

06.004 TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Full-time position control/budgeted employees of Allegany College of Maryland are eligible for tuition reimbursement for courses offered by an accredited or professionally recognized educational institution other than ACM according to established priorities and within available financial resources for any specific fiscal year. Employees are advised that Tuition Reimbursement is a fringe benefit and may be taxable income in accordance to **IRS Publication 15-B, Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits**.

ACM's recognized fiscal year is July 1st through June 30th. Tuition reimbursement is funded by the annual budget and is not guaranteed in any fiscal year due to available funding or guaranteed at any specific level of funding. An eligible employee, as outlined in Criteria and Eligibility 06.004.01, may receive **up to a maximum amount per fiscal year**. The amount of maximum reimbursement will be published at the beginning of each fiscal year by the Human Resource office (as outlined in Amount of Reimbursement, 06.004.03). The actual amount of reimbursement may be less (or nonexistent) depending on the amount budgeted and the number of qualified employees who apply. All other associated costs for coursework including books, supplies, materials, and required and non-required fees are the financial responsibility of the employee and are not applicable for reimbursement under this policy.

06.004.01 Criteria and Eligibility

Employee must be a full-time non-temporary administrator, faculty, professional or associate support staff member with a contract exceeding 6 months in duration for any given fiscal year. Employees must remain in the employment of the College through completion of the course. An employee who leaves the College prior to completion will not be eligible for Tuition Reimbursement.

Graduate or undergraduate coursework must relate to improving the employee's effectiveness on the job or, with President approval, assist in preparing the employee for a position of increased responsibility or advancement within the College. (The Tuition Reimbursement program does not cover job-related workshops, seminars, or special supervised training sessions, etc., but may be funded under Professional or Staff Development). Approval of coursework must be obtained from the Supervisor and departmental Vice-President for a course or program.

Graduate coursework must be successfully completed at an accredited or professionally recognized institution with a grade of "B" or above. **Undergraduate** coursework must be successfully completed at an accredited or professionally recognized institution with a grade of "C" or above.

Successful completion is required for reimbursement. Auditing a course is not considered successful completion unless the student has completed all course requirements as certified by a letter from the instructor.

06.004.02 Procedure to Apply for Tuition Reimbursement

The Tuition Reimbursement Application form can be obtained through the Human Resources Office or online. "Application" deadline dates are published on the Tuition Reimbursement Application. **Any applications received after the appropriate deadline date will not be considered.**

The application submitted **must** contain the required signatures of the employee's supervisor and departmental Vice-President indicating that the provisions established in the policy have been satisfied. Any application without the **required endorsement** will be rejected. **In addition**, the application must be supported by the following additional documents to be considered complete and valid:

- *A statement of how the course(s) will help the employee to perform at a higher level or improve effectiveness at ACM*
- *Complete course description*
- *Itemized Tuition Statement*

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

06.004.03 Amount of Tuition Reimbursement

The annual budget for Tuition Reimbursement will be subdivided into semesters/terms with definite amounts set for each term. All unused funds from one semester will be carried over to the next term until the change of the fiscal year.

The amount of credits to be reimbursed per fiscal year will be a maximum of 18 credits and the maximum amount of credits to be reimbursed per semester will be as follows:

- Summer 6 credits
- Fall 6 credits
- Spring 6 credits

For any exceptions to the maximum of 6 credits per semester or the maximum of 18 credits per fiscal year, a written request with rationale **must** be submitted to the President for approval **prior** to submitting the Tuition Reimbursement Application to HR.

The maximum amount of reimbursement will be 90% of the current In-State rate per credit hour (tuition only) for graduate and undergraduate coursework at the University of Maryland, College Park – i.e., 90% of the UM-CP rates will set the maximum limit of reimbursement. However, the employee will not be reimbursed more than 90% of their actual cost of tuition.

If all submissions for the entire fiscal year, after applying maximum amounts per employee, exceed the set budget amount, the amount per eligible employee may be reduced proportionately by Graduate and Undergraduate applicants. Human Resources will notify all applicants of the amount of reimbursement.

For all employees who receive Tuition Reimbursement, the Director of Human Resources shall prepare a ***promissory note*** for the employee's signature (see Section 06.004.005, Employee

Obligation). Failure to execute the required promissory note shall result in the disapproval of reimbursement.

06.004.04 Process For Payment of Tuition Reimbursement

After completion of the course approved through the application process, the following documents must be submitted to the Director of Human Resources by the *Grade Submission Deadline* dates set forth in the application:

- Final Grade(s)
- Signed Promissory Note

Employees will be reimbursed at the end of each semester according to the following schedule:

- Summer courses reimbursed in September
- Fall courses reimbursed in February
- Spring courses reimbursed in June

06.004.05 Employee Obligations

Employees receiving the benefit of Tuition Reimbursement are **required** to remain in the employment of Allegany College of Maryland for a period of twelve (12) months (or one academic year if employee is a Faculty member) after completion of the last semester reimbursed. *For example: If an employee receives Tuition Reimbursement for courses taken in the fall ending in December, the employee is obligated to remain in the employ of ACM until the following December.*

Terms of default shall be clearly stated in the *Promissory Note* executed for **each increment** of Tuition Reimbursement. Therefore, if the employee leaves employment before their 12 month fulfillment, the employee is responsible for the amount of the last tuition reimbursement, or a pro-rated portion (as stated herein). The note shall state the end date of the employee's obligation of continued employment.

If employment ceases prior to the obligation date, the amount owed to ACM will be pro-rated as outlined by the terms in the Promissory Note. In the event of involuntary separation or termination for cause, the remaining obligation will be determined by the President of the College.