

CITY OF PLANO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

208.000

Department Name: Human Resources

Procedure: Tuition Assistance

Effective Date: 11/01/96

Revision Date(s): 03/01/01, 01/01/03, 10/01/03, 04/01/06, 07/01/06, 07/01/07,
04/01/08, 07/01/09 Policy Suspended, 01/01/12 Policy Reinstated

I. Purpose

To establish a policy for assistance of tuition only.

II. Policies and Procedures

City of Plano regular full-time employees are eligible to apply for tuition only assistance for eligible courses. Tuition Assistance is applicable for Associate, Bachelor, or Master level degrees from accredited colleges or universities.

A. Eligibility

In order for employees to be eligible for assistance under this policy, they must complete their initial probationary period prior to enrolling in the course(s). Civil Service employees must have completed at least six (6) months of employment with the City prior to enrolling in the course(s). Coursework must be from a nationally or regionally accredited school, college or university, and class attendance must be during the employee's off-duty time.

Job-related seminars, workshops, certifications, or other courses, which are short term, are *ineligible* for tuition assistance. Instead, these short-term courses should be funded through a department's training fund and applied for through the respective departments.

B. Grades Required

Classes may be taken for a grade, credit or pass/fail. The employee must make a passing grade as outlined in Section II – D. If no grade is given, documentation that the course has been successfully completed is required.

C. Course Eligibility

The City of Plano may provide tuition assistance when the individual course or the degree plan meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Career development related to City functions
- Courses in preparation for a promotion within the City
- Relates to current job duties
- Provides new knowledge and skill to enhance job performance.
- Supports the documented "Performance Objectives" section of the employee's Performance Evaluation

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- Enhances the City's ability to respond to current and/or future needs

Individual courses outside of the degree plan, but which are directly, related to the employee's present or potential position with the City, may be considered for tuition assistance under this policy on a case-by-case basis, with the final determination on written approval made by the Human Resources Director.

Course eligibility will be approved or denied by the Training Administrator within 30 days after the deadline for receipt of the request. This decision may only be appealed to the Human Resources Director. The Human Resources Director's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

D. Assistance Cost

Any course beginning on or after January 1, 2012, shall be reimbursed up to \$500 (cannot exceed actual course cost) per successfully completed course (cannot exceed \$1,000 per semester) with a maximum of \$2,000 in Tuition Assistance per year, as follows :

Grade Required	Course Level
A, B, or C Credit or Pass	Undergraduate level courses
A or B Credit or Pass	Graduate level courses

Under no circumstances shall assistance exceed the amount of \$2,000 per year. Only those courses identified on the employee's "Annual Request for Tuition Assistance Funds" form will be considered for assistance.

E. Assistance Procedures

Requests for tuition assistance must be made on an annual basis. Requests indicating the course(s) to be taken must be submitted by March 31st prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in which the course(s) will be completed. The "Annual Request for Tuition Assistance Funds" form (Appendix A) must be submitted electronically (for date and time submitted verification) to the Training Administrator in the Human Resources Department. Requests submitted after the stated deadline will be ineligible for consideration. Failure

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to submit a completed application will result in the application being ineligible for tuition assistance.

The “Annual Request for Tuition Assistance Funds” form is available in the MS Word Templates section under File...New. Tuition Assistance will be given until the budgeted funds are exhausted.

Upon completion of the course(s), the employee will electronically (for date and time verification) submit the “End of Semester Request for Tuition Assistance” form (Appendix B), a “Tuition Assistance Check Request” form (Appendix C), registration receipts, and a copy of the official grade(s) or proof of completion to the Human Resources Department. Credit card receipts and cancelled checks are not sufficient documentation of payments for tuition.

The “End of Semester Request for Tuition Assistance” form, a “Tuition Assistance Check Request” form, and all other required documentation must be submitted **within 45 calendar days** of the last session date. Tuition Assistance will be made only after proper documentation is submitted to the Training Administrator. Requests submitted more than 45 calendar days after the last session date will not be eligible to receive Tuition Assistance and will be returned to the employee. Only those courses listed on the “Annual Request for Tuition Assistance Funds” form will be eligible for Tuition Assistance.

Employees who are participating in other educational support programs (i.e., scholarships, grants, etc.) shall be eligible only for assistance of costs not paid by the other programs

Any employee who receives tuition Assistance and leaves city employment (due to voluntary or involuntary termination) shall repay the City all Tuition Assistance paid to them in the twelve (12) months prior to the last Tuition Assistance payment received. Repayment shall be according to the following schedule:

Termination within 0-12 months of Tuition Assistance received	Repay 100%
Termination after 12 months, prior to 24 months of Tuition Assistance received	Repay 50%

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As a recipient of Tuition Assistance, the employee authorizes the City to deduct the balance owed for Tuition Assistance from his/her paycheck or any other final payments due to the employee. The employee understands that, if sufficient funds are not available to satisfy the Tuition Assistance owed to the City, the employee is legally obligated to pay the balance owed to the City by certified check, cash, or money order.

F. Tuition Assistance Review

Should a question arise about whether a request meets the requirements of this policy, (e.g., whether the school is properly accredited) or administration of this policy, the employee should contact the Training Administrator. The Human Resources Director or his/her designee shall determine whether the class and/or school's accreditation satisfies the City of Plano's requirement for assistance. The Human Resources Department's decision cannot be appealed.

III. Appendices

- A. [Annual Request for Tuition Assistance Funds](#)
- B. [End of Semester Request for Tuition Assistance](#)
- C. [Tuition Assistance Check Request](#)