



## **Board Policy No. 223**

### **Tuition Assistance Policy**

**ADOPTED:** 4/12/17

(Implementation effective 7/1/17)

**RECENT AMENDMENT:** 3/10/2021

**SEE ALSO:** 223A

**SUBJECT CATEGORY:** SECTION 200, HUMAN RESOURCES

**SUBSECTION:** BENEFITS

**CONTROL DEPARTMENT:** HUMAN RESOURCES

#### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Tuition Assistance Policy is to support the professional development, educational advancement, and career growth of AC Transit employees. Providing employees an opportunity to participate in educational courses that relate to the business needs of the District will result in improved employee performance, higher levels of workforce engagement, and increased numbers of qualified internal candidates for promotional opportunities.

#### **II. PERSONS AFFECTED**

All current District employees. Part-time employees may apply for a pro-rated amount of tuition assistance that is proportional to the number of hours worked each week using the formulas found in Administrative Regulation 223A.

#### **III. DEFINITIONS**

**"Coursework"** means any required curriculum or materials from accredited college classes, certificate programs or online classes.

**"Employees"** means those individuals who are directly employed for a salary or wage by the District and are occupying an authorized budgeted position. Employees, for this policy, do not include temporary or contracted employees at the District.

**"Reimbursement"** means the amount that is paid to the employee to off-set the cost of fees associated in completing coursework.

**"Repayment"** means the obligation of the employee to repay the entire amount of the reimbursement benefit paid to them if they voluntarily separate from the District within 12 months of receiving the benefit.

**"Fiscal Year"** means July 1- June 30.

**"Core Business"** means any work found in AC Transit's class specifications or goals in AC Transit's strategic plan documents.

#### IV. POLICY

##### A. Funding

1. The availability of funding for the Tuition Assistance Program is subject to the annual budget process and may be augmented as needed by the General Manager **and as approved by the Board** during the mid-year budget review process.
2. Any application for tuition assistance that was approved in one fiscal year, but expected to be paid in the next fiscal year shall be encumbered in the next fiscal year's budget.

##### B. Eligibility

1. Employee must pay for their expenses upfront and then may request reimbursement of eligible and approved expenses by following the requirements described in Administrative Regulation 233A.
2. Coursework must be aligned with and support AC Transit's Core Business.

##### C. Limitations

1. Only current full and part time District Employees are eligible for tuition assistance.
2. Tuition assistance may not be used for dependents.
3. All coursework must be taken during the Employee's non-work hours.

##### D. Training Required by Management

Employees ***shall not be required*** to use tuition assistance for continuing education or training required by management to perform their existing duties. In these instances, expenses must be paid for by the District and employee may use work time to attend the required coursework, subject to advance approval.

##### E. Maximum Reimbursement Amount

Employee may be reimbursed up to \$2500 ***per fiscal year*** to off-set the cost of coursework if the employee has met the requirement of Administrative Regulation 223A.

##### F. Repayment Obligation

1. Employees who voluntarily leave employment within twelve (12) months from the date tuition reimbursement was approved, shall reimburse the District in full. This may be waived on a case-by-case basis by the General Manager for employees with extraordinary circumstances or for employees who retire within (12) months of receiving tuition assistance.

## **V. AUTHORITY**

### **A. General Manager's Authority**

The General Manager shall enact an Administrative Regulation that provides procedures for administering the Tuition Assistance Policy.