

169.29 FEE AND TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANY EMPLOYMENT RELATED ~~COURSES PROGRAM.~~ **UNDERGRADUATE**

(a) Full-time employees, as defined in Section 169.05(1), in Active Pay Status in the departments under the authority of the ~~County Executive, County Council, Fiscal Officer, Clerk of Courts, County Engineer, Prosecutor Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Department of Internal Auditing, Office of Consumer Affairs, Department of Information Technology, and Human Resource Commission and County Law Library~~ are eligible for reimbursement of fees and tuition expenses for associate, undergraduate, graduate or doctoral level degree courses that are employment-related or aid in career growth with the County. Employees shall attend a college, university or joint vocational school accredited through either the "U.S. Department of Education" (www.ed.gov), "The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools" (www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org) or the "North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement" (www.ncacasi.org) to the extent and in the manner provided in this Section. Any reimbursement under this Section shall be made at the discretion of the appointing authority and is subject to the availability of funds.

(b) Tuition and fees are reimbursable subject to the following:

(1) An employee **shall have completed the probationary period defined in Section 169.16** ~~be employed by the County of Summit for at least one (1) year of continuous service~~ prior to submitting a request for Tuition Reimbursement.

(2) Employees shall obtain the prior written approval of their appointing authority.

(3) The degree shall relate to an employee's position, offer growth in an area related to his or her current position, and to benefit the County.

(4) Employee shall have degree program and coursework approved by their appointing authority as a prerequisite for reimbursement eligibility.

(5) Employee shall immediately update the appointing authority on any and all degree program or coursework changes. The appointing authority shall approve the changes before the employee is eligible for reimbursement.

(6) Any courses taken shall not conflict with an employee's working hours.

(7) Employees shall be reimbursed up to **five thousand, two hundred and fifty dollars (\$5,250)** ~~two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500)~~ per calendar year, together with associated fees, for any classes or courses for which the employee received a final grade of "B" or above or received a pass in a pass/fail course. Reimbursement shall be paid upon the verification and completion of the course.

(8) On-line educational course work taken through an approved school as stated above is reimbursable.

(9) Applicants for tuition reimbursement should be aware that any reimbursement above the limit prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service will be processed as taxable income to the employee.

(c) Exclusions and Limitations.

(1) Credit courses taken on an audit basis are not reimbursable.

(2) Except as noted below, employees enrolled in a college or university as a candidate for degree are eligible for reimbursement for all subject area requirements of the degree program, regardless of whether a specific course is career-related.

(3) In no event shall credit or non-credit recreation, physical education, hobby or personal interest courses of study, whether required for a degree program or not, be eligible for reimbursement under this program.

(d) Repayment. Employees who receive tuition reimbursement from the County shall work a minimum of one year with the County following the date of reimbursement. If an employee leaves County employment or is discharged for cause, excluding layoff, before said service requirement is completed, the employee shall repay to the County all of the tuition that was paid to the employee. The requirement to work a minimum of one year with the County after receiving reimbursement is not an assurance of continued employment by the County. If an employee leaves County employment or is discharged for cause, excluding layoff, and a repayment amount is owed by the employee, and the employee does not otherwise repay the amount, the employee agrees to have the repayment amount deducted from the employee's paychecks that are issued after the termination decision occurs. Each employee, upon receiving a reimbursement, will be required to sign an agreement for repayment as outlined in Section 169.29(d.)

(e) Reimbursement of Student Loans for Medical School. An Employee who has been employed as forensic pathologist in the Medical Examiner's Office for one year, is eligible to receive reimbursement of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) per year for up to ten years for outstanding student loans, incurred in obtaining a medical degree. Reimbursement will immediately cease upon termination of full-time employment with the County.

(Ord. 2011-380. Adopted 11-7-11; Ord. 2015-269. Adopted 8-31-15; Ord. 2022-105. Adopted 4-25-22.)