

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Subject: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM	General Order: 275
Effective Date: March 5, 2024 Revision Date:	Distribution: All Personnel

I. PURPOSE

This general order establishes the procedures for the distribution of Meridian Township funds to reimburse full-time police department employees for college tuition.

II. POLICY

Meridian Township recognizes the value of continuing education for the employees of the police department and encourages our members to work toward secondary degrees. Dependent on funding from the Meridian Township Board of Trustees and employee eligibility, funds may be offered to our employees to offset the cost for employees seeking degrees from colleges and universities.

In accordance with the Meridian Township Personnel Policy, the Meridian Township Police Department is committed to extending educational benefits in an objective, non-discriminatory fashion.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Eligibility

1. Full-time employees of the Meridian Township Police Department who have completed one year of service and are not on probation are eligible to participate in the tuition reimbursement program.
2. Approval for participation in the program must be obtained by the employee from the Chief of Police or his or her designee.
3. It is the responsibility of the employee to demonstrate that the course or courses taken are of benefit to Meridian Township, and the ultimate decision of whether the course or courses are of benefit to Meridian Township will rest solely with the Chief of Police. Courses taken that are not of benefit to Meridian Township will not be eligible for reimbursement.
4. Courses must be taken through an accredited college, university, or trade school to be eligible for reimbursement.
5. Employees intending to participate in the program shall submit a written proposal in the form of a memo to the Chief of Police including the name of the educational institution, estimate of cost, course name(s), dates over which the course(s) will be taught, and an explanation of the benefit

Meridian Township will receive. Upon receipt of the employee's proposal, the Chief of Police, or his or her designee, may contact the employee for additional information.

6. Course work may not interfere with the employee's job duties, and all hours spent in class or doing course work shall be done during non-working hours. The employee must be employed by Meridian Township for the duration of the course(s), from registration through completion of the course(s).
7. Employees must request approval for participation in the program each calendar year. Approval in one calendar year does not guarantee approval for the next calendar year. The maximum amount of reimbursement funds for any individual employee in any calendar year shall not exceed \$5,000.

B. Reimbursement

1. Reimbursement will cover the actual cost of tuition and registration fees only. Books and other related fees are not eligible for reimbursement.
2. Employees who receive reimbursement from another source such as a government sponsored program or scholarship may seek assistance through this program. However, the employee will only be reimbursed the difference between the amount received from the other funding source and the actual course cost, up to the maximum allowable amount set forth in this general order.
3. Employees must obtain at least a 2.5 GPA in each individual course taken, or "pass" in a pass/fail course to be eligible for reimbursement.
4. The employee will be required to pay all required tuition and fees at the time of registration for the course(s). In order to receive reimbursement after completion of the course(s), the employee must submit official transcripts of completed course work with the corresponding grade as well as proof of payment to the Chief of Police within sixty days of course completion.
5. The Chief of Police or his or her designee shall review submissions for reimbursement twice a year, once in June and again in December. Half of the funds for the year will be available during the first half of the year and half of the funds will be available during the second half of the year. Should funds remain unused from the first half of the year, that money

shall carry over to the second half of the year and be available to employees.

C. Tuition Reimbursement & Repayment Agreement

1. Employees must sign a tuition reimbursement & repayment agreement when submitting a request for reimbursement with the terms to be set forth in the agreement.
2. Generally speaking, the Tuition Reimbursement & Repayment Agreement will require the employee to agree to remain employed by the Meridian Township Police Department for three consecutive years to receive reimbursement.
3. Should the employee voluntarily terminate their employment with the Meridian Township Police Department OR should the employee's employment with the Meridian Township Police Department be terminated involuntarily, before the end of that three years, the employee will reimburse Meridian Township in a prorated manner in accordance with the Tuition Reimbursement and Repayment Agreement.
4. The terms of the tuition reimbursement & repayment agreement shall be made available to the employees by the Chief of Police or his or her designee upon reasonable request.
5. Employees who do not sign the tuition reimbursement & repayment agreement will not be eligible for tuition reimbursement.
6. Employees must enter into a separate tuition reimbursement & repayment agreement every calendar year in which they receive a reimbursement under this program.

D. Disbursement of Funds

1. Unless an employee has received specific approval for reimbursement and has entered into a tuition reimbursement & repayment agreement, no employee is guaranteed tuition reimbursement under this policy, even if that employee meets all of the eligibility requirements.
2. The Chief of Police or his or her designee shall determine how to distribute funds on a first come first serve basis dependent on the amount of funding provided by the Township and past participation in the program.

3. Should multiple employees submit requests for reimbursement and funding is limited, the Chief of Police or his or her designee shall take into consideration several factors. These factors include but are not limited to:
 - a. Educational degrees already possessed by the employee.
 - b. If / when the employee has already received tuition reimbursement from Meridian Township in the past.
 - c. Other benefits already received such as sponsorship through the police academy.
 - d. When the request for reimbursement was made.

IV. CANCELLATIONS

None

Authorized by:



Rick Grillo, Chief of Police

Index as:

Tuition Reimbursement Program

Application: This directive constitutes department policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law.