



GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



EFFECTIVE DATE: February 28, 2005	REVISED DATE: March 23, 2012	NO. PAGES: 1 of 4	NUMBER: 1.3.21
SUBJECT: <p style="text-align: center;">TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM</p>			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL:		RELATED ORDERS:	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Michael McGrath, Chief</i></p>			

Substantive changes are in italic

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the Tuition Reimbursement Program and to promote advanced *and ongoing* education for sworn members of the Cleveland Division of Police.

POLICY: All sworn members, with the exception of members on extended illness status or any leave of absence or disciplinary suspension, are eligible. Tuition reimbursement shall be administered through the *Bureau of Support Services*.

Reimbursement of expenses is permitted only for those law enforcement classes directly applicable to the performance of an officer's current official duties. These classes are not required by the Division and are taken by the officer as wholly voluntarily.

Tuition reimbursement for classes not directly related to an officer's official law enforcement duties, including non-law enforcement related courses needed to fulfill the requirements of a law enforcement related degree is not permitted (e.g. an art appreciation course needed to meet the Fine Arts component of a Baccalaureate degree in Criminal Justice).

PROCEDURES:

I. Eligibility for Reimbursement

A. Career-Related Criteria

1. *Any course related to an officer's current official duties as an Ohio peace officer is eligible for reimbursement. For example, an accounting course for an officer assigned to Financial Crimes or a forensics course for a member assigned to the Crime Scene and Records Unit is allowable.*

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2. The *Commander of the Bureau of Support Services* shall make the final determination as to whether a course is career-related. *There is no right of appeal as the U.S. Department of Justice oversees the strict use of these funds, ensuring that all courses are directly related to law enforcement.*
3. Questions regarding a course's eligibility for reimbursement shall be forwarded on a Form-1 with any supporting documentation through the chain of command to the *Commander of the Bureau of Support Services*. Officers who fail to ascertain course eligibility for reimbursement *prior to taking the course* risk denial of reimbursement.

B. Allowable Costs

1. Only tuition and course/lab fees are reimbursable. Costs associated with transportation, parking, books, room and board, proficiency exams, or penalty fees of any kind are NOT reimbursable.
2. Reimbursement shall be reduced by any and all aid received in the form of grants, gifts, scholarships, benefits or other financial assistance that the student has no liability to repay.
3. Financial assistance received in the form of loans, such as Stafford Loans, are eligible for reimbursement in the year the funds are used for tuition.

II. Eligibility for Reimbursement

- A. Reimbursement shall be made on a sliding scale based on the letter grade attained as follows:
 1. An "A" is eligible for 100% reimbursement.
 2. A "B" is eligible for 75% reimbursement.
 3. A "C" is eligible for 50% reimbursement.
 4. A passing grade in a pass/fail course is eligible for 50% reimbursement.
- B. The maximum reimbursement is a cumulative \$4,000 per calendar year. For

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the purposes of reimbursement, the start date of the course determines the reimbursable calendar year.

III. Application

- A. To apply, officers shall complete the attached pre-structured Form-1 (Attachment A). Each course requires a separate Form-1.
- B. *The Form-1 must include details to support that the class is directly related to the officer's current duties. It is advisable that an official course description be attached to the Form-1.*
- C. The form shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the *Commander of the Bureau of Support Services* for further processing.
- D. Application and documentation of grades and proof of payment/loan must be received in *the Bureau of Support Services* no later than 45 days after the completion of a course.
 1. Documentation shall consist of the grade report, proof of costs (e.g. canceled check, credit card statement or receipt or letter from the educational institution). Documentation may take the form of copies. Proof of payment documentation must clearly correspond to the cost of classes for which reimbursement is requested *and include any reductions in tuition due to scholarships, grants, or loans.*
 2. The member may be required to provide additional documentation and original documents as needed.
 3. *The Commander of the Bureau of Support Services* shall determine whether or not the documentation satisfies the level of proof required for reimbursement.

IV. Fund Accounting and Disbursement Procedures

- A. Fund accounting and disbursements are a function of the Budget Unit.
- B. Funds for reimbursement are established by current collective bargaining agreements and paid for out of law enforcement trust funds.
- C. Funding is variable and disbursements may be limited to available funding.

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- D. If funds are insufficient to provide maximum allowable reimbursement then disbursement will made on a prorated basis as based on the available funds.

- V. *Members who complete coursework for which they were reimbursed shall forward either a copy of a grade report or diploma to the Personnel Unit and the Training Section for inclusion in the member's personnel and training files.*