

Chapter 9 Training and Development

Section 5 Education Expense Reimbursement Program

- A. Purpose: The purpose of the Education Expense Reimbursement Program is to provide financial assistance to employees who take college or technical college courses during their off time to complete an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or master's degree in public or business administration, accounting, or finance, or other degree related to a current management position. This program also provides financial assistance to employees who take courses to complete certificate programs related to County employment.
- B. Eligibility: Regular County employees who have completed their probationary period are eligible to participate. Employees receiving grants from other sources which cover the full cost of tuition and materials will not be eligible to participate. Reimbursement for educational expenses may be available for college or technical college or certificate courses which are part of the requirements:
1. Employee must be satisfactorily performing the duties and responsibilities of his/her current job.
 2. The educational degree or certificate, in the judgment of the Management Development Committee, must be directly related to the employee's current position or must directly enhance potential for advancement within Marathon County Government to a position which the individual has a reasonable expectation of achieving.

Only courses which lead to a certificate, or an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree in a field applicable to the employee's current job or that may lead to a management position within Marathon County Government, with the employee committing to the goal of completing the certificate or degree, will be funded.

Employees approved for a certificate or degree program shall execute an agreement with the County which will include a commitment to continued employment during and subsequent to the completion of the program. The Employee Resources Director shall negotiate the terms of the agreement with the employee, which shall be subject to review and ratification by the Employee Resources Committee.

C. Application/Approval Procedures:

1. Employees shall complete and submit an application to the Employee Resources Department requesting participation in the program prior to actually taking courses for which reimbursement is requested.
2. The Management Development Committee will review all applications meeting the minimum criteria. This Committee will approve or deny reimbursement requests based on the following criteria:
 - a. Whether certificate or degree program is directly related to the employee's current job and/or will improve management skills;
 - b. Employee's performance history including the length of time employed by the County, achievements and contribution during this period, and overall quality of the work performed;
 - c. Appropriateness of the educational goal (e.g. level of correlation between the education and a likely career path within Marathon County Government).
3. Employees are eligible for 75 percent reimbursement of the cost for tuition, books, and lab fees (if applicable) to a maximum of \$1,500 per calendar year for graduate degree and \$1,000 per calendar year for under-graduate degree and certificate programs.
4. Employees must successfully complete each course and receive a passing grade if the course is graded on a pass/fail basis or a grade of "C" or better if letter grades are issued. For graduate level courses, a grade of "B" or better is required for reimbursement.
5. Reimbursement will be made after satisfactory completion of each the course. A copy of the grade report, or confirmation from the school that the course has been completed, along with original receipts for tuition and books and lab fees paid shall be submitted to the Employee Resources Department for processing. This shall be done by the employee within 30 days of notification of satisfactory completion of the course.
6. Mileage and other travel expenses are not reimbursable. Time spent for classes shall not be paid.

D. Budget For Educational Expenses

1. Annually, the Employee Resources Department will budget for funds for the purpose of providing educational reimbursement. Based upon the predetermined criteria, reimbursement may be provided to qualified employees until the budget allocation has been expended.
2. Seminars, workshops, other training conducted during work time as a means of skill development and keeping current in the field remains the responsibility of the operating departments and is not covered by this policy. Funds for this type of training will be the departments' responsibility.