



Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Policy

Policy No. C-08¹

The Scope of this policy includes the following individuals:²

- ✓ Employees (including Full-Time At-Will Employees, Civil Service Employees, Teamsters Employees, HPOA, HPSA, and IAFF Employees)

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and procedures for the tuition and certification reimbursement program.

II. POLICY APPLICATION

Through its tuition and certification reimbursement program, the City demonstrates its commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and development by supporting employees in furthering their education, enhancing performance in their current position, and preparing employees for future opportunities within the City.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Regular, full-time employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period and are not serving a qualifying period at the start of the college course or certification program are eligible for tuition and certification reimbursement.

¹ This policy is not to be construed as a contract or an implied contract concerning any employment-related decision or term or condition of employment. The City reserves the right to revise, delete or add to any and all policies, procedures, work rules or benefits stated in this policy at its sole discretion. See Introduction, Administrative Policy No. A-01.

² The relevant definitions for the individuals identified in the Scope of this policy are defined in Introduction, Administrative Policy No. A-01.

B. PROGRAM FUNDING

The program is contingent upon funding availability and may be suspended by the City at any time, with or without prior notice. Therefore, employees should not sign up for courses or certification programs unless they can cover the associated costs and expenses independently, as the program may not be available to provide reimbursement support. Additionally, because there is no pre-approval process and the program operates on a reimbursement model, employees are responsible for covering the costs and expenses for any courses or certification programs they elect to pursue.

C. PROGRAM EXCLUSIONS

- i. Certifications that are listed as “desired” or “desirable” in the job description for the employee’s current full-time City position, or for any full-time City position not currently held by the employee.
- ii. Certifications that are listed as “required” in the job description for the employee’s current full-time City position.
- iii. Courses that lead to an associate, bachelor’s, or master’s degree program that is listed as a minimum education “requirement” in the job description for the employee’s current full-time City position.
- iv. Courses that lead to an associate, bachelor’s, or master’s degree program that is listed as “desired” or “desirable” in the job description for the employee’s current full-time City position, or for any full-time City position not currently held by the employee.
- v. Professional development activities such as courses, workshops, seminars, webinars, conferences, or institutes, that earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) needed to maintain certifications listed as “required” in the job description for the employee’s current full-time City position, or for any full-time City position the employee does not hold.
- vi. Professional development activities, such as courses, workshops, seminars, webinars, conferences, or institutes that are deemed essential by management for the job performance of an employee.
- vii. Courses or programs, such as adult education, adult learning, continuing education, or professional certification programs offered by colleges or universities that do not lead to academic or college credit.
- viii. Costs for entrance, placement, preparatory or practice tests or examinations, study materials, books, computers, supplies or equipment, parking, mileage or travel, and other expenses for items associated with courses and certifications.
- ix. Costs associated with unsuccessful attempts by an employee to pass any required competency tests or examinations mandated by a certifying organization in pursuit of a “required” certification listed in the job description for a full-time City position.

- x. Professional licensure, journeyman certificates, and journeyman cards, such as Journeyman Electrician Certificates or Professional Engineering (PE) Licenses.
- xi. Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs), Commercial Learner Permits (CLPs), CDL Medical Examination Certificates (MECs), and CDL driving schools.
- xii. Juris doctorate degrees and academic college degrees above a master's level.

IV. REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA

Employees should consult their Tuition and Certification Department Approver to verify if a college course, degree program, or certification is eligible for reimbursement under this policy before enrolling or registering for courses or certification programs.

A. TUITION REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA

- i. Courses must be taken at an educational institution that is regionally or nationally accredited. To verify a school, click [here](#).
- ii. Courses must earn college credit and contribute towards an associate, bachelor's, or master's degree program that is listed as a minimum education "requirement" in a job description of a full-time City position that is the same or a higher level/grade than the employee's current role. Degrees listed as required for the employee's current City role or degrees listed as desired or desirable in the job description are not eligible for reimbursement.
- iii. Employees who intend to seek reimbursement for a course that contributes towards a "closely related degree or field of study" should contact HRtraining@cityofhenderson.com to determine reimbursement eligibility before enrolling in the course.
- iv. Employees must achieve a grade of "C" or higher in the course or receive a "Pass" credit if the institution does not provide an academic letter grade.
- v. Employees approved for tuition reimbursement can receive 100% of the actual per-credit tuition costs, up to \$200.00 per credit hour. Actual per-credit tuition costs include mandatory fees charged by the institution such as registration, technology, and lab fees, after deducting any discounts, incentives, grants, or scholarships that lower the actual costs paid by the employee.
- vi. The annual tuition reimbursement cap is \$2,500 per calendar year, based on the date the tuition reimbursement is paid to the employee within that calendar year.

B. CERTIFICATION REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA

- i. The certification must be listed as "required" in a job description for a full-time City position that is the same or a higher grade/level than the employee's current role. Certifications listed as required for the employee's current City

role or certifications listed as desired or desirable in the job description are not eligible for reimbursement.

- ii. The employee must meet all necessary criteria to obtain the certification mandated by the certifying organization or entity, which may include passing the required competency tests or examinations.
- iii. Employees approved for certification reimbursement can receive 100% of the initial costs of acquiring an eligible certification. Actual certification costs include fees for competency tests or examinations mandated by the certifying organization, but exclude expenses related to unsuccessful attempts by the employee to pass these tests/examinations.
- iv. The annual certification reimbursement cap is \$1,500 per calendar year, based on the date the certification reimbursement is paid to the employee within that calendar year.

C. MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS

- i. Employees can receive up to \$2,500 in tuition reimbursement and up to \$1,500 in certification reimbursement per calendar year, based on the dates when either reimbursement is paid to the employee within that calendar year.
- ii. Employees can receive a combined maximum reimbursement of \$4,000 for eligible tuition and certification expenses per calendar year, based on the dates when reimbursements are paid to the employee within that calendar year.
- iii. Employees are required to monitor their available reimbursement allocations under this policy. Employees are encouraged to email HRtraining@cityofhenderson.com to inquire about their available reimbursement allocations before enrolling in courses or certification programs.

V. PROCEDURE TO REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT

A. TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

- i. Employees who complete eligible courses independently of a college term must initiate the Request for Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Form (or "Request Form") and a Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Program Employee Repayment Agreement within ninety (90) days of course completion, as shown on the itemized receipt(s) from the institution.
- ii. Employees who complete eligible courses within a college term must initiate the Request Form and a Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Program Employee Repayment Agreement within ninety (90) days after the college term has ended, as shown on the itemized receipt(s) from the institution. *Requests for tuition reimbursement for courses completed while the college term is still in progress will be denied.*

- iii. Employees must attach the following documentation to their Request Form to qualify for reimbursement. Click [here](#) to view acceptable examples of these forms.
 - a. The Courses or Certificates for Reimbursement Sheet listing each course the employee is seeking reimbursement for.
 - b. The job description for the employee's current full-time City position.
 - c. A degree program checklist for an associate, bachelor's, or master's degree program from the educational institution that verifies each course the employee is seeking reimbursement for is mandatory to complete the degree program.
 - d. The job description for a full-time City position that is the same or a higher level/grade than the employee's current role that lists the degree program under (d) is a "minimum education requirement" for that role, or has been approved as a closely related degree by HR.
 - e. Itemized receipts from the institution for each course the employee is seeking reimbursement for. These receipts should include the college term dates (if applicable), the tuition and fees charged to the employee, any deductions such as discounts, grants, scholarships, and the actual costs paid by the employee.
 - f. A final grade report for each course, indicating a grade of "C" or higher, or a "Pass" if the institution does not assign an academic letter grade.
- iv. The Request Form and documentation will be reviewed to confirm eligibility according to this policy. The employee will be notified by email if their reimbursement request is approved.

B. CERTIFICATION REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

- i. Employees seeking reimbursement for an eligible certification must initiate the Request for Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Form (or "Request Form") and Tuition and Certification Employee Repayment Agreement via DocuSign within ninety (90) days of meeting all necessary criteria to obtain the certification mandated by the certifying organization, as shown on the itemized receipt(s) from the institution.
- ii. Employees must attach the following documentation to their Request Form to qualify for reimbursement. Click [here](#) to view acceptable examples of these forms.
 - a. The Courses or Certificates for Reimbursement Sheet listing each certification the employee is seeking reimbursement for.
 - b. The job description for the employee's current full-time City position.
 - c. The job description for a full-time City position that is the same or a higher grade/level than the employee's current role that identifies the certification the employee is seeking reimbursement for is "required" for that role.

- d. Itemized receipts from the certifying organization or entity, showing the fees charged to the employee, including expenses for unsuccessful attempts to pass mandated tests/examinations, any deductions such as discounts or scholarships, and the actual cost(s) paid by the employee, and,
 - e. The official certification from the certifying organization or entity.
- iii. The Request Form and documentation will be reviewed to confirm eligibility according to this policy. The employee will be notified by email if their reimbursement request is approved.

VI. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. CLASSES & COURSEWORK

Employees are required to schedule courses and complete classes and coursework outside of their regular work schedule and working hours. When an employee's class attendance unavoidably conflicts with their job duties, their job responsibilities take precedence. However, if operations permit, supervisors may make a reasonable effort to temporarily modify an employee's work schedule to support their class schedule, pending approval from the Department Director.

B. SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Employees who separate from the City within one (1) year after receiving tuition or certification reimbursement(s) must reimburse the City for any reimbursements received within 12 months immediately preceding their separation date, through a deduction in their wages under the terms of the Tuition and Certification Reimbursement Program Employee Repayment Agreement. Employees are required to sign a repayment agreement every time they request reimbursement for tuition or certification expenses.

C. FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS

Employees are required to retain copies of all approved tuition and certification reimbursement forms and documentation. If the City determines that an employee has falsified forms and/or documentation to receive reimbursement, the employee shall forfeit the privilege to further participate in the program and must reimburse the City for any tuition and/or certification reimbursements received, and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

D. TAXATION OF BENEFITS

Employees are responsible for understanding how tuition and certification reimbursements may affect their personal taxes. For more information on potential tax

implications, please consult [IRS Publication 970 \(2024\), which covers Tax Benefits for Education](#).

VII. APPROVAL

APPROVED BY:

Stephanie Garcia-Vause, ICMA-CM, FAICP, City Manager/CEO

REVIEWED BY:

Nicholas Vaskov, City Attorney

Javier Mendez, Director of Human Resources

Record of approved document can be obtained through the Human Resources Department.

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