

Human Resources Policy/HRP-T562

# Tuition Reimbursement

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## Policy:

The objective of this program is to allow/encourage full time and regular part time (at least 24 hours per week) employees the opportunity to improve their job-related skills to enhance their ability in their current position or to prepare for advancement to a higher-level position at Northwest Kidney Centers. These funds are available for degrees up to a Master's Degree.

NKC will provide funds of up to \$1,000 for each employee who is pre-approved to participate in this program. This is up to \$4,000.00 (for each employee participating in the program) per rolling 12 months. These funds can be used for tuition, books, and lab fees. Up to one-half of the funds may be requested prior to completing course work.

## Procedure:

1. Funds will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis for those employees who meet the criteria. Once the funds are depleted, no further employees will be eligible for reimbursement unless funds become available in the next fiscal year. Employees must request funds prior to the start of the term in which they are seeking tuition reimbursement but not more than 30 days in advance of the term if they will be finishing the classes / program for which they are requesting funds. This allows more employees to participate and does not tie up funds for employees who may later drop courses.
2. An interested employee obtains a Tuition Reimbursement Application Form via the Knet/Policy Manager. The employee completes the indicated portion of the form for courses for which reimbursement is requested and then forwards this to his/her Supervisor / Manager for initial review and approval, then to the Clinical Director / Vice President of Clinical Services, and then to Human Resources. Human Resources will approve these each term on a first come, first served basis.

By signing the form, the employee understands that he/she is employed full time or regular part time (at least 24 hours per week) now and through the course and is committed to remain employed with NKC for 12 months following reimbursement. If the employee fails to meet this commitment, the employee shall reimburse NKC for covered costs paid to him/her. By signing the

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*Application Form*, the employee acknowledges that if he/she does not complete 12 months of employment or changes status to less than regular part time (24 hours per week) he/she will have the reimbursement amount deducted from his/her final paycheck. If the final paycheck does not cover the amount, the individual must repay NKC with personal funds.

Should an employee not successfully complete the course work then, at the end of the term, the advance for the reimbursement will be repaid to NKC via payroll deduction over not more than two pay periods.

3. The Supervisor / Manager approves the application to indicate items "a" through "d" and forwards it to the Clinical Director / Vice President who, if approved, forwards it to Human Resources.
  - a. Attending an education course will not interfere with the individual's job performance.
  - b. Any schedule changes will not affect the efficient operation of the unit or department.
  - c. The employee consistently meets job requirements and is rated "successful" in his/her current position.
  - d. The employee is not in a disciplinary action cycle.
4. The Vice President of Human Resources will verify the following:
  - a. The employee has a minimum of one full year of service (12 months and more than 500 hours of service).
  - b. The employee is working full time or regular part time of at least 24 hours per week.
  - c. The employee has enrolled in an eligible course. This includes:
    - (1) A single job-related course, or course which enables the employee to advance within NKC. These courses must be taken through an accredited college or university, or teaching institution which provides CEUs.
    - (2) Job-related courses, or courses which enable the employee to advance within NKC, which will allow the employee to achieve an Associate's or Bachelor's or Master's degree.
    - (3) This does not include: (a) courses which instruct in any sport, game, or hobby (unless such education is required as part of a degree program).

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Note: This policy will be reviewed in each subsequent fiscal year. Continuation of this program depends upon NKC's financial performance. The program may be terminated at any time for business reasons.

5. Once the employee has completed the course with a grade of "B" (2.5 on a 4.0 scale) or better, he/she submits original documentation with a check request to the Vice President of Human Resources for approval. The reimbursement will then be made within one week if all documentation is complete when the check request was submitted. If requesting one-half of funds prior to completion of course work, copies of the tuition bill, books receipt, and lab charges must be attached to the reimbursement request.
6. It is the intention of NKC that benefits under this Educational Assistance Plan be eligible for exclusion from the employee's income under either Section 162 or Section 127(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, if applicable law permits. If applicable law does not permit benefits to be excluded from participant's income, those benefits will be reported by NKC to the IRS as income to the participant on the participant's W-2 Form for the tax year in which benefits are paid.