

CHAPTER 8

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

It is the policy of ITD to provide job-related training to its employees in order to enhance the ability of employees and thus ensure maximum productivity. Employees are encouraged to pursue educational opportunities, which will enhance their opportunity to advance within the organization or within state service. Costs of training or educational courses may be paid for or reimbursed as provided in this chapter.

Section 1. JOB-RELATED TRAINING

Division Directors may, within approved budgetary constraints, plan, schedule, and pay for any job-related training programs appropriate to the work assigned to an employee of their division.

Division Directors will determine which programs are considered to be job-related. This determination will be made based on the content of the training program and its value to improving the ability of an employee to perform the job. The method of training, i.e., correspondence, conference, hands-on, video conferencing, classroom attendance, etc., will not be an eligibility-determining factor.

All costs related to attendance at approved job-related training programs will be paid by ITD. Travel, lodging, and per diem associated with such training will be paid in accordance with current Office of Management and Budget Fiscal and Administrative Policies.

Training under this section will normally be provided during duty hours. When training or associated travel extends beyond normal duty hours, the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and this manual (see Chapter 5, Section 2) for non-exempt employees must be applied.

ITD will pay for the cost of an exam needed to receive a certification that has been included in an employee's education plan and has received the supervisor/manager's prior approval. ITD agrees to pay for two exams for the same certification, in case the first exam was failed. Additional exams for the same certification previously tested for would be at the employee's expense.

Section 2. TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

ITD affords its employees the opportunity to pursue continued education through colleges and/or universities and may, depending upon agency budgetary constraints and the employee's

successful completion of the course(s), reimburse the employee for associated tuition and fees, including lab fees; however, ITD does not reimburse employees for the cost of books. ITD will reimburse employees for up to two classes per semester and a maximum of six classes per calendar year. The rate of reimbursement for courses in this policy will be up to 80 percent of course tuition and fees. Time spent in class at the employee's discretion is not considered hours worked; thus the employee is not compensated.

The Deputy may establish additional parameters for the approval of tuition reimbursement when it becomes necessary to provide an equitable distribution of limited funds, such as limiting the reimbursement to less than 80 percent tuition, in order to accommodate more employees. Parameters may be flexible from one budget period to another, but within a budget period such guidelines will be applied in a consistent and fair fashion.

In instances where a tuition reimbursement agreement is in effect at the time revisions are made to this policy, the existing agreement in effect at the time will remain in effect until the completion of the course to which the agreement applies.

Temporary employees and new employees on probation are not eligible for tuition reimbursement. ITD employees on a formal performance improvement plan may not be eligible for tuition reimbursement, unless specific course(s) are prescribed by the employer to assist in improving the employee's performance.

In all cases for which an employee requests tuition reimbursement, the degree pursued must yield some form of benefit to ITD (i.e., be directly or indirectly job-related). The employee must reflect such course work in his or her annual education plan and a Request for Training and Development (SFN 52862) <https://intranet.itd.state.nd.us/forms/> must be completed and approved prior to the employee attending any course.

Approval to attend a college and/or university and to be eligible for tuition reimbursement is granted at ITD's discretion, on a course-by-course basis (not on a total degree plan basis), depending on such factors as: the availability of agency funds, higher priority training needs, employee performance, etc. Normally, the employee attends such course offerings outside the employee's regularly scheduled work hours. Under unusual circumstances, a particular course required under the employee's degree plan, may not be offered outside the employee's normal work hours. Under such circumstances, an alternative or flexible work schedule may be offered to the employee, at the supervisor/manager or director's discretion, if the supervisor can assure customer service will not suffer and that such work schedule does not place an additional burden on fellow team members in the work unit.

To receive tuition reimbursement for any completed course(s), an employee must submit the following information to ITD's Accounting Division upon completion of the course and receipt of a grade: a Request For Tuition Reimbursement form (SFN 58474)

<http://intranet.itd.state.nd.us/forms/>, evidence of successful completion of the course (e.g.: obtaining a final grade of C- or above), and a copy of the paid receipt.

(Effective 12/29/06)