

# **ST. CLAIR COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

**Date Issued: 09/24**

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### **I. APPLICATION:**

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

### **II. PURPOSE STATEMENT:**

St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) 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 SCCCMH.

### **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 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. An employee must have a minimum of one (1) year experience working in a case management position with SCCCMH in order to be eligible for application to the Masters in Social Work (MSW) tuition reimbursement program.

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- E. Courses/training/endorsement/certification must be taken at an accredited and recognized school, college, university, corporation, or a recognized training institute/program.
- F. Course(s) that are unrelated to an employee's job or would not lead to a direct benefit for the agency are not reimbursable
- G. Only tuition is reimbursable for courses taken in pursuit of a degree. Costs of travel are not included in the reimbursement.
- H. Cost of an approved training program/endorsement/certification and, if required, supervision during the training/endorsement/certification will be paid with required substantiation.
- I. With approval at the start of the course(s), SCCCMH will reimburse an amount as determined by Leadership, which may include cost of tuition.
- J. 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.
- K. With approval at the start of the course(s), SCCCMH will reimburse for what SCCCMH determines as an agency need; degree/certification/training program.
- L. The employee agrees to continue working for SCCCMH for a mutually agreed number of months following the education/training/endorsement/certification as a return on investment for SCCCMH.
- M. 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.
- N. 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 grade of 80% (B) or better in order to receive a tuition reimbursement.
- O. Employee must use accumulated vacation or compensatory time to attend course(s) during normal work hours or when on a Leave of Absence (LOA). A flex schedule may be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and the Leadership Team if program needs can be met.
- P. 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.
- Q. In the case of training/endorsement/certification, the employee is responsible for any future costs related to maintaining the endorsement/certification.
- R. A Request for Tuition/Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement must be completed for

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each class or specialized training.

- S. The employee must also sign a Repayment Agreement stating they commit to working for SCCCMH 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.
- T. 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.
- U. All awarded funds will be required to be repaid to SCCCMH 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 form [#0234 Application for Tuition Reimbursement](#) or form [#0233 Application for Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement](#) to their supervisor prior to the start of the class/training for approval or denial of reimbursement.

**Supervisor**

2. Reviews to determine:
  - a. Course(s)/training meets guidelines of policy.
  - b. Program needs can be met if employee attends training or requests flex time to take classes.
  - c. If in agreement with the request, forwards form #0234 Application for Tuition Reimbursement or form [#0233 Application for Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement](#) to Chief Executive Officer/Designee.

**Chief Executive Officer/Designee**

3. Reviews request and:
  - 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**

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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 form [#0825 Request for Tuition/Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement](#) 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 grade of 89% (B) or better.

#### **Human Resource Designee**

1. Reviews documentation for accuracy and 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 W-2 tax form.

#### VI. REFERENCES:

N/A

#### VII. EXHIBITS:

- A. [#0233 Application for Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement](#)
- B. [#0234 Application for Tuition Reimbursement](#)
- C. [#0825 Request for Tuition/Training/Endorsement/Certification Reimbursement](#)

#### 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, 01/24.