

Chapter 7: Employee Training and Development

Section 7-1: Employee Training and Development

The County encourages the development of, and attendance at, training and education programs that enhance employees' ability to perform their work more effectively and/or to qualify for promotion within the employees' career field. Such programs shall be planned, coordinated, and conducted so as to maximize the effectiveness of training and education funds available within departments. Where subject matter or available resources do not permit the use of in-service training, specialized training or education courses by outside resources may be approved. Whenever possible, in-service training shall be provided when the same or similar training is required of groups of employees. Department Heads are encouraged to pool their training resources to facilitate lower cost training in mutual areas of interest.

Section 7-2: Rules for County Funding

The following policies determine when requests for training or education will be approved (assuming available funds) for County funding:

- a. Job Required Training. The County may reimburse classified employees for approved training or education expenses when the subject matter is essential to proper performance of the employee's assigned position and the employee was not expected to have completed the training or education prior to employment. Attendance may be authorized during working hours. Undergraduate or graduate education courses which fall into this category may be approved for reimbursement of the cost of tuition and books only when employees satisfactorily complete the course (completion of course with grade of "C" or better). The fact that such courses

are part of a degree program shall not disqualify them from reimbursement; however, the County will not pay for courses within the degree program which are not job essential.

- b. Job Related Training. The County may reimburse classified employees for approved expenses when the subject matter is job related and in the view of the County Administrator or Department Head should lead to improved performance on the job. Attendance may be authorized during working hours. This training generally consists of short courses, seminars, conferences, meetings, etc. coincident with the employee's routine responsibilities with the County. Undergraduate or graduate courses which fall into this category may be approved for reimbursement of the cost of tuition and books only when employees volunteer to attend classes on their own time and satisfactorily complete the course (completion of course with grade "C" or better). The fact that such courses are part of a degree program shall not disqualify them from reimbursement; however, the County will not pay for courses within the degree program which are not job related.
- c. Payment or reimbursement for any training or education program that does not meet the conditions set forth in the preceding two subparagraphs is not authorized.

Section 7-3: Application

Applications for training or education courses are made on prescribed forms that are available on the Human Resources intranet site. Training applications must be completed by the employee and approved by the appropriate approving authority before participation in a training or course. Employees should review Administrative Policy Section 115: Travel and Business Meeting Policy for information on estimating travel costs, and/or requesting

reimbursements for approved travel or trainings that require travel.

Section 7-4: Approval Authority

The County Administrator, or designee, approves training or education programs for Department Heads. Department Heads approve training in accordance with this Chapter for assigned employees within the limits of training funds in the departmental budget. County Administrator approval is required when training payments and associated costs are expected to exceed \$1,500.

Section 7-5: Repayment of Training Funds

All training payments are contingent upon presentation of satisfactory evidence of successful completion of the enrolled program. Training payments made by the County in advance are subject to repayment by the employee if 1) conditions for completion are not met, or 2) the employee voluntarily separates from County employment prior to the completion of the training.

The County reserves the right to require that an employee sign a Training Payment Reimbursement Agreement. Such agreements shall be used when the training payments and associated costs are expected to exceed \$1,500 or, in the opinion of the County Administrator, the training may substantially improve the employee's marketability. The use of an Agreement will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources to ensure County-wide consistency. If an employee has signed an Agreement and voluntarily separates from County employment within one year following the completion of training, they will be expected to repay the County any training payments and associated costs pertaining to the Agreement.