

Educational Assistance Policy

East Bonner County Free Library District

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the East Bonner County Free Library District to encourage the district staff to engage in professional development and the improvement of job skills. In support of these goals the District may, based on department needs and budgetary constraints, assist employees with tuition costs incurred in connection with course work at a college, university, or trade school. The course must be directly related to the employee's current position, or to an ability to advance within a career path with the District.

While successful completion of a course of study improves an employee's educational background, such accomplishment does not obligate the District to reward participants with promotion, transfer, reassignment, compensation increase, or other employment-related benefits.

Guidelines

Assistance is subject to the following guidelines.

Eligible Expenses

Tuition for approved or accredited programs.

Pre-Approval Required

Eligible employees wishing to obtain scholarships or other funds for course tuition must obtain the approval of the Library Director before beginning the course.

Criteria for Assistance

1. The employee must be continuously employed by the District in a regular position for a minimum of six months prior to requesting tuition assistance.
2. The employee must be in good standing with no disciplinary actions pending, in process, or received, within the previous six-month period.
3. The most recent performance review must indicate "Meets Expectations" or above.
4. The employee must sign the Agreement and Statement of Understanding outlining the conditions for assistance.
5. "Directly related" is defined as a degree program, or course, that would contribute to the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to satisfactorily perform the employee's present job, or prepare the employee for a reasonable future promotional opportunity.
6. Courses must be taken on the employee's personal time.
7. Educational assistance requests will only be granted for accredited programs.

Limitations

1. The assistance benefit is based on Library District needs and budget constraints, not to exceed \$1,000 per person per fiscal year.
2. The educational assistance benefit may be suspended if the Library Director determines that it is in the District's best interest to do so.
3. The benefit will be provided based on the merits of each application as determined by the Library Director.
4. Application deadlines, among other criteria, may also affect eligibility.

Prior to Enrollment

1. Fill out, and submit to the Library Director, an Educational Assistance Request form.
2. Provide a letter of support from an immediate supervisor.
3. Provide a letter to the Director describing the educational opportunity, and the benefit to the Library District and its users.
4. The Director will determine eligibility of the request, and notify the employee. If the request is denied, a brief explanation of the reason for denial will be provided.
5. Each semester, the employee will submit an official billing from the educational institution. The Library will pay the agreed upon amount to the employee, or institution, on a semester-by-semester basis.

After Course Completion

1. Submit a copy of the final grade, or grades, to the Library Director or Human Resources Manager. (The employee must receive a "C" or better in a graded course, or a "Pass" in a pass/fail course, for any undergraduate course of study, and a "B" or better in a graded course for graduate level work.)
2. If grade requirements are not met, reimbursement for tuition costs will not be issued by the Library District. The employee will be required to repay any amount that has been prepaid by the District. This can be done through payroll deductions.

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Board of Trustees
East Bonner County Library District