
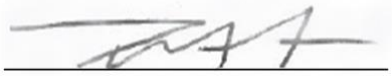


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CHAPTER 4: TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT		
	STATE of MAINE DEPARTMENT of CORRECTIONS Approved by Commissioner: 	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: See Section VIII
	EFFECTIVE DATE: August 19, 2003	LATEST REVISION: September 15, 2023

I. AUTHORITY

The Commissioner of Corrections adopts this policy pursuant to the authority contained in 34-A M.R.S.A. Section 1403.

II. APPLICABILITY

Entire Maine Department of Corrections

III. POLICY

It is the purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for Department employees to participate in staff development that is in addition to any required training. The Department supports employee staff development that contributes to the Department's mission and employee learning opportunities.

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Full-time employee – an employee normally expected to work at least the standard work week (40 hours) for the class and agency.
2. Part-time employee – an employee working less than the standard work week for the class and agency, on regularly scheduled hours per week for the position.
3. Post-secondary education – education that comes after secondary, or high school, education and includes university, college, community or junior college, or a vocational school. It also includes graduate school programs, such as master’s programs, research doctorates, and professional schools.
4. Tuition reimbursement – the reimbursement of some of the tuition and related costs after the employee has paid for the course(s) if the expenses fall within the requirements of this policy.

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- Procedure A: Staff Development, General
- Procedure B: Professional Development Request Review and Approval Process
- Procedure C: Staff Development Activity Reimbursement and/or Advance
- Procedure D: Documentation
- Procedure E: Tuition Reimbursement for Post-Secondary Education

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Professional Development Request form ([online](#))
- Attachment B: [Travel and Expense Account Voucher Form](#)
- Attachment C: Request for Tuition Reimbursement Invoice form (online)

VII. PROCEDURES

Procedure A: Staff Development, General

5-ACI-1D-22, 4-ACRS-7B-19 & 4-JCF-6E-14

1. For the purposes of this policy, staff development is considered an organized and evaluated activity designed to achieve specific learning objectives and enhance the job performance of employees. The activity must include a formal agenda and instruction or presentation.
2. A staff development activity may include, but is not limited to, conferences, workshops, seminars, professional meetings, and programs offered by professional organizations related to an employee’s current position or future career opportunities in the Department.
3. Staff development may also include an educational program offered by a university or college related to an employee’s current position or future career opportunities in the Department.
4. No advance funding is available for post-secondary education. However, an employee may submit a Request for Tuition Reimbursement upon completion of an eligible course as set out below in Procedure E.
5. Staff development does not include required training (orientation, entry level, specialized, or annual training).
6. Approval of staff development requests shall be based on Department needs, availability of other staff to fulfill the employee’s responsibilities, and availability of funds.
7. A request to attend a professional association meeting from an employee holding office in a professional association or who has delegate voting rights shall normally be approved, staff and financial resources permitting.
8. Administrative leave may be granted to enable an employee to participate in a staff development activity as described in Department Policy 3.16, Administrative Leave.

Procedure B: Professional Development Request Review and Approval Process

1. For other than post-secondary education, the employee shall complete the online Professional Development Request form (Attachment A) and submit the form and any required supporting documentation (e.g., announcement, agenda, or other description of the activity) and any other applicable forms (e.g., Request for Out-of-State Travel and/or Travel Advance Form, Air Travel Quotation Form - linked to Attachment A) to the Department’s Staff Development and Training Office. If the forms are not properly completed or do not have sufficient supporting documentation, the employee shall be notified. Incomplete submissions shall not be forwarded on to approvers for review.

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2. Unless there are exigent circumstances, the employee shall submit the form and supporting documentation at least thirty (30) days prior to the staff development activity.
3. Upon receipt of the Request for Professional Development form, the Department's Staff Development and Training Office staff shall review the form to ensure that it is properly completed and has the necessary supporting documentation.
4. If the request is complete, the form and supporting documentation shall be forwarded for review and approval, as applicable, to the following staff:
 - a. For community corrections staff:
 - 1) Step 1: Regional Correctional Administrator, or designee;
 - 2) Step 2: Department's Training Director, or designee; and for out-of-state travel to the;
 - 3) Step 3: Deputy Commissioner, or designee.
 - b. For facility staff:
 - 1) Step 1: Facility Staff Development Coordinator;
 - 2) Step 2: Facility Chief Administrative Officer, or designee;
 - 3) Step 3: Department's Training Director, or designee; and for out-of-state travel to the;
 - 4) Step 4: Deputy Commissioner, or designee.
 - c. For Central Office staff:
 - 1) Step 1: Direct supervisor;
 - 2) Step 2: Department Training Director, or designee; and for out-of-state travel to the;
 - 3) Step 3: Deputy Commissioner, or designee.
5. If the request is approved, the facility Chief Administrative Officer, or designee, the Regional Correctional Administrator, or designee, or the Central Office supervisor, as applicable, shall determine whether to allow an advance or reimbursement for all or some of the expenses related to the activity, in consultation with the applicable business office, based upon funding availability and, if so, identify the funding source.
6. If the request is not approved, the facility Staff Development Coordinator or Department's Training Director, or designee, as applicable, shall inform the employee of the reason.
7. If an employee is denied approval for the requested activity, the employee may appeal the denial to the next higher level in the approval process, if any, but no higher than to the Deputy Commissioner.

Procedure C: Staff Development Activity Reimbursement and/or Advance

1. All requests involving reimbursement for travel and other expenses related to a staff development activity shall be in accordance with state policies established by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

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2. Additional approval for a staff development activity requiring out-of-state travel shall be obtained from the Deputy Commissioner, or designee, using a Request for Out-of-State Travel and/or Travel Advance form and, if applicable, an Air Travel Quotation Form, which are linked in Attachment A.
3. If approved for an advance or reimbursement, the employee shall submit the Travel and Expense Voucher form (Attachment B).

Procedure D: Documentation

1. Proof of satisfactory completion of the activity (e.g., certificate of completion, proof of registration, along with a copy of the agenda, etc.) shall be submitted by the employee to the appropriate Staff Development Coordinator or the Department’s Training Director, or designee, as applicable, for placement in the employee’s training file.
2. Upon completion of a staff development activity not sponsored by the Department, the employee shall complete a Training Record and Course Evaluation form as set forth in Department Policy 4.4, Training Documentation and Records, and submit the form to the appropriate Staff Development Coordinator or the Training Director, or designee, as applicable.
3. An employee who does not satisfactorily complete the activity may be required to refund to the Department any advance or reimbursement received for the expenses of the activity.

Procedure E: Tuition Reimbursement for Post-Secondary Education
5-ACI-1D-22, 4-ACRS-7B-19 & 4-JCF-6E-14

1. Tuition reimbursement may be available for part-time or full-time Department employees who are pursuing post-secondary education through an accredited educational institution and have completed one year of employment with the Department at the time of the course work.
2. Tuition reimbursement funding is contingent upon the availability of funds continuing to be appropriated or allocated for tuition reimbursement. If funds are not allocated and available, the Commissioner may terminate tuition reimbursement until such time that those funds become available.
3. In addition, the Commissioner retains the right to reallocate the Department’s tuition reimbursement funds at any time to meet newly identified or changing priorities within the Department.
4. No liability shall accrue to the Department, nor the State, and neither the Department, nor the State, shall be obligated or liable for any future payments or for any damages as a result of termination of tuition reimbursement or reallocation of tuition reimbursement funds.
5. A first come, first served basis is used in the tuition reimbursement process.
6. Coursework related to a current Department employee’s employment, or as part of a degree program which will support their continued professional growth/advancement within the Department, may be prioritized for funding.

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7. An employee must pay upfront for the post-secondary education coursework and successfully complete the course with a letter grade of “C” or better (or a “Pass” grade in the case of a pass/fail graded course) to be eligible for tuition reimbursement.
8. The following expenses are eligible for tuition reimbursement:
 - a. tuition costs paid by the employee; and
 - b. fees related to the coursework, e.g., textbook(s), equipment, lab fees, etc.;
9. Tuition reimbursement shall not be paid for:
 - a. any associated mileage, meals or other expenses incurred;
 - b. any items or fees already paid through financial assistance, scholarship or other financial benefit derived from public or private programs;
 - c. fees for transcripts, lost library books, parking violations, etc.; or
 - d. taxes or shipping fees.
10. Depending upon available funds, employees may apply for:
 - a. up to \$1000.00 per fiscal year (July 1- June 30) for a full-time employee; or
 - b. up to \$500.00 per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) for a part-time employee.
11. Tuition reimbursement occurs on a fiscal year basis (July 1 - June 30) and is administered by the Staff Development and Training Office.
12. Upon satisfactory completion of a course, an employee seeking reimbursement shall complete and submit the online Request for Tuition Reimbursement Invoice form (Attachment C) to the Department’s Staff Development and Training Office by May 30th, and include the following:
 - a. a receipt of payment from the school;
 - b. proof of passing grade(s) from the school; and
 - c. a completed State of Maine, [Department of Corrections, Agency Purchase Order/Requisition](#).
13. The Department’s Director of Training, or designee, shall coordinate the reimbursement with the applicable business office, which shall include the following steps:

Step 1: A review by relevant training staff to determine if the employee is eligible as set out above for tuition reimbursement. If approved, the process shall progress to Step 2;

Step 2: A fiscal review by the Resource Administrator to ensure fiscal requirements are met and, if so, the Resource Administrator shall sign the Purchase Order and submit the packet to the Corrections Service Center for payment.
14. If the tuition reimbursement request is denied, the Department’s Director of Training, or designee, shall inform the employee.
15. The Department’s Director of Training, or designee, shall be responsible for tracking tuition reimbursements paid out to staff on an annual basis.

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VIII. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

ACA

- 5-ACI-1D-22** Written policy, procedure, and practice encourage employees to continue their education and, as authorized, provides administrative leave and/or reimbursement for employees attending approved professional meetings, seminars, and similar work-related activities.
- 4-ACRS-7B-19** Employees are encouraged to continue their education and training. Continuing staff development is encouraged by providing administrative leave and/or reimbursement for attending approved educational programs, professional meetings, seminars, or similar work-related activities.
- 4-JCF-6E-14** Employees are encouraged to continue their education and training. Providing administrative leave and/or reimbursement for attending approved educational programs, professional meetings, seminars, or similar work-related activities encourages continuing staff development.

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