

Title: Tuition Reimbursement Program Policy		CARE BRAVELY
Department: Human Resources Approver(s): Terri Carter (VICE PRESIDENT - HUMAN RESOURCES)	Effective Date: 09/09/2022 Review Date: 09/09/2025 Reference #: 12484	
Site(s): Carroll Hospital Center, Grace Medical Center A Sinai Hospital Facility, Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center & Hospital, Northwest Hospital Center, Practice Dynamics, Sinai Hospital of Baltimore		

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PURPOSE:

To outline the LifeBridge Health Tuition Reimbursement Program, which provides financial support to the educational development of employees where such education has a direct relationship with the employee’s role or future role and benefits the work of LifeBridge Health.

DEFINITIONS:

Accredited Institution – A college or university that has gone through an external review process and has met the standards of a recognized reviewing agency, for overall institutional quality, educational accomplishments, and business and professional responsibilities.

Accredited Program – A degree program (e.g., Associates, Bachelors, Masters) which has been reviewed and approved by an Accredited Institution, or credited course of study approved in advance by the Accredited Institution.

Active – An employee who is currently working and is not on any type of leave is considered Active.

Credit Certificate Training Program is an educational program aimed at training individuals to become a License Practical Nurse (LPN).

Eligible Employees – All employees who meet the Eligibility Requirements set forth in Section I hereof.

Full-Time Employees – Employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of a .9 FTE equivalent.

Part-Time Employees – Employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of a .6 FTE equivalent but less than a .9 FTE equivalent.

Weekend Option Employees – Clinical employees who receive premium pay in return for their commitment to work every weekend.

POLICY:

I. Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for tuition reimbursement, an employee must:

- Be Active;

- Be a Full-Time, Part-Time, or Weekend Option Employee;
- Completed their Introductory Period;
- Not have any corrective action higher than a verbal warning; and
- Have attained at least a “Meets Expectations” on their most recent performance appraisal.

II. Course Requirements

To be approved, a course must:

- Be part of an Accredited Program at an Accredited Institution.
- Be part of a Credit Certificate Training Program for License Practical Nurses.
- Have a direct relationship to the Eligible Employee’s current or future role and benefit the work of LifeBridge Health, as determined by such employee’s supervisor;
- Be taught during hours in which the employee is not otherwise regularly schedule to work; and
- Be online, in-person, or a combination of both.

II. Application Process:

Eligible Employees must complete and submit an electronic Tuition Reimbursement Application and proof of registration and tuition payment at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the course. All applications shall include disclosure of all known sources from which the employee is receiving reimbursement for the course, including but not limited to: scholarships, grants, and governmental funding sources (e.g., GI Bill). Failure to disclose other sources of financial aid may adversely affect an employee's eligibility for reimbursement. Employees have an ongoing obligation to update their application with additional financial resources, as they identify them.

The Eligible Employee’s supervisor should ensure that the employee meets the eligibility requirements. Such supervisor should complete and submit Section II of the electronic Tuition Reimbursement Application form which forwards the application, including proof of payment, and his/her recommendation, to Employee Services for approval.

III. Maximum Reimbursement:

Only amounts paid for course tuition will be reimbursed. There will be no reimbursement for other costs associated with taking a course, including but not limited to: books and registration, technology, lab, and activities fees.

Full-Time and Weekend Option Eligible Employees will be entitled to tuition reimbursement as follows:

- Non-nursing courses: up to \$3,500 per calendar year.
- Nursing courses: up to \$5,000 per calendar year.

Part-Time Eligible Employees will be entitled to tuition reimbursement pro-rated based on the employee’s FTE, up to a maximum of \$1,500 per calendar year.

IV. Payment Process:

After coursework is completed, Eligible Employees must submit grades electronically by uploading grades to their original tuition reimbursement application. Payment will be made for each course in which the employee receives a grade of “C” or better for certificate and undergraduate courses or a grade of “B” or better for a graduate course.

The employee shall also submit all receipts and bills that would provide an accurate total of the employee’s tuition for such course. Employees who receive reimbursement for tuition through other sources will only be eligible for reimbursement of the dollar amount that they would be required to spend out-of-pocket for tuition.

Reimbursement will be processed within 2-4 weeks after Employee Services receives all information necessary to make such reimbursement.

Amounts paid to Eligible Employees for tuition reimbursement hereunder will be excluded from such employee’s taxable income to the extent permitted by the Internal Revenue Service.

V. Work Commitments:

- For non-nursing course of study, it is expected that tuition reimbursement recipients will remain Active employees in a benefited position within LifeBridge Health for at least six (6) months following completion of the course for which they were reimbursed. Employees who receive tuition reimbursement and terminate employment within 6 months following completion of the course for which they received reimbursement will be required to reimburse their employer for the amount of the reimbursement.
- For nursing course of study, it is expected that tuition reimbursement recipients will remain Active employees in a benefited position within LifeBridge Health for at least twelve (12) months following completion of the course for which they were reimbursed. Employees who receive tuition reimbursement and terminate employment within 12 months following completion of the course for which they received reimbursement will be required to reimburse their employer for the amount of the reimbursement received.

• **VI. Other Considerations:**

- LifeBridge Health reserves the right to recover previously paid tuition reimbursement if an employee fails to follow the terms and conditions of this policy, including the Application for Tuition Reimbursement.
- Time in school, whether on or off premises, is not time worked, and therefore will not be paid.
- Successful completion of one or more courses does not guarantee a promotion.

OTHER KEY WORDS:

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Supervisors: Know the provisions of the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

Employees: Discuss planned courses with leadership, know the eligibility requirements and apply in a timely manner.

Human Resources: Administer the program; provide coaching to employees and assist with interpretation of the policy.