



Policy and Procedure

Title:	Tuition Assistance		
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Approval(s):			
<hr/> Jack Barto, President & Chief Executive Officer		<hr/> Keith Strawn, Vice President, Human Resources	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of NHRMC to invest in the continuing education of its employees.

II. PROCEDURE

1. Eligibility

Tuition assistance is available and may be granted, after 90 days of employment, to full and part-time employees regularly scheduled to work 20 hours or more (≥ .5 FTE) per week. To receive tuition assistance, eligible employees must pursue a course of study at an accredited university or college that leads to licensure, degree, and/or meets the criteria of business or operational necessity related to their current position or another position within NHRMC. In this educational partnership, the employee agrees to a service payback commitment, as described in this policy.

2. Tuition Benefit

Tuition Assistance includes (a) **Tuition Advancement** with payment made after the employee has registered for the course(s) and before the course(s) begin or (b) **Tuition Reimbursement** with payment made after completion of the course(s).

NHRMC will pay 100% of education expenses for tuition, books, lab fees and initial certification exams, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per calendar year.

3. Courses

Courses for credit, including Internet courses, are covered under this policy provided that such courses of study: (a) are clinical courses, (b) are non-clinical, but essential to the Medical Center’s operation, (c) will maintain or improve the skills required of the employee in his/her work, (d) will meet the requirements for assuming greater responsibilities within the organization, and/or (e) will enhance the employee’s potential for advancement to a position which the employee has a reasonable expectation of achieving.

Correspondence courses, seminars and conferences are not covered by this policy. Reimbursement for such programs will be the responsibility of the department if it deems such training necessary.

Non-credit courses that are required as part of the curriculum leading to a degree or initial licensure will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to approval by the respective Vice President and Human Resources. Computer software course (i.e. Microsoft Word, Excel, Access) are not covered under the Tuition Assistance Policy.

4. Conditions

- A. Amounts reimbursed / advanced will be for tuition, books, lab fees and initial certification exams only. The employee pays all student fees. NHRMC will not duplicate Tuition Assistance made by any other agency or institution, such as the Veterans Administration, grants or scholarships.
- B. Employees may receive Tuition Assistance, for approved applications, if they receive a grade of C or better for Undergraduate courses, a B for better for Graduate Courses, a P grade for Pass/Fail courses to be accompanied by a letter form the instructor indicating the equivalent letter grade and a pass for certification exams.
- C. Tuition Assistance benefits will be “credited” to the calendar year in which the course was completed.
- D. An employee whose status changes to other than active full-time or part-time (0.5 FTE or greater), prior to completion of any course or certification exam, is not eligible for tuition assistance for those courses.
- E. An employee who is currently under active, written disciplinary action prior to approval of any course is not eligible for tuition assistance approval / consideration.
- F. Tuition Assistance is considered taxable income for undergraduate and graduate programs in excess of \$5,250 annually, as determined by Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Guidelines.
- G. Employees receiving Tuition Assistance who do not successfully complete the course, will not be eligible for additional advancement or reimbursement until the initial advancement has been repaid.

5. Application

Eligible employees must complete the employee portion of NHRMC's Tuition Assistance application, submit it to their Department Manager or Director for approval / denial prior to enrollment and return it to HR – Benefits as indicated below. A Tuition Assistance Application must be completed each semester. Regardless of when you choose to receive monies, the completed, approved application is due 30 days in advance of the course(s) starting date.

Tuition assistance includes (a) tuition advancement or (b) tuition reimbursement, to be chosen by eligible employees for approved coursework:

- A. **Tuition Advancement** is payment made after the employee has registered for the course(s) and before the course(s) begin. The Tuition Assistance Application, along with an itemized bill from the college/university, must be submitted to HR-Benefits no later than 30 days prior to the bill due date.

An employee receiving tuition advancement must sign a legally binding agreement that if he/she fails to meet the requirements of this policy, she/he will be obligated to repay the advanced amount either through payroll deductions or through other legal means.

- B. **Tuition Reimbursement** is payment made after completion of course(s). The Tuition Assistance Application, along with an itemized bill from the college/university, must be submitted to HR-Benefits no later than 30 days before the course starting date.

Official grades and proof of payment must be submitted with 30 days from the completion date of the course and receipt of the final grade. Proof of payment consists of a canceled check (copy of the front and back), bank statement, credit card statement or a paid receipt from the college/university. Reimbursement for books for approved Tuition Assistance will only be made with a copy of the receipt.

Advancement and reimbursement requests will be processed upon receipt of all required information. Eligible Tuition Assistance will be added to the employee's regular paycheck by direct deposit.

5. **Service Payback**

An employee receiving Tuition Assistance (reimbursement or advancement) must agree in advance, as part of the application and approval process, to work for NHRMC for a period of time. Employees who terminate their employment with the Medical Center for any reason (voluntarily or involuntarily) will be required to repay the Medical Center as follows:

- a. The full amount of tuition assistance paid to the employee in any of the 12 months preceding their termination date and/or;
- b. Half of the full amount of tuition assistance paid to the employee in any of the 13-24 month period preceding their termination date.

By accepting Tuition Assistance, an employee expressly authorizes NHRMC to withhold any repayment amounts required under this Policy from any amounts owed to the employee (including but not limited to the employee's final paycheck or unused, accrued PDO.) If the employee fails to make any required repayment and the Medical Center takes action to recover the repayment obligation, the employee agrees to pay the fees incurred by NHRMC in pursuing recovery.

This service payback requirement is not an employment contract and in no way obligates NHRMC to provide continued employment to any person.

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Vice President of Human Resources.

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