



VICTORIA COUNTY TUITION REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE: To encourage and support employees' professional growth and development, provide for optimal potential for advancement within the County, and to attract and retain top talent.

I. ELIGIBILITY

The Victoria County Tuition Reimbursement benefit will be available to all Regular, Full-Time County employees in good standing, who have been employed for at least one year consecutively with the County by the time of reimbursement.

This policy is written pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code (127) and the Internal Revenue Service Regulations.

Victoria County Tuition Reimbursement does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, pregnancy, veteran status, disability, or any other condition between employee classifications, favor higher compensated employees over other employees, or favor one type of qualified educational pursuit over another.

II. FUNDING

If funds are available, under this policy, an employee can apply for tuition reimbursement for up to a maximum of \$5,250 per calendar year and a lifetime maximum of \$12,500. **The tuition reimbursement will be used for tuition only and no other educational expenses.**

Victoria County reserves the right to increase or decrease the maximum allotted funding at any time.

Funding is allocated for the tuition reimbursement on a first come/first serve basis.

III. REQUIREMENTS

Employees who utilize this program must be enrolled in a nationally accredited college, university, business institute, vocational school, or trade school for degrees or certifications applicable to county services. Victoria County will only reimburse costs for education plans leading to a degree or license/certification.

Employees must have approval from their department head (elected or appointed official) and the County Judge's signature on the Reimbursement Request Form before each semester. All forms are required to be completed before the application is accepted.

All employees requesting tuition reimbursement should request reimbursement as far in advance as possible. For each semester, the employee must submit a new reimbursement request form.

All reimbursements are contingent on the student/employee's completion, good standing in the classes taken, and good standing within their department. Each student must have a passing grade according to the degree program and institution's grading rubric. The County will not provide reimbursement for courses dropped, failed, or incomplete. If a course is graded on a "Pass/Fail" basis, a "Pass" is required for reimbursement. A withdrawal/drop from any course prior to completion will result in the denial of reimbursement.

The student/employee *must* submit their official transcript and itemized receipt no later than 30 days after the end of the semester to the County Judge's office. Failure to submit official information within 30 days of the end of the semester could result in a loss of reimbursement.

Employees who are on a leave of absence due to military leave, worker's compensation, FMLA, or any other protected leave may submit for reimbursement upon return from such leave within 45 days of the employee returning to work from authorized protected leave.

Employee tuition reimbursement will only apply to the employee and does not apply as a benefit for family members or non-county employees. Legal names listed on the employee's enrollment proof must match the employee's legal name as listed on the reimbursement form.

IV. EXCLUSIONS

Education involving sports, games, and hobbies are excluded from the tuition reimbursement program per IRC Section 127(c)(1).

Employees who have a separation of employment (dismissal, resignation, or retirement) at any time during the semester, or any time before the reimbursement is issued, will forfeit all rights to tuition reimbursement.

The reimbursement will only cover tuition and exclude all other costs, including but not limited to; Fees, Books, E-Books, Educational Materials, Meals, Lodging, Transportation, Seminars, Conferences, Uniforms, etc.

Seminars, Conferences, and Workshops normally funded by departments for employee educational purposes will not be reimbursed under this policy.

V. **PROCEDURE**

Employees who wish to utilize the Tuition Reimbursement benefit must complete the following:

1. **Submit Reimbursement Request Form** – Form must be turned in to the County Judges office *no earlier* than 45 days before the start of the semester and *no later* than 7 days before the beginning of the semester.
2. **Submit Proof of Enrollment** – Enrollment proof from an accredited institution must be turned in to the County Judges office *no earlier* than 45 days before the start of the semester and *no later* than 7 days before the beginning of the semester.
3. **Submit Itemized Receipt** - After the semester ends, the employee must submit copies of all **detailed receipts** associated with the degree/certification. If itemized receipts are NOT presented, reimbursement may not be covered.
4. **Submit Official Transcript** – An official transcript that includes the current semester's grades must be submitted to be applicable to receive reimbursement. This transcript must have posted grades for the County Judge's office to approve. Non-passing grades and class withdrawals will not be covered for reimbursement.
5. **Reimbursement** – After the County Judge's office receives and verifies all receipts and transcripts, the total reimbursement amount will be calculated and submitted to the Treasurer's office to issue the reimbursement payment.