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<p>Continuing Education Policy</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>The library realizes that its future success and long term growth depend in part on the development of its employees. It is the policy of the library to encourage and support employee continuing education with the desired outcome of increasing the effectiveness of library services through staff development and also increasing employee retention. Such continuing education course work shall not be a prerequisite for retention of the employee's position.</p> <p>The funding for this program is subject to the annual budget process. The Library reserves the right to amend, modify or terminate this program at any time. In the event that the Library chooses to terminate this program, all commitments made up to that time will be honored by the Library pending receipt of satisfactory documentation from the employee and confirmation that the employee has met all the terms and conditions applied to educational assistance. In the event that there are more requests for assistance than can be accommodated by the funding available, the library reserves the right to limit and/or deny assistance. Educational assistance is not guaranteed to any employee. Receipt of educational assistance in no way guarantees promotion or continued employment with the library.</p> <p>Eligibility Criteria</p> <p>For the Employee</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Applicants must meet all eligibility criteria in order to apply for educational assistance.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Employees wishing to receive reimbursement for course work taken must apply and receive approval before the course begins, and before March 1 of the fiscal year before the course will be taken.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Grants shall be awarded pursuant to director and board approval, and successful completion of the course, defined as a grade of B or better, as demonstrated by an official transcript or grade report.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Coursework must not conflict with the employee's work schedule or productivity. Nothing related to continuing education shall be considered as overtime.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Employees applying for educational assistance must disclose any and all other sources of financial assistance for educational purposes. Only those tuition expenses not covered by other sources of financial assistance up to the defined limits will be considered by the Library.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Full-time and part-time salaried employees must have been employed by the Library for at least one year before they are eligible to apply for assistance.</p>		
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<p>Employees must remain in library employment for one year after the completion of the course for which they have received educational assistance. Any employee who receives financial reimbursement through this program and who fails to continue working for the library for at least twelve months following payment of tuition reimbursement will be required to reimburse the Library for any money received from this program during the previous twelve months. The required reimbursement may be withheld from payout of wages.</p> <p>Employees' most recent performance reviews must be satisfactory or better to participate in the program.</p> <p>Employees who are enrolled in a professional diploma or certificate program, and have the option of choosing a letter grade must choose that option. If there is no option, employees must complete the program satisfactorily. Employees who do not complete the course of study satisfactorily or with a grade of at least B will not receive educational assistance for that course of study. Employees who choose a pass/fail grade option will not receive educational assistance for that (those) course(s).</p> <p>Within budgetary constraints, applications which otherwise meet the criteria shall be approved on a “first come, first served” basis.</p> <p>For the Courses</p> <p>Tuition reimbursement is only available for studies at fully accredited educational institutions offering course work at a level higher than that of high school.</p> <p>Reimbursement is for tuition costs only. Educational assistance will not exceed 100% of tuition costs or \$1500.00 per applicant per fiscal year, whichever is less, with no carry forward to subsequent years if the amount is unexpended. Registration fees, late fees, application fees, books and other related expenses are not reimbursable under this program.</p> <p>Academic courses eligible for reimbursement must be broadly related to an employee’s preparation for career growth within the library field or provide knowledge which will enhance an employee’s performance in a position employed within the library as determined by the library director. Where an employee is enrolled in a degree program that requires courses that are job related and non job related, tuition reimbursement is not available for those courses that are non job related.</p> <p>Upon receipt of the employee’s application, the director and board shall approve or disapprove the employee’s application on a course by course basis. Approval of a planned course implies that the library will provide tuition reimbursement in the amount specified in this policy document after the employee successful completes the course with an A or B grade and continues to satisfy the other requirements of this policy.</p>		
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<p>Application Process</p> <p>Application for tuition reimbursement for the upcoming fiscal year must be received by March 1 of the prior fiscal year and before the start of the course. To apply for tuition reimbursement, the following must be submitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name of the college or educational institution. Dates for the start and finish of the course. The name of each course, the course description, the number of credits assigned to the course by the institution, the total cost of tuition, and the tuition reimbursement anticipated by the employee from sources other than the library. A written justification by the employee that the course or courses proposed for study should be considered as job related. The relation of the proposed course or courses to a more general study plan, (such as an associate or bachelors degree) if appropriate. Proof of course registration. Proof of payment of tuition and fees. <p>After completion of a course approved for tuition reimbursement, the employee shall submit the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transcripts or grade reports within 90 days of completion of the courses. Transcripts or grade reports received after 90 days will not be considered. A copy of a detailed statement by the educational institution's registrar of the tuition costs for the course including grants, scholarships, and other reimbursements not originating with the library. <p>Upon receipt of the required documentation and verification of eligibility, the library will reimburse that portion of the employee's tuition that conforms with the provisions of this policy.</p>		
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