



DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE: BENEFITS – EDUCATION AND TRAINING	NO. COU-069
<p>1.0 Education and Training</p> <p>The District will reimburse any employee who successfully completes an approved program of study through University, Community College or Seminar.</p> <p>Each program of study is to be approved by the Administrator prior to enrollment. Reimbursement will be 100% of the course fee and necessary course material on submission of paid receipts and proof of successful course/program completion.</p> <p>2.0 Employee Learning Fund (ELF)</p> <p>The District’s Employee Learning Fund (ELF) is modeled after the Provincial Ministry of Education’s Employee Learning Fund. ELF is established to:</p>	

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- 1) assist District employees in pursuing further education or training opportunities where a designation and/or credential will be obtained upon program completion;
- 2) reflect the District's commitment to organizational learning;
- 3) create a culture in which learning and adaptation to learning is continuous, interactive and encouraged;
- 4) make learning opportunities accessible to all employees, whether through workplace training or through formal education; and,
- 5) encourage employees to acquire new knowledge and skills that enhance their work, support their career development and prepare them for challenging assignments in the future.

Through the Fund, the District assists qualified employees to achieve these goals by underwriting associated costs of further education and training. The Fund is designed to address employee development and training needs.

1) Program Administration

The ELF is the responsibility of the Manager of Corporate Services. Fund administration includes:

- a) Application process.
- b) Oversight of screening and adjudication of applications.
- c) Financial administration for the purposes of tracking employee institutional reimbursements. or
- d) Program monitoring and accountability.
- e) Ongoing consultation with post-secondary education/training institutions and individual District employees and management staff about operational requirements and information related to the Fund.

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- f) Policy development and implementation.
- g) Recruitment and selection of Adjudication Committee members.

2) Selection Process

The ELF Committee (the Committee), under the auspices of the Corporate Services Department, processes and adjudicates applications to the ELF. Committee members are recruited and selected by the Manager of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The ELF Committee shall consist of:

- a) Manager, of Corporate Services - Chair
- b) Inside Union Shop Steward
- c) Outside Union Shop Steward
- d) Management Representative

The Committee meets at the call of the Chair to review applications and conduct the adjudication and selection process. Recommended decisions made by the Committee are confidential and subject to final approval by the CAO. Within 2 weeks of a final decision, the Manager of Corporate Services notifies all applicants in writing.

Once an employee has been approved for financial support through the ELF, the employee must meet the following additional requirements:

- a) Submission of certified end-of-term academic or program transcripts and evaluations throughout the duration of enrolment.
- b) Written notification to immediate Supervisor or Manager, within 5 business days, of any change in education or training program and/or employment status.
- c) Written notification from the relevant institution confirming successful completion of the education/training program and/or courses. An employee who does not meet program and/or course requirements for successful completion must reimburse the employer for all associated program costs.

3) Information for Supervisors, Managers and Directors

As a Supervisor, Manager or Director, this information will assist you in your decision-making when:

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- a) an employee requests assistance from the ELF for long-term education or training leading to a credential; and,
- b) training or education activity meets the needs of both the individual and the District.

Your responsibilities include:

- a) ensuring that employees have equal access to information about the Fund;
- b) ensuring that employees understand eligibility criteria and program requirements;
- c) assessing the employee's potential to successfully complete the education/training program and their suitability for career advancement or desired occupation;
- d) reviewing the employee's application and recommending a program response consistent with established guidelines, operational requirements and funding availability (approving the application);
- e) verifying that the employee's past and present job performance is fully satisfactory;
- f) informing the Manager of Corporate Services within **5 business days** of any change to the employee's employment status that will affect funding eligibility or education/training program completion; and,
- g) reviewing the employee's application package for the appropriate approvals and signatures and providing the Manager of Corporate Services with additional employee information, if required.

4) Information for Employees

The Fund supports up to 100% of the following education and/or training costs at BC accredited public or private post-secondary education institutions:

- a) program/course tuition;
- b) textbooks and related course materials required by the education or training program;
- c) residence and travel expenses, if appropriate and applicable; and,

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d) initial institutional application and/or commitment fee.

The Fund does not support:

- a) courses or programs offered at an **unaccredited** public or private post-secondary education or training institution;
- b) vehicle parking or other transportation costs;
- c) more than **two** requests by the employee to extend, beyond institutional guidelines, the education or training program completion date(s);
- d) student and administrative fees outside the approved education or training program; and,
- e) education or training programs outside British Columbia without submission of a detailed rationale and business case prepared by the Department Head to support the application.

Before completing and submitting an application package, qualified employees should contact their Supervisor to discuss their personal learning and career plans in preparation for obtaining appropriate approvals.

Employees who are interested in applying to the ELF must complete and submit an **application package** that consists of the following documents:

- a) A **full description** of the education/training program or area of study, including detailed course description(s) and cost estimates, and demonstration of its relevance to present or future job responsibilities and/or career development.
- b) A **statement** of how the education/training will benefit the employee co-signed by the applicant and appropriate Supervisor or Manager.
- c) A **statement** outlining the duration of the program of study, application deadlines and all required tuition costs of program completion.
- d) A **statement** related to education/training leave requirements, if applicable.
- e) All **information** related to any scholarships, bursaries or other funding that the applicant has received or will receive relevant to the current application.

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- f) A **statement** from the applicant's immediate Supervisor or Manager indicating a fully satisfactory level of job performance for the past 12 months.
- g) A current **Performance Planning, Appraisal and Development** form (PPA&D).
- h) A **letter of support** from the appropriate Supervisor or Manager, including a statement of the District's ability to "backfill" the applicant's position, if required.
- i) An **agreement** signed by the applicant that s/he will return to their position with the District when the education or training program is completed. The agreement must also address a pay-back scheme should the employee not return to their position or leave the position within a three year period.
- j) Completion of an **Application Assessment Checklist** completed by the applicant's immediate Supervisor.
- k) Completion of a **Training Request** application form.

Confirmation of receipt of the application will be sent to applicants within **10 business days** of submission. An application package and/or document samples may be obtained from the Corporate Services Department.

5) Financial Administration

Financial costs associated with education or training programs through the ELF are administered by the Manager of Corporate Services. All relevant invoices and/or receipts must be submitted to the Manager for verification and processing. Reimbursement will subsequently occur through the Financial Services Department. Upon approval of the CAO an employee may receive advance funding for their educational program. The Financial Services Department will monitor outstanding advances to ensure repayment prior to any change in an employee's employment situation.

The employee must agree to fully reimburse the District in the event that the education or training program is not completed or if the employee does not meet academic program

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requirements resulting in termination or withdrawal. Specific terms of reimbursement are defined through a signed mutual agreement between the employee and the District at the time of application for funding.

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