

ST. CLAIR COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Date Issued 01/24

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I. APPLICATION:

- ☐ SCCCMHA Board
- ☐ SCCCMHA Providers & Subcontractors
- ☒ Direct-Operated Programs
- ☐ Community Agency Contractors
- ☐ Residential Programs
- ☐ Specialized Foster Care

II. PURPOSE STATEMENT:

St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority (SCCCMHA) shall encourage staff development and expand capacity in areas of needed positions, expand educational opportunities and enhance quality care by providing an opportunity for employees to request tuition/training/endorsement/certification reimbursement for continuing education classes related to the employee's job, for both undergraduate and graduate level courses in exchange for an employment commitment.

III. DEFINITIONS:

Regular Employee: Any person employed on a regular full or part-time basis with SCCCMHA.

IV. STANDARDS:

- A. It is at the sole discretion of Leadership that a tuition/training/endorsement/certification reimbursement plan be put into place. Leadership may terminate the program at any time. This program is not part of, nor subject to, the collective bargaining agreement in any way.
- B. Leadership, at its sole discretion, will decide what, if any, educational/training/endorsement/certification programs would be part of the program. This can change at any time at Leadership's discretion.
- C. Request for tuition/training/endorsement/certification reimbursement may only be submitted by regular employees of St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority who have passed their one year anniversary date, have satisfactory performance evaluations and have no corrective action plan in force during the course or when reimbursement is made.
- D. Courses/training/endorsement/certification must be taken at an accredited and recognized school, college, university, corporation, or a recognized training institute/program.

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- E. Course(s) that are unrelated to an employee's job or would not lead to a direct benefit for the agency are not reimbursable
- F. Only tuition is reimbursable for courses taken in pursuit of a degree. Costs of travel are not included in the reimbursement.
- G. Cost of an approved training program/endorsement/certification and, if required, supervision during the training/endorsement/certification will be paid with required substantiation.
- H. With approval at the start of the course(s), St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority will reimburse an amount as determined by Leadership, which may include cost of tuition.
- I. When the tuition reimbursement is not considered a Working Condition Benefit under the IRS rules, any amount of educational assistance exceeding the maximum allowable by the IRS (currently \$5,250 annually – 07/2022) will be a taxable benefit to the employee and reported as income.
- J. With approval at the start of the course(s), St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority will reimburse for what St. Clair County Mental Health Authority determines as an agency need; degree/certification/training program.
- K. The employee agrees to continue working for St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority for a mutually agreed number of months following the education/training/endorsement/certification as a return on investment for St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority.
- L. Leadership has sole discretion regarding the approval of tuition reimbursement/training/endorsement/certification. Every instance is looked at separately. No decision is binding on the next. The decision of the Chief Executive Officer is final.
- M. Upon completion of the course(s), the employee must present the receipt for tuition and proof of course completion with a 3.0 grade point or 80% (B) or better in order to receive a tuition reimbursement.
- N. Employee must use accumulated vacation or compensatory time to attend course(s) during normal work hours, when on an LOA, or a flex schedule may be approved by immediate supervisor and the Leadership Team if program needs can be met.
- O. In the case of a training/endorsement/certification, the employee will attend and successfully complete the approved activity, or will pay back the costs, as indicated on a Repayment Agreement.
- P. In the case of training/endorsement/certification, the employee is responsible for any future costs related to maintaining the endorsement/certification.

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- Q. A Request for Tuition/Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement must be filled out for each class or specialized training.
- R. The employee will also sign a Repayment Agreement stating they commit to working for St. Clair County Community Mental Health Authority for a mutually agreed period of time following the education/training/endorsement/certification. This work time will be considered repayment of the funds. If the employee leaves prior to the repayment period being completed, they will be responsible for paying back an amount that will be pro-rated based on their time in service after completion of the educational plan.
- S. If an employee enters into any disciplinary process, Leadership has the right to terminate the tuition/training/endorsement/certification reimbursement agreement and payback of any awarded funds will be required.
- T. All awarded funds will be required to be paid back if the employee terminates the program and does not graduate or successfully complete the training/endorsement/certification.

V. **PROCEDURES:**

A. **Approval Process**

Employee

1. Submits an Application for Tuition Reimbursement (Form #0234) or Application for Training/Endorsement/Certification (Form #0233) to their supervisor prior to the start of the class/training for approval/denial of reimbursement.

Supervisor

2. Reviews to determine:
 - a. Course(s)/training meet guidelines of policy/administrative procedure.
 - b. Program needs can be met if employee is in attendance at training or requesting flex time to take classes.
 - c. If in agreement with request, forwards Application for Tuition Reimbursement (Form #234) or Application for Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement (Form #233) to Chief Executive Officer/Designee.

Chief Executive Officer/Designee

3. Reviews request and:

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- a. Determines if program/agency needs will be met during educational/training experience.
- b. Determines if funding is available to grant request for tuition/training reimbursement.
- c. Consults with Leadership Team
- d. Notifies employee of approval or denial

Leadership Team

4. Provides final decision.

Human Resource Designee

5. Develops a Repayment Agreement and obtains Chief Executive Officer's approval of terms.
6. Meets with employee to review terms and secure signature.

Employee

1. Submits Request for Tuition/Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement form (#825 in the Forms Index) to Human Resources within 30 days of class completion. Request must be accompanied by proof of payment and successful completion of class(es), achieving a B (80%) or better.

Human Resource Designee

1. Reviews documentation for accuracy/eligibility and obtains Chief Executive Officer/Designee's approval for payment.
2. Submits documentation to Finance Clerk for processing.

Finance Clerk

1. Processes payment, ensuring any educational assistance in excess of the maximum allowable by the IRS (currently \$5,250 annually – 07/2022) is reported as income on employee's W2s.

VI. REFERENCES:

None Available

VII. EXHIBITS:

None Available

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VIII. REVISION HISTORY:

Dates issued 08/06, 06/08, 04/09, 01/12, 01/13, 05/13, 07/14, 07/15, 07/16, 07/17, 07/18, 07/19, 11/20, 09/21, 11/22.