

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

POLICY NO. 215

PURPOSE:

To provide information on the County and Department’s Registered Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Program.

POLICY:

Tuition reimbursement is provided to increase employees' knowledge and skills to meet present and future needs of the job. To prepare them for current positions which are in line with appropriate training objectives to the County's needs. This is to implement a County-wide program for career development which will attract and retain County service personnel and provide potential for advancement. **Tuition reimbursement is subject to administrative approval and funding availability.**

Permanent County employees encumbering a Registered Nurse classification item may be entitled to obtain reimbursement towards tuition, which they've paid after successfully completing approved courses leading towards a position in the Registered Nursing field. Approved courses include, but are not limited to, courses required to obtain the following:

- A Bachelor's Degree in Nursing.
- A Master's Degree in Nursing or other healthcare degrees related to nursing.
- A Doctoral Degree in Nursing Science or other doctoral program related to nursing.

To be eligible for reimbursement, the course must be taken at an accredited University or College and must meet the academic requirements of the Department's Training Plan, as well as the employee's training objectives. Accredited institutions are defined in the Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines Manual, Policy 123 titled "Accredited College Education". In addition, any courses taken to obtain an advanced degree in Nursing (BSN or MSN) must be through a nursing program approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

Reimbursement will not be made for books, supplies or other incidental costs. Reimbursement will not be made for student activity fees and other special student assessments except at State Schools where such charges are mandatory and no other tuition is charged.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1964
REVISED: 1966, 9/86, 10/92, 5/15, 11/17
REVIEWED: 9/89, 10/92, 2/96, 5/98, 1/05, 5/15, 11/17
REVIEWED COMMITTEE:

SUPERSEDES:

APPROVED BY:

Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ
Chief Executive Officer

Anish Mahajan, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Patricia Soltero Sanchez, RN, BSN, MAOM
Chief Nursing Officer

Signature(s) on File.

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A maximum of two (2) courses per employee which together total no more than eight (8) units of credit per semester/quarter will be considered for reimbursement. The facility Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), and the Department of Health Services' Office of Nursing Affairs (ONA) will have the discretion to set the amount at which courses are reimbursed (not to exceed \$1,000 per semester/quarter and \$3,000 annually per Fiscal Year) per employee based upon available funding. A semester/quarter, for schools with class schedules more frequent than a 10 week quarter, is defined as two (2) classes covering at least a ten (10) week period.

PROCEDURE:

The application for Registered Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Program Form (RNTRPF) is available via Nurse Recruitment and Retention Center (NRRC) and can be accessed through Office of Nursing Affairs (ONA) website at <http://dhs.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dhs> under nursing reimbursement opportunities. Employee must complete and submit the TRF to the NRRC.

The following criteria or requirements will be considered in evaluating requests for Tuition reimbursement:

1. The employee must hold a permanent Registered Nurse position within the Department of Health Services (DHS).
2. There is a required one (1) year DHS term of service commitment associated with the Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Program.
3. The employee must have received a competent or better rating in all areas of their Performance Evaluation in the immediate past year, and maintain the same or higher rating for the current year.
4. If an employee does not maintain a performance rating of competent in all areas while receiving tuition reimbursement, s/he risks being terminated from the program.
5. The employee must successfully have passed his/her initial six (6) month probation period before application for tuition reimbursement can be considered.
6. The employee must meet attendance requirements as specified by their facility.
7. The employee must meet competitive selection requirements, set by each facility, in instances where the reimbursement can be made available only to a limited number of employees.
8. The employee must receive a passing grade of "C" or better.
9. If the employee is a veteran, she is not eligible for tuition reimbursement from the County until eligibility for tuition reimbursement from the federal government and the State of California is exhausted.
10. The employee shall take course work outside assigned working hours and on the employee's own time.
11. If the employee is receiving other reimbursement, s/he may not be eligible for the Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Program.

In order to process the tuition reimbursement requests, the following must be followed and submitted to Nurse Recruitment and Retention Center:

1. The original application for RNTRPF Attachment "A", Tuition Reimbursement Checklist, previous course/class approval, and receipt must be completed and submitted by the employee ten (10) weeks prior to the commencement of the course. (See Attachment A & B).
2. Unit Supervisor/Manager must verify, review and sign the tuition reimbursement checklist then submit to the NRRC.

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3. NRRC will review and verify employee's applications and all pertinent required documents in meeting the needs of Department's RNTRP policy.
4. RNTRP form and tuition reimbursement checklist will be sent to the office of Harbor's Chief Nursing Office to obtain approval/signature.
5. Upon completion of the approved course(s), and once the employee has received their final grade report, a claim for RNTRPF should be submitted to the NRRC including proof of payment and course grade. Reimbursement claim forms will not be processed if they are submitted more than 30 calendar days from the course(s) completion date (See Attachment B).
6. Nurse Recruiters will update the tuition reimbursement log.
7. NRRC forwards the approved RNTRP for claims to the Office of Nursing Affairs for processing.
8. Employees who do not meet all of the above requirements will have their application/claim form denied and will be informed via RNTRP Notice of Denial form via mail and a telephone call courtesy.
9. If the employee terminates his/her employment with Los Angeles County within one year of the date of the completion of the last course for which s/he has been reimbursed, s/he shall return the amount of such reimbursement to Los Angeles County DHS (County Code Section 5.52.040).
10. Reimbursement check warrant will be sent to the employee by certified mail to their mailing address as indicated in the front page of the claim form.

Harbor-UCLA Nurse Recruitment and Retention Center is responsible for program administration, including appropriate determination of employee eligibility for reimbursement, financial management, and maintenance of all program related documents for a period of five (5) years.

NRRC shall track down employees Registered Nurse Tuition Reimbursement status using the Tuition Reimbursement Log. The Office of Nursing Affairs is responsible for processing the Request for Warrant (See Attachment A).

DHS Human Resources will monitor each facility's overall program administration on a quarterly basis. Available money shall be pooled centrally and divided in proportion to the number of Registered Nurses in each facility. At the end of the 2nd quarter of each fiscal year, DHS ONA will review tuition reimbursement funding usage and may reallocate funds based on higher volume of employee participation.

ATTACHMENT FORMS:

- Attachment A:** Registered Nursing Tuition Reimbursement Program Application
 Registered Nursing Tuition Reimbursement Program Claim Tuition Reimbursement (TR) – Request for Documentation
 Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Program - Notification of Denial
 Tuition Reimbursement Log
 Registered Nurse (RN) Tuition Reimbursement Program Request for Warrant

Attachment B: Registered Nurse Tuition Reimbursement Checklist

REFERENCE(S)/AUTHORITY:

Los Angeles County Code, Title 5, Section 5.52.