CHESTERFIELD COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Department:	**Human Resource Management**	**Policy Number:**	**6-4**
Subject:	**Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Program**	**Supersedes:**	**07/01/01**
		Date Issued:	**01/01/02**

I. INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of Chesterfield County to encourage self-development among county employees in their field of work and to maintain a high level of job performance in accordance with the county mission. This is supported through the Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Program, which features a reimbursement provision for satisfactorily completed, approved courses. The county Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Program is a benefit that is limited to available funds.

II. COVERAGE

A. **Eligibility**

1. Full time employees who have successfully completed probation and part time employees who have completed 12 months of employment at the time the request for tuition assistance is filed are eligible.

2. ***Courses*** – Only those courses which are related to the business of the department and which have been approved in advance by the department director/office administrator and Human Resource Management. Courses taken towards a professional certification will be covered if a test is administered and a grade given. This excludes all workshop/seminar type instructional units and county sponsored training programs.

B. **Reimbursable Expenses** – Tuition-related costs only. Textbooks, learning aids and materials, university fees, lab fees, parking or activity fees are not reimbursable.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Reimbursement will be made for approved courses which meet the eligibility criteria and must be supported by a copy of the grade report or official transcript indicating successful completion (grade of C or better, or pass for pass/fail courses), and by a canceled check or credit card receipt, or other proof of payment and shall be submitted to Human Resource Management, with the employee's current address noted on the paperwork, within two (2) weeks of receipt of the course grade in order to qualify for reimbursement. If copy of a canceled check is submitted, both the front and back of the check must be included. Once paperwork is submitted to Accounting, checks will be mailed within 10 working days.

B. Courses must be related to the business of the department. Degree award programs will be considered on the basis of individual course subjects—reimbursement to be provided for only those courses that are related to the business of the department. Maximum reimbursable amount per employee will be established annually in accordance with budgeted funding levels, employee/student demand, and area institution tuition costs.

C. Employees who are eligible for financial aid from other sources shall first exhaust those sources before applying for aid under the county's Employee Tuition Assistance Program. Other sources may include but are not limited to veteran's benefits, scholarships, etc.

D. If an employee leaves Chesterfield County employment within one year of completing course work that was reimbursed through the tuition assistance program, he or she will be expected to repay all funds received within the past year in full. Repayments can be made through personal check or as a deduction from the employee's final check. An employee who leaves

the county's employment prior to receiving payment for requested tuition will forfeit payment of the requested funds.

E. Any unused or unrequested funds in each semester will be forwarded to the next semester in that fiscal year. Once all budgeted funds have been committed, subsequent Requests for Tuition Assistance will be placed on a waiting list in the event that funds become available due to course drops, unsuccessful completion, etc.

F. All outstanding requests shall be voided at the end of each fiscal year, except where grades were not received until immediately before or after the fiscal year cutoff. In cases where the last period of academic instruction or testing coincides with the fiscal year cutoff (within 60 days either way), reimbursement will still be made. However, if reimbursement requests are received after fiscal year closeout and reimbursement is made with new fiscal year funds, the employee's maximum tuition reimbursement for that year will be reduced by that amount and the course will count toward the maximum number of courses for the new fiscal year.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Prior to course registration, the employee completes Part I of the Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Application (TARA) and forwards to department director/office administrator.

B. Once the department director/office administrator is satisfied that the training would be in the best interest of the department and would not interfere with position responsibilities and that the employee meets the program requirements, he will sign the request and forward it to the Department of Human Resource Management (HRM). In the event the department director/office administrator feels the request does not meet program requirements or is not in the best interest of the department, the request may be denied. If the request is denied, the employee will be notified by the department and the request will be returned to the employee.

C. All Requests for Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement approved at the departmental level will be forwarded for review to HRM. Requests will be reviewed to ensure eligibility and availability of funds. Budgeted annual funding will be divided between three semesters. Requests will be accepted by HRM in accordance with the following schedule with funds being reserved for employees in the order in which they are received:

Semester	**Tuition Reimbursement Application Period**
Spring	December 1 – March 31
Summer	April 1 – June 30
Fall	July 1 – November 30

D. Upon review of the request, the employee will be notified of HRM's determination by receiving the top three copies (white, pink, yellow) of the TARA form, marked approved, approved but placed on waiting list, or disapproved and signed by an authorized staff member in HRM.

E. Upon successful completion of the course, the employee must complete Part II of TARA, attach proof of grade and proof of payment and forward all three (3) copies of the form to HRM.

F. HRM staff will review the Request for Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement and associated documentation. For an approved request the copies will be distributed as follows:

1. The original copy of the form and documentation will be forwarded to Accounting where reimbursement will be initiated.

2. The pink copy will be placed in the employee's official personnel record.

3. The yellow copy will be returned to the employee.

G. If the request is disapproved, the form and associated documentation will be returned to the employee with an explanation