

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM	Document Number	GO 534
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1. PURPOSE

The purpose is to provide a tuition reimbursement program for sworn employees of the Hawai'i Police Department (HPD) who wish to enhance their professional and personal development by pursuing continuing education courses.

2. PERSONS AFFECTED

All sworn employees.

3. POLICY

It is the policy of the Hawai'i Police Department to encourage sworn employees to enhance their professional and personal development by pursuing continuing education. To support their pursuit, the Hawai'i Police Department will reimburse qualifying employees the tuition costs for educational courses meeting the specified criteria contingent on the availability of funds.

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1. All full-time sworn employees of the HPD who have passed the initial probationary period.

4.2. Sworn employees must be actively employed by the HPD to participate.

4.3. Eligible sworn employees must first request tuition reimbursement under the County of Hawai'i's Tuition Reimbursement (CTR) Program. CTR procedures, application forms, current reimbursement thresholds, and other information regarding the CTR can be located on the County of Hawai'i intranet site (intranet.hawaiicounty.gov).

4.4. Once an applicant has reached the threshold in reimbursements under the CTR Program, the applicant may then qualify for our department's Tuition Reimbursement Program. The reimbursement amount may be non-taxable. However, the employee must first exhaust his/her eligibility under the CTR Program.

4.5. Sworn employees who do not meet the county eligibility requirements, their CTR Program eligibility shall be considered exhausted, and non-taxable tuition reimbursement may be provided through the department's Tuition Reimbursement Program.

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5. CRITERIA

- 5.1. Course(s) must be administered from an accredited learning institution and directly related to the field of criminal justice and/or the public safety services provided by the Hawai'i Police Department and/or the employee's job duties.
- 5.2. Each individual course must first be approved by submitting an email request to the Assistant Police Chief of the Administrative Services Bureau at least 21 calendar days prior to the course start date. The request shall include:
 - a. The name of the accredited learning institution;
 - b. The course name and corresponding course number;
 - c. A description of the course from the institution's course catalog;
 - d. A brief explanation of how the course is related to the employee's job duties.
- 5.3. Via email response, the Assistant Police Chief of the Administrative Services Bureau will notify the employee of approval or disapproval. If unapproved, an explanation will be provided to the employee.
- 5.4. Late requests will not be considered.
- 5.5. A letter grade of "C" or above ("C", "B" or "A") must be achieved.
- 5.6. In those courses with no assigned letter grade, i.e. pass or fail, employee must achieve the equivalent of a passing grade.

6. REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS AND THRESHOLDS

- 6.1. Subject to the availability of asset forfeiture funds, reimbursements to an individual shall not exceed the amount set by the Police Chief per calendar year (January 1 to December 31).
- 6.2. In those circumstances, when courses overlap two consecutive calendar years, the year of the course's start date will be used to calculate the reimbursement thresholds.

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- 6.3. Total reimbursements from this and any additional tuition assistance program, such as the County of Hawai‘i’s Tuition Reimbursement program, shall not exceed the total amount of the approved course tuition, textbook and/or material costs.
- 6.4. Employees are responsible for any tax liabilities that may arise as a result of tuition reimbursements.

7. REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

- 7.1. Employees must first attempt to seek reimbursement through the CTR Program.
- 7.2. Employees who were denied reimbursement through the CTR or employees who are seeking additional reimbursement for tuition costs not covered by CTR may seek reimbursement through the HPD Tuition Reimbursement Program by submitting a Tuition Reimbursement application within 30 calendar days of receiving a denial or award letter from the CTR Program.
- 7.3. Employees who did not meet the county eligibility requirements for CTR reimbursement may seek reimbursement through the HPD Tuition Reimbursement Program by submitting a Tuition Reimbursement application within 30 calendar days of course completion or within 30 calendar days of the end of the college term (fall, winter, spring, and summer).
- 7.4. The application shall be submitted to the Assistant Police Chief of the Administrative Services Bureau and shall include the following:
 - a. A copy of the emailed course approval from the Assistant Police Chief of the Administrative Services Bureau, including a description of the course from the institution’s course catalog;
 - b. A copy of the transcript, which indicates the final grade achieved;
 - c. A copy of the receipt indicating payment was made for the course tuition, textbook and/or materials.

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- 7.5. The Administrative Bureau Assistant Chief will notify the employee whether the application was approved or not. If unapproved, an explanation will be provided to the employee, and the application will be forwarded to the Human Resources Section and filed in the employee's personnel file.
- 7.6. Upon approval, the Finance Section will process the reimbursement and notify the employee when the reimbursement check is available for distribution, the application will be forwarded to the Human Resources Section and filed in the employee's personnel file.