

## **EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS**

The RAILS educational benefits program is contingent on annual funding.

### **Requirements for Approval**

All staff applying for reimbursement for coursework that is a part of a degree program (certificate, associate, bachelors, and graduate) from an accredited institution must:

- Provide evidence of admission to the certificate/degree program.
- Submit an application to their supervisor and obtain approval for the class, with prior approval preferred, to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Be full-time, working 37.5 hours per week in order to receive the maximum allowable reimbursement.
- Be employed for at least one year prior to application for educational benefits. Benefits will not be applied retroactively to courses taken before one year of service.
- Must have received a satisfactory performance review.
- The class must be related to the applicant's job or aligned to the needs of the organization or a required/core class as part of a certificate/degree program
- Registering for a class does not ensure reimbursement under this program.

### **Reimbursement**

- The amount of the reimbursement is contingent on the number of approved applicants.
- Incomplete classes will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement will not exceed 50% of the cost of class tuition.
- Reimbursement amounts will be prorated for part-time employees.
- The employee will not be reimbursed for a class that was previously reimbursed.
- Reimbursement related to mileage, commute, or any time spent outside of regular work will not be considered.
- Enrollment in classes or certificate/degree programs and tuition reimbursement by RAILS is not a guarantee of a job change, promotion, or salary increase.
- Reimbursement will be made to the employee after providing verification that they have successfully completed a class with a B average or above or earned a pass for a pass/fail class.

### **Termination/Resignation/ Retirement:**

Educational benefits are only available for courses taken after completing one year of service; benefits will not be applied retroactively. If an employee is laid off by RAILS, no repayment will be due. Employees may be required to sign individual agreements in order to receive reimbursement under this policy. If an employee is enrolled in a class approved for reimbursement and at any time

during the class term, the employee resigns from RAILS or is terminated by RAILS, no reimbursement will occur.

**Class Time**

If the class is not offered outside the employee's normal working hours, work schedules may be modified with the approval of the employee's supervisor and the approval of the Executive Director. Time spent attending courses will not be compensated.

**Tax Liability**

It is possible, under Federal Law IRC 127, that an employee receiving reimbursement for a class may be subject to income tax and required to declare that reimbursement as income. For further information and the current maximum allowed, contact the Human Resources department.

**Appeals**

Appeals of denial may be made in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall have ultimate authority on approving, denying or adjusting any tuition reimbursement requests.