

**CITY OF NEWTON
TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

I. Policy

- a. The City of Newton provides opportunities for employees to improve skills and job performance or to prepare for promotion opportunities within the City through a tuition assistance program.

II. Definitions

- a. Eligibility: All full time employees who have completed one year of service and who are not receiving educational financial assistance from another source will be eligible to apply for financial assistance under this program. If an employee is receiving funds from another source, which does not cover all allowable expenses, the City's Tuition Assistance Program may be used to defray costs in excess of funds received from other sources.
- b. Approved Course: An approved course is one which will either improve the employee's ability to perform his/her current job or will prepare him/her for a job with the City that may demand a higher level of responsibility and/or skill.
- c. Approved Institution: Any regionally accredited college, university, technical institute or correspondence school, or any other school approved by the City. Regionally accredited schools are predominantly academically oriented, non-profit institutions. For profit institutions (e.g. University of Phoenix), regardless of regional accreditation, will be considered for approval only if all other avenues of obtaining the degree sought, have been exhausted. Approval of tuition assistance to attend for-profit institutions will be made by the City Manager on a case-by-case basis.
- d. Eligible Expenses: Tuition, registration fees, laboratory fees, required textbook(s) and student fees are eligible reimbursement expenses. Special equipment, supplemental reading books, tools, and miscellaneous supplies such as pencils and paper are not reimbursable expenditures. At private or out-of-state colleges, tuition reimbursement will be based on current in-state, state-supported schools. All reimbursement is subject to availability of funds and approval by the City Manager. The maximum reimbursement per employee per fiscal year shall not exceed \$1000.00 per semester.
- e. Successful Course Completion: Successful course completion will be construed to be a grade of "C" or better when grade letters are given. In cases of Pass/Fail courses, or in courses in which no grade is given, a written statement of successful completion from the instructor will be acceptable to demonstrate successful course completion.

III. Procedure

- a. In order to apply for the Tuition Assistance Program, employees shall complete the following steps:
 - I. The employee completes a Tuition Assistance Program Application.
 - II. The completed application will be submitted to his/her Department Head for approval.
 - III. If approved by the Department Head, the approved application will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for City Manager approval.
 - IV. If the Human Resources Director and the City Manager approve the application, the employee will be notified by the Human Resources Director and given a copy of the approved Tuition Assistance Application and a Refund Request Form in order to keep a formal record of expenditures.
 - V. If the Tuition Assistance Application is not approved, the Human Resources Director will discuss with the employee the reasons for application denial. Denial of an application does not disqualify the employee from resubmitting additional Tuition Assistance Applications.
- b. After successful completion of the course(s), the employee shall complete the following steps in order to apply for reimbursement of eligible expenses:
 - I. Complete a Tuition Assistance Program Refund Request, listing all eligible expenditures. Sign the Tuition Reimbursement Agreement in the presence of a Notary Public. Attach all receipts and verification of successful completion of course(s) and submit to the Department Head.
 - II. After review and approval by the Department Head, the employee must submit the Tuition Assistance Program Refund Request with attachments to the Human Resources Department within 30 calendar days after completing the course or five days prior to the end of the fiscal year, whichever comes first.
 - III. After verification of reported expenses, and if approved, the Human Resources Director will submit the Tuition Assistance Program Refund Request to the Finance Department for reimbursement of expenses for which the employee is eligible.
 - IV. After reimbursement is received by the employee, the employee is expected to maintain employment with the City of Newton for no less than 24 months. If the

employee leaves prior to the 24 months of employment, or is discharged of his/her duties, the employee agrees to fully reimburse the City of Newton for the cost of the original reimbursement or any amount owed back to the City of Newton under the Tuition Assistance Program.

- V. The employee further agrees that in the event his/her 24 month employment requirement is not met, the City may attach all vacation pay, and any other employment benefits or pay which may have accrued during the employee's employment with the City to the amount owed for breach of this Agreement.

- VI. In the event that the employee is required to report for active military service, or is granted a leave of absence during the period covered by this Agreement, the period of the Agreement shall be extended accordingly.

Approved:  6/12/2018
E. Todd Clark, City Manager Date