

## **Tuition Reimbursement Policy & Procedure**

### **Objective**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the tuition reimbursement guidelines for all Reach staff. Reach is committed to providing tuition reimbursement for staff who desire to continue their education for their professional and personal development. The following policy establishes reimbursement for qualified educational expenses and successful completion of eligible undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate courses in accredited colleges or universities.

### **Eligibility**

Full-time, permanent staff are eligible for tuition reimbursement. Staff must be active when the eligible course begins, at course end, and when reimbursement is requested and paid. Employees on a leave of absence will not be eligible for this benefit until they return to active status. Contractors, Term of Project (TOP), temporary, and part-time staff are not eligible for this benefit.

### **Eligible Programs and Courses**

The following outlines the program requirements and identifies the eligible courses that qualify for tuition reimbursement:

- Undergraduate degree program and courses that are job-related
- Masters degree programs and courses that are job-related
- Doctoral degree programs and courses that are job-related
- All courses and/or programs must be taken at an accredited institution, college, university, IU, and/or appear on the Federal School Code List
- Approved Intermediate Unit (IU) courses that are job-related and qualify for transferable college credit
- All courses must relate to the employee's present position or future career path with the school

### **Program Guidelines**

Reach will reimburse eligible staff for one hundred percent (100%) of tuition costs for eligible courses up to a maximum of \$5,250 per calendar year. In addition to tuition, the following fees are eligible for reimbursement up to a maximum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per semester and count towards the maximum yearly benefit.

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- Registration fees
- Application fees
- Computer/technology fees
- Administration fees
- Lab fee, if required for the course

For a course to qualify for reimbursement, staff must complete each eligible course with a grade of “C” or higher or “Pass” for a pass/fail course.

Reach provides tuition reimbursement payments on pay dates according to the payroll calendar. Tuition reimbursement payments may take up to two pay periods to appear and the payments show as a separate line item on the pay statement.

All tuition reimbursement payments count towards the maximum tuition benefit for the calendar year in which the tuition reimbursement payments are made.

All tuition reimbursement payments are subject to IRS taxes and regulations.

### **Tuition Reimbursement Procedure**

Reach utilizes Tuition Manager as the school’s tuition reimbursement request system. Staff should refer to the Tuition Manager Guide for account set-up and access.

Staff must submit all tuition reimbursement requests using Tuition Manager in accordance with the following guidelines:

#### Prior to Course Start

- Submit all requests via Tuition Manager at least ten (10) days prior to course start date.
- Submit all requests prior to starting any course work related to the requested reimbursement.
- Provide the following information for all requests:
  - Title of Course
  - Course description
  - Dates of the course

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- Staff may be required to pay all tuition and fees prior to being reimbursed at the discretion of the institution they are attending.

### Upon Completion of Course/Program

- Submit the following reimbursement documents to HR through Tuition Manager no later than eight (8) weeks after the course completion date:
  - Proof of final grade (Cumulative course grade reports are not sufficient)
  - Itemize invoice
  - Course/program completion certificate
- To ensure tuition reimbursement payment requests submitted at the end of the calendar year are made from eligible remaining calendar year reimbursement funds, staff must submit requests prior to the last pay date before the holiday break. HR publishes this date via Tuition Manager and Reach Cyber Central. Typically, this date is on or about December 16.
- Staff must be employed by Reach to receive tuition reimbursement payment.

### Denied Requests - Requests may be denied for the following reasons:

- Failure to submit paperwork timely
- Eligibility requirements have not been met
- Incomplete paperwork
- Necessary approvals were not obtained prior to the course beginning
- Course/program is not job-related
- Received the maximum amount of the calendar year tuition reimbursement

### **Tuition Reimbursement Deferral Forms**

Many colleges and universities allow students to defer tuition payments until completion of the course by submitting a tuition reimbursement deferral form. Staff are responsible for coordinating this process with their institution and should coordinate with Human Resources to have the employer portion of the deferral completed by contacting HR at [Reach-HR@reach.connectionsacademy.org](mailto:Reach-HR@reach.connectionsacademy.org)

### **Tuition Reimbursement Repayment Provisions**

Staff who separate from the school within two (2) years after receiving tuition reimbursement payment(s) will be required to pay back a percentage of the tuition reimbursement payment(s) according to the following schedule:

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- Staff are responsible for one hundred percent (100%) repayment if the employee separates within one (1) calendar year of the course reimbursement date.
- Staff are responsible for fifty percent (50%) repayment if the employee separates within two (2) calendar years of the course reimbursement date.
- Staff who separate more than two (2) years after the course reimbursement date will not be responsible for any repayment.

### **Repayment Options**

Human Resources will coordinate directly with staff who have an obligation to repay tuition reimbursement at the time of their separation to determine the most appropriate repayment option available to the employee. Human Resources will work with the Director of Finance to recover funds. Repayment options available to staff include:

- Deduct the debt from the employee's final paycheck(s).
- Pay the school directly by personal check, cashier's check, or money order.
- Enter a Tuition Reimbursement Program Debt Repayment Agreement. Reach has sole discretion to offer a repayment agreement through successive payments to satisfy the debt within the following guidelines:
  - The length of the agreement shall not exceed (twelve)12 months
  - The number and amount of successive payments will be mutually determined by the employee and the school
- Any combination of the above repayment options.

Failure to satisfy a tuition reimbursement repayment debt will cause the School to pursue other collection methods and the employee will be responsible for all costs of collection including reasonable attorneys' fees.

### **Exceptions:**

Any exception to this policy requires the review and approval of the Chief Executive Officer.