

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY MANUAL

Section: Benefits
Subject: Professional Development Tuition Reimbursement
Policy: Local
Code: 821
Issued: 1/1/2016, 3/16/2017, 11/18/2022
Last Revised: 11/8/2022, 2/2/2024
Association Adoption: 2/13/2024
Association Effective Date: 2/13/2024

Policy – Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County is committed to staff retention through various practices including supporting staff to continue formal and informal education and encourage participation in professional development.

Thus, Cornell Cooperative Extension Madison County has established a fund balance dedicated to a Tuition Reimbursement Program to encourage staff to continue their education. The board will make this fund and its annual replenishment a priority; however, reimbursement and the fund balance annual renewal is based on the availability of funds.

Flexible work schedules may be requested towards completion of a degree and will be supported when needed if the modified schedule does not adversely affect the Association or its programs and participants. The Executive Director will make this determination and create a schedule in consultation with the staff member and their supervisor.

Eligibility – All Regular Full-Time and Part-Time Employees are eligible for educational assistance in accordance with this policy upon completion of one (1) year of continuous employment, maintaining satisfactory performance without a performance improvement plan, and provided that the employee is enrolled in courses which are part of a degree or professional development program that is relevant and will contribute to continued employment with the Association.

Process – Employees must submit a written request for reimbursement no later than 30 days prior to the end of the educational opportunity and include a description of the coursework or professional development opportunity. Reimbursement decisions will be made by the Executive Director and Human Resources Committee. Final decisions and reimbursement will be based upon:

- Availability of funds
- Eligibility of staff person based on criteria above.
- The Association will provide approved tuition reimbursement to the employee through payroll.
- Employee must access Cornell Extension Administration scholarship funds first, if eligible.
- Maximum eligibility not to exceed \$5000 per employee (books and fees are not eligible for reimbursement)

- An employee will not be eligible for tuition reimbursement if they withdraw from an approved course or if the approved course is cancelled. An employee must notify their supervisor immediately if either of these occur.
- Reimbursement is based on earning a B or better. Failure to satisfy a minimum passing grade will result in denial of reimbursement for the applicable course. If a course is pass/fail, pass is acceptable.
- Eligible employees who receive assistance from outside sources (scholarships, grants, etc.) are eligible for tuition reimbursement only if the cost of tuition exceeds the amount of assistance previously received.
- Upon completion of the course the employee must submit to their Supervisor a college/university invoice or statement indicating tuition charged and the amount paid. The invoice must contain the school's name and address. The employee must also submit a transcript/grade report that includes the employee's name, course name, term, and grade. Courses receiving an Incomplete or Failing Grade are not eligible for reimbursement.

Also considered are the following factors:

- Need/Relevance of course work to job duties/position.
- Job Performance – eligibility will cease if the employee receives a performance improvement plan while taking courses that are eligible for reimbursement.

All staff members who apply for and are granted any reimbursement will be required to sign an ***Educational Agreement*** with the organization, committing two years of continued service following the completion of coursework or repayment of reimbursement if termination of employment falls short of that commitment. The Board of Directors may waive the repayment under certain circumstances, including but not limited to death of the employee, termination based on lack of funds, etc.

The following repayment schedule will be utilized should an employee's service terminate within the term of the Educational Agreement:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Terminate within 6 months: | 80% repayment required. |
| • Terminate within 6-12 months | 60% repayment required. |
| • Terminate within 12-18 months | 40% repayment required. |
| • Terminate within 18-24 months | 20% repayment required. |

Educational Agreement for Professional Development Support Degree Completion

On this _____ day of _____, 20__, the parties to this agreement,
_____ (employee) and _____ (Executive Director, Cornell
Cooperative Extension Madison County), agree to the following terms and conditions of this Educational
Agreement.

The employee above applied for and has been granted a reimbursement for Professional Development
educational assistance in the amount of \$_____. The employee agrees to commit two (2) years of
continued service following completion of coursework. Repayment of the reimbursement will be required if
termination of employment falls short of that commitment. The Board of Directors may waive the repayment
under certain circumstances including but not limited to the death of the employee, termination based on lack
of funds, etc.

The following repayment schedule will be utilized should the employee's service terminate within the term of
the Educational Agreement:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Terminate within 6 months: | 80% repayment required |
| • Terminate within 6-12 months | 60% repayment required |
| • Terminate within 12-18 months | 40% repayment required |
| • Terminate within 18-24 months | 20% repayment required |

Employee Signature

Executive Director Signature

Board President Signature

Board Treasurer Signature