

Staff Personnel Manual (SPP)

SPP 601: Release Time for Professional Career Development/Learning/ Mentorship

Effective: 11/1/1996

Revised: 12/23/2024

Purpose

To support continuous learning by encouraging employees and students to participate in work-related or university-sponsored development opportunities, including but not limited to professional development classes, workshops, conferences, seminars, webinars, and university professional organizations

Source

University policy

Applicability

Benefits eligible [classified employees](#), [university staff](#), and [non-faculty administrators](#)

Policy

Release Time for Professional Development Opportunities

As an institution of learning, ASU values the continued growth and development of its employees and students. The university provides release time from regular duties for employees to participate in development opportunities that will enhance skills and abilities, provide professional growth and development, and expand knowledge. These professional development opportunities include, but are not limited to;

- University sponsored training, professional development classes, workshops, conferences, seminars, webinars, and classes, including those offered through online learning management platforms.
- Participation in university professional organizations.
- Participation in university affinity groups.
- Participation as a mentor or mentee in university programs, with a special emphasis on programs that benefit under-represented staff and students in reaching their educational/professional career goals.

An employee must receive approval from his or her [supervisor](#) before using release time for professional development opportunities. In granting release time for attending professional development opportunities, the supervisor considers department needs and the employee's request.

Employees should not be required to make up work time missed when participating in supervisor-approved professional development opportunities. If an employee chooses to participate in educational activities or professional activities on

his or her own time, the time spent is not considered as time worked and will not be considered for [overtime](#) or [compensatory time](#) purposes.

Minimum Allowance for Professional Development

The university supports the professional development and growth of all employees. Accordingly, all full-time benefits eligible ASU Employees are eligible for 24 hours of release time per year for professional development. All professional development hours shall be recorded and tracked within the Human Capital Management (HCM) system. Professional development hours will reset at the start of each calendar year. Requests for professional development release time must be approved by the supervisor. Supervisors should work with their employees to minimize the impact of release time on department operations.

Please note release time is based on full-time employment (FTE). Employees working less than 100 percent FTE but who are at least 50 percent and benefits-eligible will receive prorated professional development release time adjusted accordingly to their FTE percentage.

Yearly Plan for Professional Development

It is expected that employees complete their regular job responsibilities, therefore supervisors and employees should work together to identify reasonable work modifications that allow the employee to participate fully in professional development opportunities, without negatively impacting service. It is suggested that the employee and supervisor work together to create a professional development plan for the employee during the performance evaluation cycle; such a plan helps in planning release time.

Fees for Development Opportunities

Fees for classes are not automatically reimbursed; departments are encouraged to fund supervisor-approved professional development opportunities for employees.

Employee Training and Professional Development

A variety of trainings and workshops are available at the university. Some offerings can be found on the Office of Human Resources Professional Development website.

Cross-Reference

For information on release time for attending university classes, see [SPP 505](#), "Employee Reduced Resident Tuition."