



TUITION REIMBURSEMENT BENEFIT PROGRAM

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The City of Doral encourages the Mayor and Members of the City Council to voluntarily pursue professional development opportunities in the fields of public policy, public administration, public speaking, and related areas, including certifications, as well as undergraduate or graduate degree programs. These opportunities are intended to enhance their knowledge, improve their performance, and strengthen their ability to serve the residents of the City of Doral. Accordingly, the City will provide a tuition reimbursement benefit to eligible elected officials who are seeking a qualifying undergraduate or graduate degree. Reimbursements and other payments made by the City under this policy are subject to current federal taxation requirements, and the availability of budgeted funds.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, the Mayor or Councilmember must be actively serving in office at the time of application and at the time of reimbursement.

The elected official must also be in good standing. For purposes of this policy, “good standing” means the elected official has not been subject to any formal ethics violations or sanctions that would impact eligibility under applicable laws or City regulations.

Course Eligibility:

Eligible coursework may include undergraduate or graduate courses taken as part of an approved degree program, as well as certification programs or other professional development opportunities in the fields of public policy, public administration, public speaking, or related areas. All coursework or programs must provide knowledge or competencies relevant to public service,

governance, leadership, or the duties of elected office and must be offered by an accredited college, university, or recognized professional institution.

Grade

Requirements:

An elected official must maintain a “C” average or above to remain eligible for participation in the program.

Tuition

Reimbursement

Provisions:

An elected official is eligible to receive reimbursement for a maximum of six (6) classes per fiscal year. The amount of reimbursement approved by the City will be based on the grade received in each course, as provided in this policy.

Tuition, parking costs, and required laboratory fees are eligible for reimbursement. All other expenses, including but not limited to books, supplies, or non-laboratory fees, are the responsibility of the elected official and are not eligible for reimbursement.

REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT

The reimbursement amount will be based on the established Florida resident credit hour rate for undergraduate or graduate courses charged within the State University System at the time of course enrollment, regardless of the elected official’s selection of a private educational institution.

Upon completion of an approved course, the reimbursement schedule will be based on grades received as follows:

- 100% reimbursement for a grade of “A”
- 75% reimbursement for a grade of “B”
- 50% reimbursement for a grade of “C”

The City will not provide any amount of tuition reimbursement if a grade of “D,” “F,” or “Incomplete” is received.

APPROVAL PROCEDURE

The Mayor or Councilmember must receive prior written approval from the City Manager to participate in the City's tuition reimbursement benefit program.

To obtain approval, the elected official must submit the following:

- Course or program description
- Schedule (including dates and times)
- Program cost

The City Manager will review the request and determine whether it meets the criteria for participation. Notice of approval or denial shall be provided in writing.

If the elected official leaves office due to circumstances beyond their control, including but not limited to appointment to another office, death, or disability, the elected official shall not be eligible to receive any pending reimbursement.

If the elected official is removed from office or is recalled from office at any time during the 12-month period, the elected official shall be required to repay the City any funds paid under this program.

The balance of any amount owed shall be due in full within seven (7) days of separation from office. In appropriate circumstances, the City and the elected official may agree to a payment plan.

PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

If approved to participate in the program, the elected official shall pay all tuition.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of completion of the approved course(s), the elected official must provide copies of all receipts and a copy of the certified transcript. The elected official shall also disclose and provide documentation of all financial assistance received, including but not limited to scholarships, grants, stipends, waivers, discounts, or other non-refundable assistance.

If the documentation provided is satisfactory, reimbursement will be processed upon approval by the City Manager.

All payment of reimbursement eligible expenses shall be subject to the availability of budgeted funds. The City Manager may deny any eligible applicant the reimbursement of eligible expenses based on a lack of sufficient budgeted funds.

POLICY MODIFICATION

The City may change the provisions of this policy at any time, including eligibility criteria and reimbursement amounts. Requests will be processed in accordance with the policy in effect at the time of submission.

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