursement. (See General Guidelines G and L).
5. If the reimbursement request is disapproved, the Department Director shall state the reasons(s) why the request for reimbursement was denied (typed only).
6. If approved, the Department Director shall authorize the processing of a separate Special Payroll Request Form for each pre-approved and successfully completed course to reimburse the employee for the allowed 50% reimbursement as shown on the approved Pre-Approval Request Form B.
  - a. The Special Payroll Request Form must be typed and must contain the following:
    - Employee's Name
    - Employee's Social Security Number
    - Employee's Administration Group
    - Gross Amount of Reimbursement Request
    - Title of Course
    - Course Number
    - Institution Attended
    - Graduate, Undergraduate or Other (specify) Level of Course
  - b. Attached to the Special Payroll Request Form must be:
    - The completed Reimbursement Request Form (all copies of the Form)

- The official transcript relating to the reimbursement request
  - Copy of paid invoice, receipt or cancelled check, showing that the employee has paid for the course.
7. The approved reimbursement shall be charged to and be payable from each department's Education and Training Code Account.
8. The Special Payroll Request Form along with the completed Reimbursement Request Form, with all attachments, must be sent to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission. If the Bureau Chief has approved the Reimbursement Request, the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will review all information submitted for compliance with the procedures and if approved will transmit it to the Payroll Office for processing and return copies to the Bureau Chief and employee. If the Special Payroll request is disapproved by the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission the forms will be returned to both the Bureau Chief and employee with an explanation of the disapproval.

Bureau Chiefs who need further information or clarification should contact the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission at x2710.

## SECTION 2: AFSCME Local 2719, AFSCME Local 2037 & PJCBC Employees

### GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- A. To be eligible to request participation in this Program, the employee must:
1. Have completed one year of employment with the City of Pittsburgh as a full time regular employee from date of hire, rehire or reinstatement, AND
  2. Have completed the probationary period and be employed in a full time regular position covered by the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Pittsburgh and AFSCME 2719, AFSCME 2037 or PJCBC at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request, AND
  3. Not be on Disciplinary Probation, Workers' Compensation, Short Term or Long Term Disability, Sick Leave, Parental Care Leave or other paid or unpaid leaves of absence at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request, AND
  4. Be a current employee of the City in a position covered by either AFSCME 2719, AFSCME 2037 or PJCBC at both the time of submission of his/her request for reimbursement and receipt of reimbursement.
- B. An eligible employee must complete a Pre-Approval Request Form C and submit it, along with all required supporting documents, to his/her Department Director as early as possible, but at least ten (10) work days prior to the date the course starts.
- C. The employee's Department Director must submit the Pre-Approval Request Form C, with all required supporting documents and the Department Director's recommendation for approval or disapproval, to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission (P&CSC) as soon as possible but at least five (5) work days prior to the date the course starts.
- D. The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission (P&CSC) may require additional information or documents from the employee before approval or disapproval of the Pre-Approval Request can be given. Failure of the employee to provide the requested additional documents or information to the Director of P&CSC prior to the date the course starts will preclude approval and the Pre-Approval Request will be disapproved.
- E. The City may revoke pre-approval at any time prior to the employee's payment of tuition and lab fee becoming irrevocable.
- F. Eligible employees who have received approval of the Pre-Approval Request will receive 50% reimbursement of tuition and lab fees upon the successful completion of a college, university, technical school, trade school or certified apprenticeship course which is job related (i.e.: will improve employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements, as established by the Civil Service Commission, for promotion into another position within the bargaining unit).
- G. Employees covered by the AFSCME 2719 and AFSCME 2037 agreements ONLY can present grievances over the City's determination that a course is not

job related directly to Step III. The grievance must be filled within five (5) days of the City notifying the employee of the determination. The grievance procedure is specified in Article XXIV, Section 6 of the AFSCME 2719 bargaining unit agreement and Article XVI, Section 6 of the AFSCME 2037 bargaining unit agreement.

H. Courses (credit or noncredit) must be taken at an accredited college, university, technical or trade school or as part of a certified apprenticeship program and must be credited toward a degree, certificate or license. Correspondence courses will not be eligible for consideration.

I. Successful completion of a credit or noncredit college, university, technical/trade school or certified apprenticeship course is defined as achievement of a "C" grade or better for all undergraduate, technical/trade or certified apprenticeship work completed, and achievement of a "B" grade or better for all graduate level work completed. Attainment of a "C-" for undergraduate, technical/trade or certified apprenticeship coursework or a "B-" for a graduate course does not constitute successful completion of a course.

J. Reimbursement will be made only after the employee completes a Tuition Reimbursement Program Reimbursement Request Form verifying the successful completion of a pre-approved course. Reimbursable costs will be for tuition and lab fees only. Fees for registration, university, computer, administrative or late fees, graduation, books, instruments, transportation, meals, etc. are not reimbursable under the Program.

K. Reimbursements will be treated as ordinary income, and as such may be subject to Federal, State and/or Local taxes based on IRS requirements in effect at the time of the request.

L. If an employee receives other available tuition assistance, such as a grant and/or scholarship from government, college/university and/or private funds, the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program will reimburse 50% of the difference between such other available tuition assistance and the amount of the tuition and lab fees.

M. Employees must attend class on their own time. Participation in the Tuition Reimbursement Program must not interfere with the employee's work responsibilities or hours of work.

N. Approvals of both Pre-Approval and Reimbursement Request Forms under this Program are subject to and contingent upon City Council appropriating sufficient funds for the Program. The funds appropriated to each department for the Program shall be used to cover tuition and lab fees incurred by any department employee, regardless of bargaining unit status. Once the amount of pre-approved requests equals the allotted funds for a department in any given year, no further approval will be given to employees who enroll in courses during that year. If the funds allocated to the department for any given year are insufficient to pay for all requests for reimbursement, then the Department Director shall determine which requests to approve. Pre-approval for courses which carry over or begin in the fiscal year following pre-approval are contingent upon the City appropriating sufficient funds to cover the tuition and lab fees.

O. Employees who transfer to another City department must seek approval for reimbursement of that course from their new City Department Director or Bureau Chief. Employees who transfer to a position outside of their bargaining unit are ineligible for reimbursement for that course.

P. An employee who resigns or is terminated from employment for any reason prior to the completion of a pre-approved course will not be eligible for reimbursement.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **A. Pre-Approval Procedures**

#### **1. Employee's Request – Part I of Tuition Reimbursement Program Pre-Approval Request Form C**

a. A Pre-Approval Request Form C must be completed for each proposed course. The form must be typed and submitted to the employee's Department Director at least ten (10) work days prior to the date the course starts. Forms are available in all Directors' offices. Additional copies can be obtained by department heads from the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission by calling x2710.

#### **b. Part I of the Pre-Approval Request Form includes:**

- Identifying employee data
- Name and address of the accredited institution or certified apprenticeship program
- Grants, scholarships, awards or any other non-repayable financial assistance received for tuition costs (e.g., PHEAA, PELL, etc.)
- Title of the proposed degree (including major), certificate or license program
- Course number
- Title of course
- Number of credits for the proposed course, if applicable
- Tuition costs for the proposed course
- Lab fees, if any, for the proposed course
- Starting and ending dates for the proposed course
- Calculation of requested 50% reimbursement
- Description of why the proposed course is job related. (i.e.: will improve the employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements as established by the Civil Service Commission for promotion into another position within the bargaining unit)
- Employee's signature verifying an understanding of and agreeing to the General Guidelines and Procedures of the Program

c. The employee must attach to the Pre-Approval Request Form C a copy of the institution's formal description of the proposed course and confirmation from the institution of the tuition and lab fee costs associated

with the course and source(s) and amount(s) of any scholarships, grants, etc.

d. Eligible employees are SOLELY responsible for providing supporting documents for each proposed course to the satisfaction of his/her Department Director and the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission to receive full consideration under the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program. Failure to do so within the time frame specified in the Procedure shall result in the disapproval of the employee's request.

2. Department Director Action – Part II of Pre-Approval Request Form C

a. Upon receipt of the Pre-Approval Request Form C with Part I completed, the Department Director will review the request to verify that the request has been submitted in a timely basis and that all required information and supporting documents are complete and accurate.

b. The Department Director will review the request to determine if the employee meets the following qualifications for consideration under the Tuition Reimbursement Program:

- Is the employee eligible as defined in Section I-a. above?
- Is the employee's identifying data (e.g.: job title, start date, etc.) accurate?
- Is the college, university or technical/trade school where the course will be taken accredited or is the program a certified apprenticeship program?
- Is the course a non-correspondence course toward a degree, certificate or license?
- Is there money available in the appropriate code account to cover this request?
- Is the proposed course job related (i.e.: will improve the employee's knowledge and skills to perform present job duties or enable the employee to meet the minimum requirements as established by the Civil Service Commission for promotion into another position within the employee's bargaining unit)?

c. The Department Director will complete 6a. in Part II (typed only) describing how the course and/or degree, license or certificate program is job related. The Director will also complete Part II of the Pre-Approval Request Form C (typed only) recommending approval or disapproval of the proposed course. If approval is recommended the Director will sign the Form. Any modification, change, correction, etc. made to Part I of the form must be initialed and dated by the Department Director or his/her designee.

d. The Department Director must submit the completed Pre-Approval Request Form C and all accompanying documents to the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission for review and approval/disapproval at least five (5) work days prior to the date the course starts.

e. The Department Director is responsible for ensuring that the Pre-Approval Request Form C and all supporting documents are complete and accurate before forwarding them to the Director of P&CSC.

3. Director of the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission Action – Part III of Pre-Approval Request Form C

a. The Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission will review the Pre-Approval Request Form C, all accompanying materials, and the recommendation from the appropriate Department Director.

b. The Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission will complete Part III of the Pre-Approval Request Form C indicating approval/disapproval of the request and state the reason(s) for the final approval or disapproval of the request. All decisions of the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission shall be final.

c. The yellow copy of the completed Pre-Approval Request Form C will be returned to the originating department and must be maintained on file. The pink copy will be returned to the employee.

B. Reimbursement Process

4. The employee is responsible for initiating the reimbursement request process. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted in a timely fashion and no later than thirty (30) days after completion of a pre-approved course. Departments must accurately note the date the Reimbursement Request was received and the form must be initialed by the person who receives it.

5. To be eligible for reimbursement consideration the employee must:

a. Be a current employee of the City in a position covered by either the AFSCME 2719, AFSCME 2037 or PJCBC bargaining unit agreement at both the time of submission of his/her request for reimbursement and receipt of reimbursement, AND

b. Complete the Reimbursement Request Form which includes employee identifying data, course title, course number, name of institution, whether the course is a graduate, undergraduate or other level course, verification of cost incurred (copy of paid invoice, receipt or cancelled check) and an official transcript to be sent to his/her Department Director.

6. Upon receipt of the official transcript validating that the employee has successfully completed the course that has been pre-approved, the Department Director will complete the section of the Reimbursement Request Form entitled FOR DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY.

7. Reimbursement may occur only upon successful completion of a pre-approved course and the availability of sufficient funds for allocation for tuition reimbursement. (See General Guidelines I and N).

8. If the reimbursement request is disapproved, the Department Director shall state the reason(s) why the request for reimbursement was denied (typed only).
9. If approved, the Department Director shall authorize the processing of a separate Special Payroll Request Form for each pre-approved and successfully completed course to reimburse the employee for the allowed 50% reimbursement as shown on the approved Pre-Approval Request Form C.
- a. The Special Payroll Request Form must be typed and must contain the following:
- Employee's Name
  - Employee's Social Security Number
  - Employee's Administration Group
  - Gross Amount of Reimbursement Request
  - Title of Course
  - Course Number
  - Institution Attended
  - Graduate, Undergraduate or Other (specify) Level of Course
- b. Attached to the Special Payroll Request Form must be:
- The completed Reimbursement Request Form (all copies of the form); AND
  - The official transcript relating to the reimbursement request; AND
  - Copy of paid invoice, receipt or cancelled check showing that the employee has paid for the course.
10. The approved reimbursement shall be charged to and be payable from each department's Education and Training Code Account.
11. The Special Payroll Request Form along with the completed Reimbursement Request Form, with all attachments, must be sent to the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission. If the Department Director has approved the Reimbursement Request the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission will review all information submitted for compliance with the procedures and if approved will transmit it to the Payroll Manager for processing and return copies to the Department Director and employee. If the Special Payroll Request is disapproved by the Director Personnel and Civil Service Commission the forms will be returned to both the Department Director and employee with an explanation of the disapproval.

## SECTION 3: NON-UNION Employees

### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to request participation in this Program, the non-union employee must:

- 1)** Have completed one year of continuous employment with the City of Pittsburgh as a full time regular employee. Re-hired or reinstated employees who have met this criterion in their previous City employment do not have to wait one year to participate in the Program, AND
- 2)** Be employed in a non-union, full time regular position at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request, AND
- 3)** Not be on lay off, Workers' Compensation, Short Term or Long Term Disability, Sick Leave, or other leaves of absence at the time of submitting the Pre-Approval Request.

#### I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A.** Eligible employees who have received approval of the Pre-Approval Request will receive 50% reimbursement of tuition and lab fees upon the successful completion of college or university level courses that are job related or degree related courses which will improve the employee's knowledge and skills that are job related. Courses must be taken at an accredited college or university. Correspondence courses and non-credit courses are not reimbursable.
- B.** Successful completion of a college or university level course is defined as achievement of a "C" grade or better for all undergraduate work completed, achievement of a "B" grade or better for all graduate level work completed, or achievement of a "P" grade for courses graded on a Pass/Fail basis only as determined by the college or university. Attainment of a "C-" for undergraduate coursework or a "B-" for graduate coursework does not constitute successful completion of a course.
- C.** Reimbursable costs will be for tuition and lab fees only. Fees for registration, University, computer, administrative, or late fees, school activities, deferred payment, graduation, books, instruments, transportation, meals, etc. are not reimbursable under the program.
- D.** If an employee receives other available non-repayable tuition assistance such as a grant or scholarship from government, college/university and/or private funds, the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program will reimburse 50% of the difference between such other available non-repayable tuition assistance and the amount of the tuition and lab fees.

- E.** Reimbursements will be treated as ordinary income and, as such, will be subject to Federal, State and/or Local taxes based on IRS Requirements in effect at the time of the request.
- F.** Employees must attend class on their own time. Participation in the Tuition Reimbursement Program must not interfere with the employee's work responsibilities or hours of work.
- G.** Approvals of both Pre-Approval and Reimbursement Request Forms under this program are subject to and contingent upon City Council appropriating sufficient funds for the program. The funds appropriated to each department for the program shall be used to cover tuition and lab fees incurred by any department employee, regardless of bargaining unit status. Once the amount of pre-approved requests equals the allotted funds for a department in any given year, no further approval will be given to employees who enroll in courses during the year. If the funds allocated to the department for any given year are insufficient to pay for all requests for reimbursement, then the Department Director shall determine which requests to approve.
- H.** Employees who transfer to another City department after they have received approval of a Pre-Approval Request, must seek approval for reimbursement for that course from their new City Department Director.
- I.** An employee who resigns or is terminated from employment for reasons considered to be just cause prior to completion of a pre-approved course, will not be eligible for reimbursement. An employee who is terminated by the City for reasons not considered just cause (e.g.: lay-off, economy reduction, abolition of position, etc.) prior to completion of pre-approved course will be eligible for reimbursement provided all other criteria for eligibility are met.

**II. PRE-APPROVAL PROCEDURES**

- A.** Employee's Request – Part 1 of Pre-Approval Request Form A
  - 1)** A Pre-Approval Request Form A must be completed for each proposed course. The form must be typed and submitted to the employee's Department Director at least ten (10) work days (holidays are excluded) prior to the date the course starts.
  - 2)** If, because of extenuating circumstances, the employee cannot submit the Pre-Approval Request Form A and supporting documentation to his/her Department Director at least ten (10) work days prior to the date the course starts, the employee must attach a memo to the Director of the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission stating the extenuating

circumstances of why the deadline could not be met. These circumstances will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

- 3)** The employee must attach to the Pre-Approved Form A a copy of the institution's formal description of the proposed course and confirmation from the institution of the tuition and lab fee costs associated with the course including source(s) and amount(s) of any grants, scholarships, etc.
- 4)** Eligible employees are SOLELY responsible for providing supporting documents for each proposed course to the satisfaction of his/her Department Director and the Director of Personnel and Civil Service Commission to receive consideration under the City's Tuition Reimbursement Program. Failure to do so within the time frame specified in this procedure shall result in disapproval of the employee's request.

**B.** Department Director Action – Part II of Pre-Approval Request Form A

- 1)** Upon receipt of the Pre-Approval Request Form A with Part I completed, the Department Director will review the request to verify that the request has been submitted in a timely basis and that all required information and supporting documents are complete and accurate. Any modifications, changes, corrections, etc., made to Part I of the form must be initialed and dated by the Department Director or his/her designee.
- 2)** The Department Director or Bureau Chief will review the request to determine if the employee meets the qualifications for consideration under the Tuition Reimbursement Program (see Eligibility and Section I: General Guidelines A., C., D., and G.) by completing questions 1 through 6.
- 3)** The Department Director or Bureau Chief will complete 6a. in Part II describing how the course is job related. The Director will also complete Part II of the Pre-Approval Request Form A and all accompanying documents to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission for review and approval or disapproval of the proposed course and sign the form. If disapproval is recommended the Director must state his/her reasons for recommending disapproval.
- 4)** The Department Director must submit the completed Pre-Approval Request Form A and all accompanying documents to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission for review and approval/disapproval at least five (5) work days prior to the date the course starts.

**C.** Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission  
Action – Part III of Pre-Approval Request Form A

- 1)** The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will review the Pre-Approval Request Form A, all accompanying materials, and the recommendation from the Department Director to ensure compliance with program requirements.
- 2)** The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will complete Part III of the Pre-Approval Request Form A indicating approval/disapproval of the request and stating the reason(s) for approval or disapproval. All decisions of the Director of Personnel & Civil Service Commission shall be final.
- 3)** The yellow copy of the completed Pre-Approval Request Form A will be returned to the originating department and must be maintained on file. The pink copy will be returned to the employee.

**III. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES**

**A.** Employee's Request – Part 1 of Pre-Approval Request Form A

- 1)** The employee is responsible for initiating the reimbursement request process. A Reimbursement Request Form must be completed for each pre-approved course. The form must be typed and submitted to the Department Director no later than thirty (30) days after completion of the course.
- 2)** The employee must attach to the Reimbursement Request Form a copy of the paid invoice, receipt or canceled check showing that the employee has paid for the course. If the institution the employee is attending has a policy that students participating in employer tuition reimbursement programs need not pay the full tuition until after they receive reimbursement, verification of this policy must also be submitted.

**B.** Department Director Action – Part II of the Reimbursement Request Form

- 1)** Upon receipt of the Reimbursement Request Form with Part I completed, the Department Director or his/her designated representative will accurately note the date received and the initials of the person receiving the form. The Department will hold the form until receipt of the official transcript.

- 2)** Upon receipt of the official transcript, the Department Director will review the request to determine if the employee meets the qualifications for reimbursement (see General Guidelines B., G., and I.). The Director will complete Part II of the Reimbursement Request Form recommending approval or disapproval of the request and sign the form. If disapproval is recommended, the Director must state his/her reason(s) for recommending disapproval.
- 3)** The Department Director will submit the Reimbursement Request Form, and the official transcript and documentation that the employee has paid for the course to the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission for review and approval/disapproval.

**C.** Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission  
Action – Part III of Reimbursement Request Form

- 1)** The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will review the Reimbursement Request Form, all accompanying materials and the recommendation from the Department Director.
- 2)** The Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will complete Part III of the Reimbursement Request Form indicating approval/disapproval of the request. If the request is disapproved, the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission will state the reason(s) for disapproval. All decisions of the Director of the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission shall be final. The yellow copy of the completed Reimbursement Request Form will be returned to the employee. The gold copy will be forwarded to the Payroll Supervisor for processing if the request is approved.

Reimbursement under the Tuition Reimbursement Program shall be charged to and payable from each Department's Education and Training Code Account.

Pre-Approval Request Forms and Reimbursement Program can be obtained from the Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission by calling x2710.