

UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Policy 110

May 23, 2001

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
IN-STATE AND OUT-OF-STATE ADULT EDUCATION
AND TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**Intent

It is the intent of this policy to clarify the approval process for educational opportunities for court employees. The policy does not apply to judges.

It is not the intent of this policy to permit court employees to obtain undergraduate or graduate degrees at the expense of the North Dakota Judicial System. Educational and professional development programs should be chosen for the position an employee presently holds.

Philosophy

The judiciary supports the continued professional development and education of judicial employees as a means of providing employees with the skills necessary to fulfill their duties.

A. In-State Adult Educational Programs and Conferences

The appointing authority, or the designee of the appointing authority, shall have the authority to approve requests to attend in-state conferences and adult educational programs. The employee's supervisor shall determine that the conference and/or program is related to the employee's job duties and forward the request, along with the supervisor's recommendation, to the appointing authority.

B. In-State Tuition Reimbursement for College Level Courses

The appointing authority, or designee of the appointing authority, may approve the costs of tuition, books, lab fees, or other direct expenses for college level classes. The employee's supervisor shall determine that the class is directly related to an employee's job duties and is necessary for the performance of the employee and forward the request, along with the supervisor's recommendation, to the appointing authority.

C. Out-of-State Adult Educational Programs and Conferences

An employee who has identified a training program or conference which is believed to be job related may submit a memorandum to the employee's supervisor. The memorandum must contain an explanation of the type of training; an agenda or brochure; a statement of how the training pertains to the employee's present duties and responsibilities; a reason or justification for submitting the request; the period of absence, projected training and travel costs. The employee's supervisor shall determine that the material is not otherwise available in-state and that the program or conference is related to the employee's job duties. The supervisor should consider the educational needs of the position and previous attendance at out-of-state programs prior to making a recommendation and seeking approval of any request from the appointing

authority and the Chief Justice or designee. If approval is recommended, the appointing authority will submit the travel request to the Chief Justice for consideration.

The training may be fully funded, partially funded, or not funded as determined by the appointing authority and Chief Justice based upon available funding and priorities. If the training is not funded, a decision as to time off with pay to attend the program will be indicated in the event that the employee desires to provide personal funding. Education leave will not be subtracted from the employee's bank of annual leave.

D. Professional Development

Professional development is defined as a course of study which will lead to attaining a professional status or a professional certificate or a degree.

Requests for enrollment in a professional development program must be made to the immediate supervisor. The recommendation of the supervisor and appointing authority shall be forwarded to the Chief Justice for approval prior to the expenditure of funds.

E. Reimbursable Costs

Upon proper approval, the state shall reimburse the cost of lodging, mileage, meals, books, registration fees, tuition, and associated costs of attending education and professional development programs. The salary of the individual attending the program is paid by the North Dakota Judicial System while in attendance.

F. Budgetary Limitations

Attendance at any educational program or conference is subject to budgetary limitations. Payments shall be made from funds pursuant to policies and procedures established by the fiscal department of the State Court Administrator's Office.

G. The appointing authority, or designee of the appointing authority, shall ensure that any information relating to the course content and cost of attendance is documented on forms provided by the state court administrator's office. The forms shall be completed and forwarded with the employee's travel voucher.

H. Reporting

Education leave taken shall be reported in accordance with Policy 102 (Leave Policy).