



## Franklin County Common Pleas Court General Division

**Policy:** Tuition Reimbursement Program

**Qualifying Employees:** All employees of the Common Pleas Court

**Initially Approved by the Court:** October 18, 2001

**Effective Date:** October 18, 2001

**Date Amended Policy Effective:** June 19, 2018

**Amendment Dates:** December 23, 2003

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### I. PURPOSE

The Franklin County Common Pleas Court is committed to investing in its employees' professional development. Employees are encouraged to further their education to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities. This policy establishes the tuition reimbursement program and defines for employees the process for application and reimbursement.

### II. DEFINITIONS

**Tuition** means the price of or payment for an academic course, certification course, or examination required to obtain a certificate at an accredited college, university, technical, business institute or professional organizations.

**Reimbursement** means the action of repaying a person for eligible tuition.

**Business Need** means any course or exam that directly affects the employee's ability to perform their current job; prepares the employee to perform a future role within the Court; or provides a required or preferred certification for the employee's current job.

### III. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Employees - Any full-time employee who has completed their probationary period prior to the start of the course(s) is eligible.
- B. Courses - There must be a correlation between the content of the academic or certification course and the business needs of the Court.
  - 1. Courses must be taken from accredited colleges, universities, technical, business institutes or professional organizations.
  - 2. All courses must be taken outside scheduled working hours.

#### **IV. APPLICATION**

- A. Applications for reimbursement may be obtained from the Court's finance database within the Court Application Portal.
  - 1. The application shall be completed by the employee and submitted to the department director for preliminary approval.
    - a. Applications must be submitted to the department director no earlier than 30 calendar days, and no less than 10 calendar days, prior to the start of the course(s).
    - b. Employees are required to submit a course description and fee schedule with their application.
  - 2. The department director will forward approved applications to the Court executive director for final approval who will return the application with a determination to the Court's finance department prior to the start of the course. The finance department will notify the department director and employee of the final determination.
- B. Courses for which application is made must be the same courses for which reimbursement is sought, unless prior approval is obtained from the Court executive director.
- C. Employees must notify the Court's finance department when canceling a class after the application has been approved.

#### **V. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

- A. Based upon availability of funds, an employee is eligible for reimbursement up to \$5,000 per calendar year.
  - 1. Courses must be successfully completed by obtaining a grade "C" or better or "Pass" for a Pass/Fail course.
  - 2. Employees are eligible for a maximum of \$30,000 total tuition reimbursement throughout the employee's tenure with any Franklin County court or agency.
- B. Whether applied for or not, governmental or private agency tuition assistance (grants and scholarships) will be applied to the cost of the course prior to any tuition reimbursement assistance.

#### **VI. REIMBURSEMENT**

- A. Within four (4) weeks of course completion, an employee shall submit the following:
  - 1. A paid receipt or statement of account reflecting payment;
  - 2. An official transcript of "C" or better, or "Pass" on a Pass/Fail course; and
  - 3. A copy of the awarded certification, if applicable.

- B. Reimbursement will not be available for the following circumstances:
  - 1. Non-instructional fees (includes lab fees, student services fees, or other preparatory expenses);
  - 2. Courses for which a D or lower, or Fail in a Pass/Fail course was received;  
or
  - 3. If the employee was separated from employment while taking a course or before the employee receives a reimbursement check.
- C. There is no guarantee tuition reimbursement will be available any given year. Any full or partial reimbursement to employees will be based solely on the availability of funding.

**VII. REPAYMENT**

- A. An employee participating in the tuition reimbursement program who resigns, retires, or is discharged for cause shall repay the tuition reimbursement paid by the Court for courses completed less than two years prior to the date of separation. Repayment by the employee shall be in full upon separation or according to a payment plan as established by the Court.