



POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement 410.1

Policy Area: Training

Effective Date: **FEB 08 2005**

Approved: *Paul A. Quander, Jr.*

Paul A. Quander, Jr., Director

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

I. COVERAGE

This policy statement covers all permanent employees of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA or Agency) with a minimum of 120-days of continuous employment in an active duty status and a current performance rating of “Fully Meets Expectations” or above (or whose supervisor certifies their performance at that level).

II. BACKGROUND

CSOSA recognizes that efforts by staff to improve their skills and knowledge through independent studies may result in improved job performance and therefore serve to further the Agency’s mission.

As of the date of this policy statement, employer-provided educational assistance of an amount up to \$5,250 is considered tax-free and applies to graduate and undergraduate level courses only. Educational assistance in excess of \$5,250 must be reported on the employee’s Form W-2 as taxable income. In providing this information, the Agency is not offering tax advice. Employees having questions concerning the tax implications of tuition reimbursement benefits are urged to contact the Internal Revenue Service or other experts in tax law.

III. POLICY

Limited funding is available from the Agency under the Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP) to reimburse staff members who successfully complete pre-approved academic coursework from an accredited college or university that is job-related (*i.e., related to the competencies identified for their current positions or to the mission of the Agency*) and must be provided outside the employee’s normal work hours.

Generally, tuition reimbursement is not to exceed \$1,500 per employee, per semester. However, actual tuition reimbursement amounts are contingent upon the program funding level. Because of the limited amount of funds available, CSOSA can only consider requests for individual courses offered in the immediate upcoming academic period (semester/quarter). That is, CSOSA cannot approve in advance a schedule or program of courses for an entire academic year.

The TRP shall not be used for routine, Agency-provided technical/administrative training assigned or approved by a supervisor, or for individualized tutorials. Failure to adhere to the above guidelines may jeopardize future consideration to participate in the TRP.

IV. AUTHORITIES, SUPERCEDURES, REFERENCES, AND ATTACHMENTS

A. Authorities.

5 U.S.C. § 4109 (a)

B. Supercedures.

Human Resources Directive 410.1 Change 1

C. Procedural References.

Tuition Reimbursement Program Application Package

D. Attachments.

Appendix A. Definitions

Appendix B. General Procedures

APPENDIX A
DEFINITIONS

- A. Tuition Reimbursement – a process by which the Agency will provide payment directly to the employee for tuition expenses already paid, excluding the costs of books, lab fees, registration, or other expenses.
- B. Successful Completion – “Successful Completion” is defined as a grade of “C” or better for undergraduate courses and “B” or better for graduate and doctoral courses; or “Pass” on a Pass-Fail system. An “Incomplete” (I) is not considered successful completion of a course and is not reimbursable.
- C. Accredited College or University – Colleges or universities must be accredited by a nationally recognized body, which is a regional, national, or international accrediting organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

APENDIX B GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Application Process: Employees may apply for tuition reimbursement by submitting the required TRP application (Attachment C) and an SF-182 Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training (Attachment C) to their immediate supervisor for approval. These forms are also available on the Intranet. The TRP application and SF-182 must include the following information: course title, course description, course times, and dates; tuition cost; the name, address, and telephone number of the accredited college or university; a brief statement explaining the value of the course(s) to the Agency; and an acknowledgement of the terms of the TRP.
- B. Supervisory Approval: The supervisor will review the request to ensure that the course(s) meets the job competencies and/or Agency mission-related criteria, and to certify that the employee's performance "Fully Meets Expectations" or "Exceeds" expectations. Supervisors are encouraged to seek guidance from TCDC if they have questions regarding a requested course's relationship with the Agency's mission. The supervisor should also indicate the priority order for funding courses when multiple courses are requested. If approved, the request will be forwarded to the Training and Career Development Center (TCDC) for final approval. The supervisor and employee will be notified in writing of approval/disapproval of the request.
- C. Application Deadline: All TRP applications must be submitted to the TCDC by the prescribed deadline that is indicated on the TRP application, the Intranet and via email. Late applications will not be accepted. It is the full responsibility of the applicant to submit his/her application to the supervisor at least five (5) business days prior to the deadline. If this does not occur, the supervisor will not be responsible if the application is late. If the applicant submits his or her application to the supervisor at least five business days prior to the deadline and the supervisor does not return the application to the employee in time for the employee to meet application deadline, the employee's application will be considered by TCDC. A memorandum from the supervisor must accompany a late application stating the reason for the delay.
- D. Withdrawals, Cancellations, etc.: If the employee withdraws, cancels, drops, or substitutes the approved course(s), he or she must advise the TCDC in writing of the status of enrollment for approved course(s) within 15 business days of the enrollment change. All substitutions and changes must be submitted on a Course Substitution Request Form and pre-approved by the employee's supervisor and the TCDC. This form will be included in the TRP application package and also on the Intranet. Requests for substitutions after the completion of a course will not be approved.
- E. Changes in Employment Status and Disciplinary Actions: Employees who are suspended, terminated, or who resign from the Agency are disqualified from receiving tuition

reimbursement for courses approved or under consideration. The employee's supervisor must notify the TCDC within two days of such action. If an applicant's appeal of a disciplinary action is upheld, the disqualification may be lifted.

- F. Reimbursement: Upon the completion of the approved course(s), the employee must submit to the TCDC: (1) an original SF-1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (Attachment 3 and on the Intranet); (2) an official final grade report; (3) an itemized tuition bill; and (4) proof of payment or lender information. If the employee received a student loan to pay for the approved course(s), the reimbursement funds will be forwarded directly to the lender. The employee must provide a memorandum indicating lender information and student account information. If the employee received other sources of funding or discounts, reimbursement will be limited to the amount of tuition paid up to the pre-approved amount. The reimbursement claim must be submitted within 45 days of the last day of class. If the claim for reimbursement is submitted after 45 days from the last day of class, payment is not guaranteed. If the employee leaves the Agency prior to completing the pre-approved course(s), the Agency is not obligated to reimburse employee.