

HONORHEALTH™

Subject: Tuition Assistance Program	
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Section: General	Page: 1 of 4
Distribution: All HonorHealth Facilities	Approved by Executive Committee
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PURPOSE:

This policy defines the support, staff eligibility, criteria and payment process of HonorHealth tuition benefits for college degree program credits.

POLICY:

HonorHealth supports a continuing education program by offering reimbursement for tuition expense for all eligible employees who successfully complete college credit courses from a college accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), or its regional affiliates. Nursing degree programs are required to have Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) or Commission for Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accreditation, in addition to regional accreditation.

PARAMETERS:

1. DEFINITION

A credit course is a course or lab where an individual earns "hours of credit" that may be applied towards obtaining a degree from a school accredited by NCA, or its regional affiliates.

2. ELIGIBILITY

At class start and through class end, including the reimbursement process, the employee must be actively employed in a full- or part-time position working a regular schedule of thirty-two (32) hours or more per pay period at HonorHealth, exclusive of on-call or temporary status, and,

- A. The employee must be in good performance standing with no current or pending corrective action in violation of HonorHealth policies and procedures.
- B. Employees on leave covered by Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) are required to submit an activity level clearance from their physician to Workforce Development permitting the employee to attend classes on-site.

C. *Successful* completion of six (6) months after hire in a regular full- or part-time position prior to start of class. Eligibility begins on the 180th calendar day of employment.

3. CONDITIONS

- A. No hourly compensation is to be paid for the hours of course work, except use of paid time off (PTO). The total paid hours in any pay period should not exceed the employee's regularly scheduled number of hours.
- B. Employees receiving tuition assistance benefit funding must continue their employment with HonorHealth in a regular position working a minimum of 32 hours per pay period for a period of twenty-four (24) months after receipt of funds.

Any HonorHealth employee who receives tuition assistance funding and terminates their employment (or does not fulfill the worked hours requirement) prior to the completion of twenty-four (24) months of continued employment after receipt of such funds will be obligated to repay HonorHealth according to the repayment schedule described below.

- If an employee terminates their employment or reduces their hours below thirty-two (32) per pay period for any reason (except position elimination) within 12 months of a tuition assistance payment, the employee will be required to repay 100% of the tuition payment.
- If an employee terminates their employment or reduces their hours below thirty-two (32) per pay period for any reason (except position elimination) within 12-24 months of a tuition payment, the employee will be required to repay 50% of the tuition payment.

Employees will be required to sign a payback agreement and must comply with the terms of the agreement.

- C. Tuition assistance funds will not be paid for repeated classes that were previously paid by HonorHealth.
- D. Non-credit classes, special executive development programs, workshops, seminars, and similar programs are not eligible for reimbursement through the Tuition Assistance Program.
- E. Reimbursement is only for tuition for credits, and clinical program lab fees. It does not cover textbooks, e-books, course packets, course materials, equipment, site fees, distance learning fees, non-clinical course lab fees, personal expenses, and additional surcharges.
- F. A Tuition Assistance Program Application form is submitted upon enrollment with reimbursement processed after the grade is received for successful completion of course. Requests for reimbursement and grade reports must be submitted within forty-five (45) days of course completion.

- G. Reimbursement is paid for the calendar year, provided the course is successfully completed with a "C" or better grade, or "pass". The tuition rate is paid at current in-state resident rate. Reimbursement is limited to a maximum reimbursement schedule for qualified employees as maintained by the Workforce Development Department.
- H. Audited courses are not reimbursed.
- I. Other reimbursement sources (i.e., scholarships and grants) must be utilized first. The amount not reimbursed by other sources is eligible for reimbursement, provided all other criteria have been met.
- J. It is the responsibility of the employee to file tax forms accordingly for a reimbursement.
- K. All courses that are part of an outlined/planned curriculum of a degree program that the employee has been accepted into, and all credit courses, are reimbursed. All courses and degree programs must be related to a career at HonorHealth.
- L. The administrator responsible for the department is authorized to approve reimbursement for credit courses that are related to current and future business operations of HonorHealth.
- M. Distance learning degree programs that are accredited by the NCA or its regional affiliates may be considered for reimbursement of college credit tuition, excluding added distance learning/provider fees. Internet courses that are a part of an education plan from a college may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- N. Performance equivalency exams are reimbursed provided all other criteria have been met.
- O. Non-clinical research or surveys, which are part of any course requirement, must be approved by the Senior Vice President of HR and Chief Talent Officer, and subsequently by the Vice President responsible for the data, prior to initiation of the research or survey. The Research Committee (IRB) must approve clinical research projects.

4. PREPAYMENT FOR CLINICAL PROGRAMS

- A. HonorHealth offers up-front tuition payment for those enrolled in college credit courses leading to professional certification, licensure or ability to practice in clinical areas for a position we utilize within our facilities. Applies to eligible employees enrolled in a qualified nursing track or healthcare career track program.
- B. Applicants are required to meet eligibility requirements and to submit a copy of their clinical program upon enrollment. Participants are obligated to submit a grade of "C" or better in all classes within forty-five (45) days of completion to continue in the program.

5. PROCEDURE

- A. The employee must discuss education plans with his/her management staff. Upon entry into a degree program, the program description and outline of courses is submitted to HonorHealth Tuition Assistance Program. The employee's management staff should keep a copy of the program plan and check courses taken against this plan at the time the request for tuition assistance is submitted. Management staff signs the form to verify status and eligibility.
- B. Within forty-five (45) days after course completion, the employee must submit tuition assistance request per instructions outlined on the tuition website at their site of employment.
- C. Policy compliance is monitored by the Workforce Development Department.
- D. The employee is notified via e-mail if course is denied or compliance is not met.
- E. The employee is responsible for monitoring application status with their tuition account representative, and billing and payment activity on their college or university student account site.
- F. The employee is responsible for submitting required documents within the specified time line of this policy and the announced, end-of-the-year cut-off date.
- G. The Workforce Development Department assures that the maximum reimbursement per calendar year is not exceeded.

DOCUMENTATION:

- Application for Tuition Assistance Program (On-line application process via the Hospital Intranet)
- Reimbursement Receipt(s)
- Grade report

CONTRIBUTORS/AUTHORS:

Human Resources – Workforce Development