



## CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### PROCEDURE(S): TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

EFFECTIVE DATE: MAY 20, 2019

REVISION DATE(S): JULY 27, 2020, OCTOBER 1, 2022, NOVEMBER 7, 2022, MAY 2, 2023, OCTOBER 24, 2023

## TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

The City of New Braunfels encourages and supports its team members in pursuing educational opportunities, in keeping with the needs of the City of New Braunfels and its citizens. The purpose of the program is to broaden the knowledge of team members in their fields and/or to provide avenues for career development. All reimbursements are subject to the availability of funds in the City budget.

### **A. Eligibility**

A team member must be employed in a regular full-time or part-time regular position and must begin participation after completion of the six [6] month probationary period. Only part-time regular team members (authorized to work over 1,000 hours per year) and full-time team members are eligible to participate in the program. Team members who move to a full-time position are eligible for the higher reimbursement amount once they have completed their six [6] month probationary period from date of hire and do not have to restart their probationary period for the purpose of this policy. The City Manager may waive the employment tenure requirement for recruitment purposes. The team member must not be on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or receive a demotion during the semester of request.

### **B. Application Process**

Team members requesting tuition reimbursement must be enrolled in an accredited college or university or recognized technical training school, or in a recognized GED course, and working towards completing a degree. Team member must complete course work that is related to their current City employment or to a position that the team member could reasonably progress to or transfer to within the City. Post-Baccalaureate Certification Programs are not eligible for tuition reimbursement. Prior to participating in the program, team members must submit an application, degree plan as well as a summary statement that indicate how the degree will assist you in your current role and/or how the degree could help prepare you for a position that you aspire to transfer to within the City of New Braunfels. A tuition reimbursement team member committee will review the materials and determine whether or not the degree and coursework is eligible and



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make a decision to approve or deny the degree plan. If a degree plan is denied, team members may appeal the decision by requesting a review by the City Manager's Office (CMO). HR will facilitate the appeal process with the CMO. The CMO will have final approval of any appeal decisions. Once an application is approved, all required coursework under that degree plan is approved. Free elective courses should be based on a discipline that applies to municipal government service delivery. The tuition reimbursement panel will determine eligibility of elective courses if the Human Resource Director feels the course warrants additional consideration.

### C. Purpose

This program is available to team members who wish to voluntarily pursue educational advancement or training outside the course of their employment with the City. It does not apply to courses or training required by the City. It also does not cover professional licensing and professional development seminars, as any course, training, licensing or certification that is required by the City. These should be covered by professional development funds within each department. Team members who participate in this program will attend classes and complete course work outside of their normal work hours, on their own personal time. If a class is only available during a team member's normal work hours, the team member may request a flexible work schedule from the team member's Department Director. A memorandum outlining the team member's flexible work schedule must be signed by the team member, approved by the Department Director and forwarded to Human Resources with the completed Tuition Reimbursement Program Application. When there is a conflict between classes and the team member's job responsibilities, the job responsibility must have priority.

### D. Application

Team members must submit a completed [Team member Tuition Reimbursement Application Form](#) (and attachments as required) to Human Resources, which will include the signature of the team member's Department Director and all related registration paperwork, within thirty [30] calendar days before or after the start of the course. It is the responsibility of the Department Director to review and approve the application. If the Department Director disagrees with the application, they still must forward the application to Human Resources for their review and include an explanation for their position. Team members should allow adequate time for review by his/her Department Director prior to the deadline of submission to Human Resources. A new application form must be submitted for each academic class or program.



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Within thirty [30] calendar days after the completion of the course, team members must submit a [Tuition Reimbursement Request Form](#) to Human Resources, with a copy of the course grade[s] or certificate[s] of completion, validated by the school, along with a copy of the itemized statement of tuition [i.e., bill], showing payment and all financial aid applied. Internet printouts are acceptable, but grades must be validated by the school [i.e., official seal or stamp] if required by Human Resources.

### **TUITION REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:**

1. Tuition Reimbursement Request Forms received more than thirty [30] days after the last day of class, and those without a complete Team member Tuition Reimbursement Application on file will not be honored or reimbursed.
2. Eligible Expenses and Reimbursement – Full-time team members are eligible for reimbursement up to \$5,000 annually. Part-time regular team members (authorized to work over 1,000 annually) are eligible for up to \$2,500 annually. Part-time team members (authorized to work less than 1,000 annually), seasonal, and temporary staff are not eligible to participate in the program.
3. For courses taken from an accredited college or university, team members will be reimbursed only for tuition and mandatory fees. For traditional and technical schools, there is no cap on the number of classes the City will reimburse; however, reimbursement will be capped monetarily at the amounts previously stated. If a team member is eligible for grants, scholarships or any additional funds, the reimbursement will only be for the amount the team member actually paid/was incurred.
4. The City will reimburse tuition and mandatory fees requested such as, but not limited to, lab fees, library fees, student center fees, automated services and records processing fees, registration fees, student services fees and identification card fees. Team members will not be reimbursed for the cost of books, course supplies, parking, late fees, penalties, orientation fees, applications for graduation, installment fees, costs related to acquiring official transcripts or certificates, housing or any other costs other than those described above.



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5. The tuition/fee reimbursement for completed courses to approved team members is as follows: "A" will receive 100 percent; "B" will receive 85 percent; and "C" will receive 70 percent. Grades below a "C" will not receive any reimbursement. For courses that are pass/fail and for non-graded courses, approved team members will receive 100 percent reimbursement of tuition and fees for a satisfactory and/or "pass" grade. There is no reimbursement for a non-satisfactory or failing grade.
  
6. Team members who receive tuition reimbursement for a course[s] must remain employed with the City of New Braunfels for a period of at least eighteen [18] months following the completion of that semester's course[s]. If the team member fails to remain employed, either voluntarily or involuntarily with the City for the required eighteen [18] month period, the entire tuition reimbursement received within the preceding eighteen [18] month reimbursement period must be repaid to the City. The reimbursement will not be prorated based on the team member's service time after the reimbursement is received.

**BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM, THE TEAM MEMBER AGREES TO HAVE DEDUCTED FROM HIS/HER FINAL PAYCHECK AN ALLOWABLE AMOUNT TO REIMBURSE FUNDS RECEIVED THROUGH THIS PROGRAM, IF TEAM MEMBER LEAVES [EITHER VOLUNTARILY OR INVOLUNTARILY] WITHIN EIGHTEEN [18] MONTHS OF THE REIMBURSED COURSE COMPLETION.**

The team member is required to submit documentation of any other financial assistance received [GI or VA benefits, federal or state grants, scholarships, etc.]. Reimbursement will be coordinated in conjunction with any other financial assistance and will not exceed 100% of the cost of tuition and fees as defined above. The amount requested for reimbursement [total eligible tuition and fees, minus other financial assistance received] will be subject to the level of academic success [i.e., 100% for A, 85% for B, etc.], not the full total eligible tuition and fees. All reimbursements are subject to the availability of funds in the City's budget.