

Staff Professional Development and Training Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

The City of Mount Pearl is committed to supporting employees in the professional development and training of their skills, continuing with their personal career goals and opportunities that become available within the City. The City encourages employees to pursue formal education at recognized accredited educational institutions. The City of Mount Pearl may provide partial or full financial assistance to permanent employees for the successful completion of courses and/or attendance of conferences that are of benefit to both the employee and the City. Employees shall submit their professional development and training opportunities to their departments for approval by their Director and/or CAO.

2.0 Background

Although a primary responsibility for professional development rests with individual employees, the City plays a significant role in this process through its efforts to provide job growth and development opportunities that meet both business needs and employee goals. The City of Mount Pearl intends to assist individuals' development in accordance with their interests and capability, and to work with individuals to create the systems or processes within which they work to remove barriers to performance. These are joint responsibilities. This policy complies with the City's *Travel Expense Policy (HR-TE-02)* and with the *Employee Code of Conduct Policy (HR-ECC-01)*. For instances where provisions of this policy conflict with the *Collective Agreement* the later shall prevail.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to permanent employees who have successfully completed their probationary or trial period and have at least 1 year of accumulated service. Employees must be actively at work.

4.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the eligibility requirements and the process for educational assistance and tuition reimbursement as requested by the employee and as required by the City.

5.0 Definition

- **Course Fees**

The fees and/or tuitions paid by the employee and include: instruction and examination charges established by the institution, registration fees, laboratory fees, prescribed textbooks and other course related fees that are set out in the official course description.

6.0 Training Requirements

Courses, licenses and certifications must be offered through an accredited educational institution, which includes schools, colleges, universities, trade schools, associations, vocational schools, and professional associations.

Courses, licenses and certifications for which employees receive financial assistance from another source(s) do not qualify for tuition reimbursement. The employee must achieve a passing grade to receive reimbursement. Transferring to another position does not invalidate the employee's eligibility for course reimbursement.

7.0 Process and Procedure

The following guidelines apply in determining eligibility for reimbursement:

- Employees must make a submission to the Director the proposed training or professional development via email at least 1 month prior to the date of commencement.
- The submission must explain the nature of the course, license or certification sought and accreditation of the educational institution.
- Application approval will be based on the employee's current position and/or future positions in the City, and the extent to which the education or training relates to the current position or career path.
- Any potential or planned changes to the employee's current duties will also be eligible for approval.
- Applications will also be made based on frequency or recurrence of request and budget availability.

7.1 Reimbursement Criteria

7.1.1 Course, license or certifications related to Employee's Current Position or potential advancement (as requested by Employee)

Upon confirmation of successful completion of the approved course and submission of receipts, the City will reimburse 100% of the costs for course fees.

7.1.2 Payment for Time Spent in Training (for courses required by Employer)

An employee who participates in employer required training that is taken on employee's own time shall be compensated with equal time off for all time spent in training. Employees will be provided the use of a City vehicle to travel to such courses or will be paid the approved per kilometer rate for use of own vehicle provided such use has received prior approval in accordance with the *Mileage Policy* and the *Business Travel Expense Policy*.

7.1.3 Advanced Payment

In exceptional circumstances, based on need, the City may advance some or all of the course costs at the beginning of a course.

7.1.4 Education Leave

The City may grant education leave without pay to address professional development and/or educational programs. Each case is decided on an individual basis by the Director. For unionized employees the request for leave must be in accordance with Article 22.11 of the Collective Agreement. If employees require time off from work for study and/or exam writing, they can utilize the Vacation Leave and Special Leave policies.

7.1.7 Continued Service Requirement

An employee approved for reimbursement is agreeing to a service commitment where the City reserves the right to adjust the repayment of time to correspond to the cost and duration of the course, license or certification. Employees who do not comply with the length of service requirement must reimburse the City for the cost of the course reimbursement.

8.0 Responsibilities

Employee:

The employee is responsible for:

- Completing and submitting the required application form.
- To obtain approval in writing prior to registering/paying for the course.
- To dedicate the time and energy to ensure they receive a passing grade.
- Provide the City with academic confirmation they successfully passed the course.
- Submit all receipts for reimbursement.

Director

The Director of the employee is responsible:

- Provide written approval or provide a reason why the course is not approved.
- Sign off on all eligible receipts.

Finance:

- The Finance Division is responsible to ensure the fees are reimbursed in an expedient fashion.

CAO:


- The final authority for approving or rejecting the educational request.

9.0 Related Procedures

Please refer to the City's companion document:

- *Tuition Assistance Reimbursement Form*

10.0 Approvals



Steve Kent, Chief Administrative Officer
October 16, 2018

Date