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| DEPARTMENT: HUMAN RESOURCES – EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT | POLICY DESCRIPTION: TUITION ASSISTANCE |
| APPROVED: | REVIEWED: |
| REPLACES: POLICY DATED 09/01/2004 | RETIRED: |
| ADOPTED: | REVISED:12/06/2016 |
| Page 1 of 7 | REFERENCE NUMBER: C-III-03 |

SCOPE: All full-time, regular employees are eligible for benefits under this policy after one (1) year of employment. Employees may pursue a degree or take individual courses at approved and accredited educational institutions under this program provided the course of study is related to the employee's current position or a probable future assignment, yields academic credit at the college-level, and ARH approves the course(s) **in advance**. Non-traditional and/or distance learning courses or programs may qualify for reimbursement.

PURPOSE: Pursuant to ARH's commitment to life-long learning, ARH has established a program to provide educational assistance via reimbursement of certain educational expenses to encourage employees to both enhance their current skills and improve their future potential.

POLICY: It is the policy of Appalachian Regional Healthcare, Inc., (ARH) to encourage and support continuous self-development and learning for all employees to enhance performance, individual contributions and professional growth.

PROCEDURE:

I. Criteria

Subject to prior approval and limited to a maximum of \$1,500.00 in an ARH fiscal year, reimbursement may be made for coursework applicable to an employee's current or potential future position. Employees pursuing a degree in nursing (ADN, BSN, MSN) may be eligible for a maximum of \$3,000.00 in an ARH fiscal year. Expenses eligible for reimbursement include tuition, registration and required fees such as building use and lab fees. Books required to satisfactorily complete a course are reimbursed at seventy-five percent (75%) of their cost. Other miscellaneous expenses are not covered. ARH reimbursement will be reduced by any other financial aid that does not have to be repaid and reimbursement will not exceed actual expense.

To be reimbursed under this policy, approval by the appropriate Vice-President or Community CEO must be received **prior to commencement of each course** or semester.

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Enrollment and participation in courses may not interfere with the employee's job performance or attendance. Employees are encouraged to be prudent in the selection of the number of courses attempted each semester. If the course requires times off from work, then the employee must make arrangements with his/her manager in advance and may request to utilize any accrued vacation, PTO or leave without pay.

A minimum letter grade of “B” or numerical equivalent (Pass for pass/fail courses) is required to qualify for reimbursement assistance.

Reimbursement will be provided at the public, state supported institution tuition rate up to a maximum of \$1,500.00 **per ARH fiscal year** for an employee. Employees pursuing a degree in nursing (ADN, BSN, MSN) may be eligible for a maximum of \$3,000.00 **per ARH fiscal year.**

Initial approval of a course of study does not obligate ARH to future/continued approval of courses in that course of study. ARH reserves the right to deny any request for tuition assistance to any employee without limitation.

II. Approval Process

An employee desiring tuition assistance must complete and submit an "Education Assistance Request" to his/her department manager. The request should include the estimated cost of and other information regarding the course for which the employee would like to receive reimbursement. The department manager **will forward the request, along with his/her recommendation,** to the facility Human Resources department for affirmation of employee eligibility.

Requests meeting qualifying criteria will be forwarded to the Community CEO or Vice-President, as applicable, for consideration and **may be approved subject to budgetary limitations.** Upon conditional approval by the Community CEO or Vice-President, the original request and supporting materials are to be forwarded to the

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System Director, Workforce Development and Employment for processing.

To be considered eligible, any such request must be received by December 15 for the winter/spring term and by July 15 for the summer/fall term. All such requests will be aggregated to assess the budgetary impact and facilitate allocation of resources. If the number of approved requests exceeds budgetary allocations then requests will be honored on a first come, first serve basis. When the approval and review process is completed, the original request will be returned to the employee with a copy to the employee's department manager and facility Human Resources.

III. Reimbursement Process

Upon completion of the course, the employee should resubmit the original Educational Assistance Request with the Reimbursement Request section completed, as well as receipts and evidence of a qualifying "B" grade. Once the request for reimbursement has been signed by the appropriate Community CEO or Vice-President, facility Human Resources will send the original request to Fiscal to the attention of the Corporate Controller or VP of Fiscal Services with a copy to the System Director, Workforce Development and Employment. Fiscal will determine whether the payment is taxable to the employee and will then forward the request to Payroll. Payroll will record repayment terms and forward to Accounts Payable for issuance of the check.

IV. Funding

Funding for tuition assistance shall be a line item on each unit's budget. When requests for funding educational assistance exceed the budgeted allocation, allocated resources will be made available on a first come, first serve basis.

V. Repayment by employee

An employee will be required to reimburse ARH for all payments made

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under this policy, **with interest at the prime rate**, if the employee leaves ARH employment within twelve (12) months after receipt of reimbursement.

VI. Coordination of Benefits

Reimbursement may not be requested more than once for the same course.

To apply for educational assistance:

- Complete the attached Educational Assistance Application and attach any additional information regarding the course(s) or degree program you wish to enter.
- Meet with your department manager to discuss your educational assistance request. If it is agreed that your request meets policy guidelines and budgetary restrictions, preliminary approval will be granted.
- Submit the original, signed form to Human Resources for final review.
- If funding is approved by the Vice-President or Community CEO, then reimbursement may be requested for satisfactory course completion.
- Upon completion of the course, submit a copy of your grade report to Human Resources along with this form.

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EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATION

Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

Department: _____ Manager: _____

Course Name(s): _____

Course Dates: _____

Degree Sought: _____
(if applicable)

If degree program, estimated time period for completion: _____

Name of Institution: _____

Address of Institution: _____

Course(s) Expenses: Tuition: _____
 Registration: _____
 Fees: _____
 Total: _____

What specific knowledge or skill will you learn?

How will the acquired knowledge or skill help improve your performance and/or prepare you for more advanced responsibilities?

Employee Signature: _____

I understand that I must pay the cost of tuition and fees in advance, and upon successful completion of the course(s), the company will reimburse me at the

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appropriate rate as outlined in the policy. I understand that I must furnish a grade report and receipts of expenses before reimbursement will be made. I also understand that if I leave the company within 12 months of reimbursement, I will be required to repay any and all amounts received.

Employee Signature: _____

Department Manager's recommendation: Approved Disapproved

Reason(s): _____

Does this application meet the established guidelines of the Educational Assistance Program? Yes No

Was this expense included in the Hospital budget? Yes No

Human Resources recommendation: Approved Disapproved

Date: _____

Vice-President/Community CEO recommendation: Approved Disapproved

Date: _____

Reason(s) (if disapproved): _____

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REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

If you are eligible for benefits from other sources, you are required to apply those benefits to your costs prior to being reimbursed by the Company.

Note: You are required to submit verification of successful course completion (minimum “B”) along with receipts for books, tuition and grades before payment will be made.

Reimbursement in the amount of \$ _____ is approved.

Expenses should be charged to: Unit _____ Account # _____

Vice President / Community CEO