

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Answers to the Most Common Questions

WHAT IS TUITION REIMBURSEMENT?

Tuition Reimbursement is a benefit for state employees at all levels. It is designed to "pay back" a portion of the money an employee has spent for tuition and fees in order to attend school.

WHAT COURSES QUALIFY FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT?

In order for a person to receive tuition reimbursement, the course or course of study must fall into one of three categories:

- Courses required for any specific degree (Associates, Bachelors, Masters, Doctoral) at the undergraduate and graduate levels or Certificate Program. (The course of study does not have to be directly related to the work performed at DMHAS.)
- Courses that are job related. (Examples include computer skills, typing, accounting, and writing skills.)
- Courses that provide, knowledge, skills, or abilities which would lend to an employee's upward mobility within the state system (not necessarily within a specific agency). Examples include computer programming, carpentry, machine repair, criminal justice.

WHERE CAN I TAKE CLASSES THAT QUALIFY FOR REIMBURSEMENT?

Classes can be taken at adult education facilities, community colleges, and state or private colleges and universities, as long as they meet the criteria described above.

DO NON-CREDIT COURSES ALSO QUALIFY?

YES! Non-credit courses are converted to a "credit equivalent" using the length of the non-credit course as a guide to calculate reimbursement.

CAN I TAKE CLASSES DURING THE DAY?

Courses funded through Tuition Reimbursement must be attended on the employee's own time with some exceptions. An example of an exception is those who are approved for Career Mobility Program as defined by the District 1199 Collective Bargaining Agreement. However, sometimes employees can adjust their work schedules to attend a class that meets during the day. Arrangements of this nature must be made with the employee's supervisors and adhere to the provisions outlined in the various collective bargaining agreements.

WHAT DETERMINES HOW MUCH MONEY I WILL RECEIVE?

Each collective bargaining unit (union) negotiates the actual pool of money available for its employees each fiscal year. These bargaining units also set guidelines as to how these funds will be administered. They establish the dollar amount an employee may receive for each college credit or for each fiscal year. Contact the current collective bargaining agreements or DMHAS Human Resource Agency Tuition Reimbursement Officer for current reimbursement rates..

HOW DO I APPLY?

The application process is quite simple. Each semester employees must submit an application (CO-101) to the DMHAS Agency Tuition Reimbursement Officer a minimum of two weeks prior to the date the course starts.

WHAT HAPPENS THEN?

Your name, along with job title, number of courses, and approximate reimbursement amount, is sent to the State's Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator at DAS. This information is put onto a priority list for all members (state-wide) of the particular bargaining unit as required. The list is created using the date your application is received by the DMHAS Human Resource Agency Tuition Reimbursement Office. Priority lists are created for each semester (summer, fall, spring).

WHEN AND HOW DO I GET PAID?

At the end of each semester employees are asked to submit to the Agency Tuition Reimbursement Office:

- Proof of Payment (i.e. receipt from the school, front and back of a canceled check, or a printout of the student's account from the school's website)
- Grade Report / Transcript or evidence of "successful completion" (a grade report, or letter from the school) for the course or courses that have been completed. "Successful completion" means: a passing grade. There is no minimum grade requirement for reimbursement.

Note: The state form Employee Voucher - Travel and Other Expenses (CO-17XP) is no longer used, due to the implementation of CORE-CT.

Paperwork is then processed by the DMHAS Human Resource Agency Tuition Reimbursement Office and submitted to the Comptroller's Office where the checks are written and sent to the employees if funds are available. Once the paperwork is submitted to the Comptroller's Office, it takes 6 to 8 weeks for the checks to be issued assuming that funds are available.

WHEN I PUT IN MY APPLICATION, IS MONEY RESERVED FOR ME?

Yes and No. Reimbursement payments are made each semester, with summer semester paid first, then fall semester, then spring. Payments are made until the money allotted to the bargaining unit for the fiscal year runs out. If this occurs, it is most inclined to happen during Spring Semester. If your name is high on the list (i.e. your application was submitted early), your chances of receiving reimbursement are better than if you waited until the last minute. **REIMBURSEMENT IS NOT GUARANTEED!**

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW THE COURSES I AM GOING TO BE TAKING?

It's better to submit an application with classes you might take listed on it, than to wait until you have your class schedule finalized. Additionally, you do not have to wait to register for classes before you submit your T/R application. Specific classes and dollar amounts will be reconciled at the end of the semester when the payment paperwork is processed.

WHAT IF MY COURSES DON'T FOLLOW A TRADITIONAL SEMESTER SCHEDULE?

Non-traditional school schedules are becoming more common, and this makes it difficult to determine the manner of submission. Tuition Reimbursement Officers should try to "fit" the classes into the standard school year. When at all possible, classes should be combined on the application to reflect the following chart: Note that the **end date** is the key factor in determining the appropriate semester. (Summer, Fall, Spring)

If the class ENDS in:	Submit the request as:
▪ September	Fall Semester

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ October▪ November▪ December	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ January▪ February▪ March▪ April▪ May	Spring Semester
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ June▪ July▪ August	Summer Semester