

<b>UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MEDICAL CENTER</b>  <b>Human Resources Benefits</b> <b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> <b>10/15/2010</b>	<b>P&amp;P NO:</b> <b>4.1.0</b>
	<b>LAST REVISION DATE:</b> <b>2/28/14</b>	<b>LAST REVIEW DATE:</b> <b>2/28/14</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b> <b>Education Assistance Program</b>	<b>FUNCTION:</b> <b>Employee Continuing Education - registration, payment terms, documentation requirements, work commitment</b>	

**I. POLICY**

The Benefits group maintains and administers the continuing education benefit for all eligible UMMC employees.

**A. OBJECTIVES:**

- To ensure that applicants are eligible for assistance and that all assistance corresponds to courses, certifications, and professional memberships that directly aid the employee’s current job performance.
- To verify that each reimbursement corresponds to eligible expenses paid for by the employee, and that all continuing education coursework is completed in good standing.
- To ensure that all continuing education reimbursements and payments are issued in a timely fashion.
- To verify that employees receiving the continuing education benefit satisfy a 6-month work requirement and that employees who do not satisfy this requirement are charged back for the assistance given.
- To ensure the employee is quickly notified in cases where the claim is incomplete or illegitimate.
- To ensure that all applications and claims, whether completed, incomplete, or denied, are appropriately documented and filed for future reference.

**B. BACKGROUND:**

The University of Maryland Medical Center (Medical Center) supports the professional development of employees through advanced certifications, job-related conferences, etc. The Employee Continuing Education Program is designed to provide financial assistance to employees who want to pursue continuing education related to hospital employment, to upgrade their care of patients, to prepare for advancement, and to develop and improve their capabilities.

The Medical Center provides the Employee Continuing Education benefit for registration fees for current job-related conferences and seminars, advanced certification exam fees, certification review course fees, tuition costs for non-credit courses that offer continuing education units (CEUs), professional dues, etc.

## Eligibility

Only continuing education expenses incurred after the employee's date of hire are eligible for reimbursement.

Employees applying for the Employee Continuing Education benefit must be performing satisfactorily in their position (achieves standards or exceeds standards on their performance appraisal) and be in good standing in terms of continued future employment with the Medical Center.

A new employee is eligible to receive reimbursement through the Employee Continuing Education benefit after six months and must have successfully completed the required initial period. Their initial evaluation must be on file to receive the benefit.

Employees must have current license/certification on file if required for their current position.

## Benefit Amount

All Medical Center regular full-time (working 36 or more hours per week) employees are eligible for up to \$500 per calendar year (January through December). All Medical Center regular part-time (working a minimum of 20 hours per week) employees are eligible for up to \$250 per calendar year (January through December). Nurses in the UMMC Professional Advancement Model with an advanced nursing certification are eligible for up to \$1,000 per calendar year. Regular part-time nurses, with an advanced nursing certification, working a minimum of 20 hours per week are eligible for \$500 per calendar year.

Please note:

Up front payments for memberships are applied to your allowance for the calendar year in which they are paid, so for example, if we process your request in December 2012 to pay up front for your 2013 membership, it is applied to your 2012 allowance.

Up Front payments for seminars and courses are applied to your allowance for the calendar year in which you attend the event, so for example, if we process your pay up front request in December 2012 for a seminar which you are scheduled to attend in January 2013, it will be applied to your 2013 allowance.

Reimbursements to you for memberships, courses and seminars which you paid for are applied to your allowance for the calendar year in which you paid, so for example, if we process your reimbursement request in January 2013 for a seminar which you attended and paid for in December 2012, it will be applied to your 2012 allowance.

## Eligible Expenses

Seminars, conferences, advanced certifications, certification reviews, professional dues, continuing education courses, and reference books/books tied to CE courses must be **directly related** to the employee's current position. Licenses, certifications, registrations, etc., required in an employee's job

description are **not** covered by this benefit.

Registration fees for an in-state (within the state of Maryland to include Washington, D.C.) or out-of-state (any state other than Maryland, inside the continental United States, excluding Alaska, Hawaii and US Territories, and any foreign country) annual conference or seminar that is attended for professional development in the employee's current job.

Reimbursement for expenses for travel and lodging when attending a seminar or conference that is attended for development in the employee's current job are also eligible.

### **Application for Employee Continuing Education Benefit**

Please indicate on the application if you want the fee paid directly by check to the organization or if you are paying for it out of pocket and want to be reimbursed by checking the correct box.

An employee should discuss his or her educational plans with the department director/manager. In most cases the employee will be required to attend the course or seminar on their own time.

#### **Continuing Education Pay Up Front Process:**

If an employee requests that the fee for the continuing education course or seminar be paid directly to the sponsoring organization, it will be paid by check to the sponsoring organization.

**A minimum of 4 weeks prior to the registration/payment deadline**, submit the following to Human Resource Services, Education Coordinator:

1. Application, signed by employee and employee's manager, indicating pay up front
2. Organization registration/application form
3. Certificate of completion or proof of attendance (**proof must be submitted within 60 days, or the fee for the course/seminar will be deducted from the employee's paycheck.**)

If the employee cannot attend the course or seminar and fails to cancel pursuant to registration terms, the fee for the course or seminar will be deducted from the employee's paycheck. The cancellation confirmation number from the sponsoring organization should be submitted to Human Resources.

#### **Continuing Education Reimbursement Process (employee pays for class and is seeking reimbursement):**

After completing the course or attending the seminar submit the following to Human Resource Services, Education Coordinator:

1. Application, signed by employee and employee's manager, indicating reimbursement
2. Proof of payment
3. Certificate of completion or proof of attendance

**All documentation must be received within 60 days of the continuing education course/seminar end date in order to qualify for reimbursement.**

For reimbursement of memberships, certifications, certification exams/reviews, and reference books, submit the following:

1. Application, signed by employee and employee's manager, indicating reimbursement
2. Proof of payment

**All documentation must be submitted within 60 days of the employee's date of payment to qualify for reimbursement**

Reimbursement request will be submitted to payroll for processing along with normal paychecks. Reimbursement will be included on the pay check and be received within 3 pay periods.

**Any employee that submits fraudulent information in connection with the Employee Continuing Education is subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.**

## **Employee's Responsibility**

As a condition of the Employee Continuing Education benefit, the employee must continue employment at the Medical Center in a benefit eligible status for a minimum of six consecutive months after completion of the course or seminar. Employees who receive the full-time employee benefit must continue to work in a regular full-time status or must work 936 hours in a regular part-time capacity within one year after completion of the course(s) to fulfill this obligation. The date of obligation for work commitment begins upon completion of the course or seminar.

Employees who fail to complete either work responsibility criteria will be required to reimburse the Medical Center, in full, for continuing education benefits received for courses with unsatisfied work commitment responsibility.

If the work commitment has not been fulfilled at the time of employee termination or change to an ineligible status, the amount due the Medical Center will be deducted from the final paycheck up to the maximum allowed by law. The Medical Center will arrange a payback schedule for any amount not covered by the final paycheck.

Employees out on a Leave of Absence are not eligible for the continuing education benefit.

If an employee is terminated as a result of layoff, the employee will remain eligible for the benefit for the current course or seminar enrolled in prior to layoff, if the Application for the Continuing Education benefit was properly submitted.

Termination of employment by resignation or discharge prior to the completion of a course or seminar will immediately cancel the obligation of the Medical Center to pay the Employee Continuing Education benefit.

## Other Limitations

The Medical Center reserves the right to determine the Employee Continuing Education Program and individual eligibility, determine the criteria for size and timing of assistance, adopt, modify or revise Program guidelines and procedures, or cancel this Program as deemed necessary at any time. The Executive Vice President or Chief Executive Officer retains the discretion to deviate from this Program in any way. This Program does not create an implied or expressed contract of employment; there is no entitlement to payment under this Program. Decisions with respect to any questions regarding Program eligibility or interpretation of this Program by the Executive Vice President or Chief Executive Officer shall be final, conclusive and binding on all parties.

## II. PROCEDURE

Sub-process	Process steps	Responsibility
<b>Employee decides to go to seminar, conference, etc.</b>	Employee discusses desire to go to conference, seminar, continuing education courses, etc. with supervisor	Employee
<b>Employee completes employee continuing education application</b>	Employee completes employee continuing education application, has supervisor sign it, and submits it to Human Resources. If the employee wants the Medical Center to pay for the conference, etc. up front, the application must be received in Human Resources four weeks before the registration deadline	Employee
2.	Human Resources checks for required signatures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee</li> <li>• Supervisor</li> </ul>	EAC
3.	Human Resources verifies employee, conference/seminar, etc meets eligibility requirements and checks for required documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Log into Abra, utilizing personalized log in information</li> <li>• Search for employee, Training → Details → Current Job UMMS → Search (magnifying glass)</li> <li>• Enter ee last name, click “OK”, find ee-highlight name, click “OK”</li> <li>• Verify employee job title, status, date of hire, and FTE</li> <li>• Using Internet search or phone call to organization, verifies educational event and organization is directly related to employee’s current job performance.</li> </ul>	EAC
<b>Ineligible employee, seminar, etc.</b>	HR notifies employee by email of the ineligibility of their job code, cost center, FTE status, conference/seminar,	

	etc. Employee is called if no email is available. Application is filed in employees Continuing Education	EAC
<b>Determining Availability of Funds</b>	Navigate to icon (person with a red check mark)-“Courses Taken” across the top menu bar (pulls history of all reimbursements) and look for any current year continuing education	EAC
<b>Processing pay up front application (if funds remain)</b>	<p>On the same screen as above step, click Add:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On the Course Tab enter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Course Description = Continuing Education</li> <li>b. Course Code = Automatically defaults when Continuing Education is entered</li> <li>c. Course Type = Select from drop down</li> <li>d. Certification = Non Specified</li> <li>e. Enrollment Status = Enrolled</li> <li>f. Credits = Blank</li> <li>g. CEU = Blank</li> <li>h. Course Fee = Amount of Course</li> <li>i. Other Fees = Blank</li> <li>j. Job Related = Skip</li> <li>k. Grade = Blank</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. On the Scheduling Tab enter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Start Date = Date entered for memberships or date of event for conferences/seminars/continuing education</li> <li>b. End Date = Same as start date</li> <li>c. All other fields = Blank</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Skip Job and Organization Tab</li> <li>4. Reimbursement and User Defined Tab <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Course Fee = Already populated</li> <li>b. Other Fees &amp; Grades = Blank</li> <li>c. Reimbursement Amount = Amount actually paid</li> <li>d. Date Requested = Date entered</li> <li>e. Approved = Skip</li> <li>f. Name of Course = Name of event</li> <li>g. Major = Blank</li> <li>h. Credit = Y</li> <li>i. Pay Period = Pay # and year, example 17.13</li> <li>j. Click Ok</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Place application in a “to pay file”</li> <li>6. End of the week each application is faxed to the organization with credit card information completed, requesting receipt</li> <li>7. Once faxed, log back into Abra and navigate to the Reimbursement and User Defined Tab: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Major = Credit Card/Application fax date &amp; number, if called, indicate phone number instead of fax number</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	EAC

	8. File application in pay period folder	
<b>Processing reimbursement application (if funds remain)</b>	<p>On the same screen as above step, click Add:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On the Course Tab enter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Course Description = Continuing Education</li> <li>b. Select from drop down in Course Code</li> <li>c. Certification = Non Specified</li> <li>d. Enrollment Status = Completed</li> <li>e. Credits = Blank</li> <li>f. CEU = Blank</li> <li>g. Course Fee = Amount of Course</li> <li>h. Other Fees = Blank</li> <li>i. Job Related = Skip</li> <li>j. Grade = Blank</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. On the Scheduling Tab enter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Start Date = Date ee paid organization</li> <li>b. End Date = Same as start date</li> <li>c. All other fields = Blank</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Skip Job and Organization Tab</li> <li>4. Reimbursement and User Defined Tab <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Course Fee = Already populated</li> <li>b. Other Fees &amp; Grades = Blank</li> <li>c. Reimbursement Amount = Amount actually paid</li> <li>d. Date Requested = Date entered</li> <li>e. Approved = Skip</li> <li>f. Name of Course = Name of event</li> <li>g. Major = Blank</li> <li>h. Credit = Blank</li> <li>i. Pay Period = Pay # and year, example 17.13</li> <li>j. Click Ok</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. File application in pay period folder</li> </ol>	EAC
	6. Verification file run based on pay period identifier to verify employee's FTE, cost center, active status, and amount of payment.	EAC
	7. Files checked using verification file and payment approved. Adjustments/corrections for data entry errors are made as needed (example, transposed numbers): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Crystal Reports from ABRA</li> <li>• Open file R:ABRA\Programs\Programs\Crystal\HRD\employee Educational Benefits\Employee Tuition OLEDB database</li> <li>• Hit select expert button, hit nemphis.misc4 tab, select correct pay period.</li> </ul>	EAC
		EAC

8.	Import file saved to T:/ITGSUPP/ITGFILES to be imported into Lawson Monday before pay day. See <i>Appendix for detailed steps.</i>	EAC
9.	Payroll processes import file. Amount of reimbursement and work commitment date recorded on inquiry screen in Lawson	Payroll Rep
10.	Payroll report manually checked against verification file for names/amounts and hard copy of claims for quality control of HRIS and payroll processing.	EAC
<b>After processing</b> 1.	Employee application and all supporting documentation is filed in the pay period file file and retained in accordance with UMMC document retention policies.	EAC

**III. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:**

- Educational Assistance Proration
- ABRA export to Lawson
- ABRA-Lawson commitment date review process

**IV. CHANGE CONTROL LOG**