

Solano Probation Peace Officer Association

August 17, 2022

Proposal # 5 Units 12 & 15

6.12 Tuition Assistance Program ~~Education Reimbursement~~

A. OBJECTIVE

The Tuition ~~Assistance Reimbursement~~ Program is designed to encourage employees to continue their self-development by enrolling in educational courses that will prepare them in new concepts and methods needed to meet the changing demands of County service.

B. ELIGIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE ~~REIMBURSEMENT~~

1. Only full-time employees filling regular positions; on other than a limited-term basis; who have completed their initial County probationary period and who are performing their jobs satisfactorily are eligible to participate in the Tuition ~~Assistance Reimbursement~~ Program. Employees in ~~F~~ederally funded, limited-term positions are eligible to participate in the program provided such ~~assistance reimbursement~~ can be provided with Federal funds. Employees are not eligible for ~~tuition assistance reimbursement~~ if their educational costs are being defrayed by another agency, such as the U.S. Department of Veterans² Affairs, the California Department of Veteran²s Affairs, or the Board of State and Community Corrections Standards and Training for Corrections.~~Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.~~
2. Part-time employees are eligible for tuition assistance reimbursement after 5 years of continuous employment. Part-time employees shall not be eligible for County time off under this program; however, they shall be entitled to ~~assistance reimbursement~~ up to the maximum prorated amount in proportion to the relationship their basic workweek bears to 40 hours.

C. POLICY FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE ~~REIMBURSEMENT~~

1. Courses must be related to the work of the employee's position, career development or occupation in such a fashion as will offer substantial benefit to the County.
2. Courses; that are directly related to the employee's work; may be taken on not more than 50% of the County's time. Employees taking approved courses that encroach on their regular scheduled working hours may be granted paid time off for such encroaching hours up to a total maximum

amount of paid time off from work equal to 50% of the class time. Courses not directly related to the employee's work, ~~such as career development,~~ shall be taken on the employee's own time.

3. Courses must be taken for credit; audited courses will not be reimbursed.
4. Courses must be taken at accredited institutions, either online or at a local institution.
5. Prerequisites ~~courses~~ for eligible courses or courses, ~~which that~~ are required for the completion of a specific program, are also eligible for tuition ~~assistance reimbursement~~. However, ~~assistance reimbursement~~ shall not be ~~made provided~~ until the appropriate eligible courses have been satisfactorily completed.
6. Courses are not eligible for tuition ~~assistance reimbursement~~ if they:
 - a. Are taken to bring unsatisfactory performance up to an acceptable level, unless the course is directed to correct a deficiency.
 - b. Are taken to acquire skills or knowledge which the employee was deemed to have when appointed.
 - c. Duplicate available in-service training ~~which is available~~.
 - d. Duplicate training ~~which~~ the employee already has ~~already received had~~.
7. Conventions, workshops, institutes, etc., are not included in the Tuition ~~Assistance Reimbursement~~ Program. An exception may be made for conferences, institutes or workshops when these events provided the employee with continuing education units (CEUs) ~~which that~~ are required to attain or maintain a certification or license which is required by the county for the employee's position. Attendance at such an event and the eligibility for inclusion under this ~~Tuition assistance reimbursement~~ provision must be approved by the Department Head in advance.
8. ~~Tuition assistance Reimbursement~~ shall be subject to certification by the department concerned that the course of study is directly related to the work of the employee.
9. Requests for ~~assistance reimbursement~~ must be approved by the Department Head before the course is undertaken and such approval shall be subject to the availability of funds for tuition ~~assistance reimbursement~~ within the Department involved.
10. ~~Tuition assistance Reimbursement~~ shall be provided made only upon ~~an approval of an application consistent with this article and with presentation~~

~~of evidence of payment for and successful completion of courses (as evidenced by a passing grade) and a “Meets Standards” current performance evaluation. Assistance Reimbursement is provided made for in the fiscal year in which the employee is enrolled in an approved course. course is completed and documentation must be presented to the Department of Human Resources within (90) days after course completion date.~~

D. PROCEDURE FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE REIMBURSEMENT

1. No later than 90 days before the deadline to enroll in a course or institution, the employee shall submit ~~their his/her~~ request to their Department Head, who shall approve or deny within 30 days ~~either recommend approval of the request within 30 days or deny it,~~ based on the criteria set forth in ~~this article~~ policy. If the Department Head recommends approval, ~~they he/she~~ shall forward the application to the Director of Human Resources, ~~or his/her designee.~~
2. ~~The employee shall apply for Tuition Assistance Reimbursement through such supervisory channels as are is designated by the head of his/her the employee’s department, on forms provided by the Director of Human Resources, or his/her designee.~~
- 2.3. ~~The application for tuition assistance must identify the course or courses the employee intends to take, whether the course is online or in person, the institution at which the employee intends to take the course, and any qualifying associated costs. The employee must acknowledge on the application that they are responsible for any tuition, costs and fees that will not be paid by the County under this program.~~
- 3.4. ~~Unless the reason for denial is lack of funds, aAn employee may appeal the denial of a-tuition assistance the request by the Department Head to the Director of Human Resources or his/her designee and appeal the decision of the Director of Human Resources through or his/her designee’s decision (unless the reason for denial is lack of funds) to the grievance procedure, provided in this MOU.~~
- 4.5. ~~Upon completion of an approved course, the employee shall request the institution to certify fees paid and grade achieved, and to send such certification to the Director of Human Resources within 90 days, or his/her designee. The employee also shall also present evidence of payment of required textbook costs, if any.~~
- 5.6. ~~The Department Head may require that the employee evaluate the course in writing and, in addition, either present information attained at the course, or review course materials with department representatives and employees.~~

E. LIMITATIONS NATURE OF ON TUITION ASSISTANCE REIMBURSEMENT

1. Tuition assistance may be provided ~~Reimbursement may be made in the up to amount of~~ fifty percent (50%) of actual out-of-pocket expenditures for tuition, registration fees, laboratory fees, and required textbooks. Other related expenses and incidental costs are not reimbursable.
2. Tuition assistance ~~Reimbursement~~ shall be limited as follows:
 - a. ~~No employee shall be reimbursed for more than two (2) courses in a single semester or quarter.~~
 - b.a. The maximum assistance reimbursement that may be received by an employee in one fiscal year shall be two thousand one thousand one hundred ~~(\$1,100.00)~~ ~~(\$2,000)~~ dollars. Effective July 1, ~~2020~~ 2023, the maximum assistance reimbursement that may be received by an employee in one fiscal year shall be two five ~~five~~ thousand dollars ~~(\$2,000)~~ (\$5,000).
 - e.b. An employee shall receive ~~be reimbursed for~~ assistance for expenses totaling five dollars (\$5.00) or more for a single course. Expenses less than five dollars (\$5.00) for a single course are not eligible for tuition assistance ~~reimbursable~~.
 - d.c. No employee shall ~~be reimbursed~~ receive tuition assistance for non-resident fees above the normal resident fees.
3. If an employee fails to complete a course for which they have received tuition assistance, the employee shall reimburse the county in the same manner as provided for in Article 5, Section 5.12 of this agreement.

F. CONTINUED SERVICE REQUIREMENT

An employee must continue in a full-time, regular position in the County service for one (1) year from the date of completion of the course. Failure to continue in the County service, through resignation or discharge (excluding layoff), will result in the forfeiture of any tuition assistance reimbursement payments received less than one (1) year prior to separation. In such situation, the Association agrees ~~that~~ the Auditor-Controller is authorized to make a deduction from the employee's final payroll warrant for the appropriate amount of tuition assistance reimbursement to be forfeited.