



THE MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Tuition Assistance

#2243

Purpose: MSB recognizes the value of continuing education for our employees. MSB provides partial financial support through tuition reimbursement to employees who pursue work-related professional development.

Scope: This policy applies to all eligible full time employees.

To be eligible an employee must be a full time MSB employee on active pay status and have completed six months of employment when applying for tuition assistance. Part-time benefits eligible (.60-.99 FTE) employees who have completed one year of employment and are in active pay status are also eligible for tuition assistance on a pro-rated basis based on their FTE. Part-time employees, employees who are less than .60 FTE or employees in the disciplinary process are not eligible to receive tuition assistance.

Policy: It is the policy of MSB to provide reimbursement to eligible employees at 75% of the cost per credit. Employees may obtain reimbursement for up to 12 credits per calendar year or a maximum of \$2,500.00 per year. Eligible employees enrolled in an accredited Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI), Certified Orientation & Mobility (O&M), Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT), or Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT) undergraduate or graduate degree program may obtain reimbursement for up to 12 credits per calendar year or a maximum of \$5,250.00 per year. All employees are subject to the following eligibility guidelines:

1. The course work is directly related to the employee's current position or related to a position within the school that the employee may hold in the future.
2. The course work must be at an undergraduate or graduate level from an accredited higher education institution.
3. Course work supporting the attainment or renewal of a professional certification or license qualifies.
4. The Department Director and supervisor must verify that the course is work-related and that the employee is in good standing.
5. The employee receives a grade of B or better or "pass" for courses taken on a pass/fail basis.
6. The employee submits a receipt from the higher education institution that identifies the actual out-of-pocket employee tuition cost per credit. Tuition assistance applies only to tuition costs incurred by the employee.
7. The employee agrees to fulfill their job responsibilities for a period of not less than twelve calendar months following the course completion date. If the employee is enrolled in a Vision related (TVI, O&M, CLVT, CRVT) program, the employee agrees to fulfill their job responsibilities for a period of not less than twenty four months following the course completion date. If the employee elects to terminate the employment relationship with the school before completing the service obligation, the employee shall repay MSB.
8. If the school terminates the employment relationship for cause within the twelve (or twenty four) calendar months following the course completion date, the employee shall repay MSB based on the Tuition Agreement form.

Procedures:

1. The employee must complete a Tuition Assistance Application for each course and submit it to HR **prior** to the start of the course.
2. HR will notify the employee and the supervisor regarding the status of the application.

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3. Upon completion of a course, the employee must submit the grade and a receipt to HR within 4 weeks.
4. The employee must sign the Tuition Reimbursement Agreement and witnessed by HR before receiving the reimbursement. Reimbursement will occur through payroll when administratively possible. (Contact Human Resources for a copy of the Tuition Reimbursement Agreement)

The employee assumes all tax liabilities for tuition reimbursement.

Notification, Training, and Posting:

To ensure compliance with this policy and consistent application of procedures, MSB shall provide initial and thereafter at least annual notice of this Tuition Assistance Policy.

The Human Resources Office shall maintain an "Annual Comprehensive Staff Notice and Acknowledgement System" indicating each staff's receipt and understanding of the policy and procedure requirements and their expectations.

The HR Department shall post this Tuition Assistance Policy # 2243 on the MSB Intranet.