

# Tuition Assistance Application

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## Section I: Employee Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Bargaining Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

SOV Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Hire: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain why you believe this course(s) is job/career related. (attach another sheet if necessary):

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## Section II: Academic Information

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Address of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name/number: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Field of Study/Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Related: \_\_\_\_\_ ( Y / N ) Indicate YES if this course is related to your current job function OR other possible future career-related positions in Vermont state government.

Educational Goal:    Associates    Bachelors    Masters    Doctorate    Additional Training

Course #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Start/End dates: \_\_\_\_\_ # of credits: \_\_\_\_\_

Course #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Start/End dates: \_\_\_\_\_ # of credits: \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition Cost Per Credit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include charges for Books or Fees, this is TUITION ONLY)

How do you want your assistance paid?: \_\_\_\_\_ Direct to School,   or \_\_\_\_\_ Assistance to You

Will you receive any Grants, Scholarships or VA Benefits to assist you with tuition? \_\_\_\_\_ ( Y / N )

If yes, please provide the TOTAL amount and supporting documentation indicating the source of the assistance.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include loans)

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## Section III: Applicant's Department

**(Questions must be answered by the Appointed Authority for your Department.**

**Form must also be signed and dated by that person before you submit the Application.)**

1. Amount employee's Department is reimbursing, if any: (if -0-, enter -0-): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ %
2. Has employee completed original probation? \_\_\_\_\_ ( Y / N ) If no, the employee is not eligible to apply.
3. Is the course above required for employment? \_\_\_\_\_ ( Y / N ) To elaborate on the question, will this person's employment be terminated if the course is not taken? Note, if the answer is Yes, the employee's Department is responsible for payment.
4. Is this course related to the employee's current job function OR other possible future career-related positions in Vermont state government? \_\_\_\_\_ ( Y / N ) Provide additional comments regarding this question if you feel necessary.

Signature of Appointing Authority Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name of Appointing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

# Tuition Assistance Program

## Purpose:

To provide financial assistance for post-secondary and/or graduate level courses, which are related to the employee's current job or other possible future career-related positions in State government. Applications must be submitted before the appropriate Spring/Fall Cycle of the Tuition Assistance Program. (See details below.)

Courses must be post-secondary or graduate level to be taken at a properly accredited educational institution. Non-credited courses, classes or seminars which are job-related may be approved by the Commissioner of Human Resources, whether they are provided at a properly accredited educational institution, or not. Courses or degree programs must be related to the employee's current position or another position within Vermont State government. Mandatory courses that are required by an employee's Agency/Department are not eligible for assistance under this program.

## Eligibility:

Only classified employees in the non-management bargaining unit, supervisory bargaining unit as well as managerial, confidential and exempt positions, who have completed original probation by the application deadline, are eligible to apply to this program. Tuition assistance is also available for Managerial, Confidential, and Exempt employees of the Executive Branch.

Note: Members of the Corrections and State Police bargaining units and non-management employees in the Defender General's Office are covered under separate programs and should contact their Department HR Administrator for more information.

## Expenses Covered by Tuition Assistance:

Tuition assistance covers tuition only. Books and fees are not covered. Depending upon available funds, up to two (2) courses, and a maximum of eight (8) credits may be reimbursed per Cycle (Spring Cycle of Program: January – June, Fall Cycle of Program: July – December). The maximum for the Fiscal Year (July – June) is four (4) courses, twelve (12) credits. Tuition assistance will not exceed 80% of the actual tuition cost, up to a maximum assistance of \$350, per credit. When combined with other sources of tuition assistance (federal grants or department contribution, for example) the maximum amount of total assistance cannot exceed 90% of the cost for tuition.

## Application Timeframe:

The Tuition Assistance Program operates on two Cycles per year. **Spring Cycle** (for courses with a START DATE between January 1 – June 30) and the **Fall Cycle** (for courses with a START DATE between July 1 – December 31). To determine which of the Tuition Assistance Program Cycles applies to a course, the employee should focus on the "START DATE" of the course, determine which Cycle that date falls within, and apply accordingly. Examples as follows:

Spring 2018 Cycle: If a course START DATE is February 1, 2018, that would fall within the Spring 2018 Cycle dates and the Application must be submitted between the dates of November 7, 2017 – November 21, 2017.

Fall 2018 Cycle: If a course START DATE is September 10, 2018, that would fall within the Fall 2018 Cycle dates and the Application must be submitted between the dates of May 25, 2018 and June 7, 2018.

As shown, Applications must be submitted well before the "Spring Cycle" or "Fall Cycle" of the Tuition Assistance Program. However, if they are mail date stamped Before or After the dates indicated above, they will not be accepted.

Occasionally, schools have not posted specific information for upcoming courses and employees are not certain how to complete the Application. In this instance, employees should provide information based on what they expect the facts

will be regarding the courses, tuition fees and financial assistance they will be provided from other sources. If facts change, employees must notify the Tuition Assistance Coordinator at the Department of Human Resources.

The Tuition Assistance Application form and detailed instructions are in the Forms and Documents section of the State of Vermont website. Employees must complete the first two sections and their Department Approving Authority must complete the third section.

- Section I: Employee Information – Please provide complete home address in addition to other information.
- Section II: Academic Information - Contains information regarding the school and courses for which assistance is being requested. Courses #1 and #2 should be completed in the order of employee's priority in the event that a Lottery is necessary and only Course #1 can be funded.
- Section III: Applicant's Department - Must be completed, signed and dated by employee's Department Approving Authority. Note, mandatory courses that are required by an employee's Agency/Department are not eligible for assistance under this program.

**Mailing Deadline for Application:**

**The Application must be MAILED to the Department of Human Resources BEFORE the Spring or Fall Cycle of the Tuition Assistance Program. The dated postmark from the US Postal Service determines whether or not the submission deadline has been met.**

**START DATE of the Course**

**January 1 - June 30  
July 1 - December 31**

**Postal Mail Date Stamp**

**November 7 - November 21  
May 25 - June 7**

**Mailing Address, via the US Mail:**

**Tuition Coordinator  
Department of Human Resources  
120 State Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2505**

**Note: Applications sent through pink mail, faxed or hand-delivered CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Please keep track of your application to ensure that it is postmarked during the specified dates.

**Payment Method:**

There are two methods for payment of the Tuition Assistance granted to employees:

1. Prepay Direct to Educational Institution: The State will prepay its share of tuition directly to the educational institution. Assistance is contingent upon employee's successful completion of the course(s). The employee must provide documentation of successful completion of the approved course(s), as well as a financial recap showing charges/payments for the course(s), to the Tuition Coordinator at the Department of Human Resources. If the course is not successfully completed, the employee must repay the State for all funds paid on their behalf within three months of the course ending. If the employee fails to register for the course, they must notify the Tuition Coordinator in writing and contact the educational institution to arrange for the funds to be returned to the state.

If an employee terminates employment prior to course completion, they must repay the State for all funds paid on their behalf within three months of termination.

2. Assistance Directly to Employee: The state will reimburse the employee directly upon successful completion of the course(s). Employee must provide documentation of successful completion of the approved course(s), and financial recap showing charges/payments for the course(s), to the Tuition Coordinator at the Department of Human Resources.

### **Lottery Drawing:**

A Lottery drawing is required when there are not enough funds to cover Tuition Assistance for all courses requested by all applicants. The Lottery is performed in a two-part process. First, it is determined if there are enough funds to cover all Course #1 requests. If there are not enough funds, everyone's name will be put in a "hat" and drawn out, one at a time. Funds are allocated in the order that names are drawn. (Historically, there has been enough money to cover everyone for Course #1.) If there are funds remaining after all of Course #1 is covered, then the names of everyone that applied for Course #2 will be put into a "hat" and drawn out, one at a time. Funds are allocated in the order that names are drawn, until funds are depleted.

### **Documentation of Successful Completion:**

All tuition assistance payments made by the State of Vermont are contingent upon the employee's successful completion of the course(s).

Upon completion of the course(s), employees must provide a financial recap showing charges/payments from the school as well as proof of their passing grade to the Tuition Coordinator at the Department of Human Resources. This documentation can usually be found on the School's Website and can be sent to the Tuition Coordinator via email attachment. If for some reason an employee does not enroll, or fails to pass the course, the funds must be repaid to the State within three months of course ending date. If the employee terminates employment before the course is completed, the funds must be repaid within three months of termination. Failure to return funds or submit required documentation showing successful completion by the due date will result in the debt being sent to the Tax Department for collection.

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### **Q: How do I know my Bargaining Unit?**

A: Union Codes can be found in VTHR. Go to “Job Data”, then “Job Labor”, on the “Job Labor” screen the Union Code is shown.

Non-Management – 01, Supervisory- 02, Manager/Confidential- 00

### **Q: Are there other tuition programs for me if I am not in one of the three groups listed?**

A: Yes, each bargaining unit has a tuition program. Contact your Department’s HR Administrator for more information.

### **Q: Why are you asking for a cost per credit?**

A: Awarded amounts are determined on a per credit basis. Up to a maximum of eight (8) credits per cycle, and twelve (12) credits per fiscal year are eligible. (Fiscal year runs 7/1 to 6/30)

### **Q: How is my awarded amount determined?**

A: Awards are based on 80% of the tuition cost (books or fees are not eligible), per credit, up to a maximum assistance of \$350 per credit. In addition, any Grants or Scholarships received could reduce the amount available from this Tuition Assistance Program.

### **Q: What is the “Lottery” and how does it work?**

A: The Lottery drawing is required when there are not enough funds to cover Tuition Assistance for all courses requested by all employees. The Lottery is performed in a two-part process. First, it is determined if there are enough funds to cover all of the Course #1 requests. If there is not enough, everyone’s name is put in the “hat” and draw out in the order that funds will be allocated. (Historically, there has always been enough to cover everyone for Course #1.) If there are funds remaining after all of Course #1 is covered, then the names of everyone that applied for Course #2 will be put into a “hat”. Names are drawn in the order that funds will be allocated until they have been exhausted.

### **Q: When will I know the amount of assistance I will be awarded?**

A: The amount of Tuition Assistance awarded should be known by the end of December (for upcoming Spring cycle) or end of July (for upcoming Fall cycle). Employees will be notified directly by the Tuition Coordinator in Human Resources.

### **Q: When will payments be made directly to the Schools?**

A: Payments will be made to Schools by mid-January (for upcoming Spring cycle) or mid-August (for upcoming Fall cycle). Accounts must be in good standing before any additional payments will be sent. If the course(s) begins before the checks have been mailed, often Colleges will accept the letter of award as proof that the money is coming from the State of Vermont.

### **Q: When will assistance payments be made directly to Employees?**

A: Payments will be made to employees after the course(s) is successfully completed and documentation has been provided to the Tuition Coordinator in Human Resources. Accounts must be in good standing before any additional payments will be sent. Assistance payments are processed through Payroll and will be included with employee’s regular paycheck.

For more information contact our Tuition Helpline at (802) 828-2984 or email [dhr.tuition@vermont.gov](mailto:dhr.tuition@vermont.gov)