

Continuing Education Policy

(Adopted May 2014; revised June 2017; revised January 2019; revised May 2022)

The Stickney-Forest View Public Library District encourages the pursuit of continuing education for Library employees so that they may continue to grow professionally and develop work-related skills that will ultimately benefit not only the employee, but the operations of the Library. The goal of this policy is to enhance job satisfaction for employees, and to improve the quality of Library service for our Library users.

Formal Courses

Library employees are encouraged to continue their education through work-related formal courses. The Library Board of Trustees may award tuition grants to individuals whose applications have been approved. Courses that are audited or non-accredited are not eligible. The awards made during a given year will depend on factors including number of applicants, date of application, and the availability of Library funds. Previous awards of tuition grant funds do not guarantee future awards.

The following will apply in the awarding of tuition grants:

- Full-Time employees who have worked at least one year and Part-Time or Less than Part Time employees who have worked an average of 20 hours per week for one year, may apply for a tuition grant.
- If approved, and assuming the availability of sufficient funding, one-half of the tuition will be reimbursed, up to \$4,000 per fiscal year for full-time employees and up to \$2,000 per fiscal year for regular part-time employees, upon satisfactory completion of the course.
- Reimbursement for job-related undergraduate course work will be no more than the rate of the hourly tuition at Morton College. For job-related graduate level study, the employee will be reimbursed at no more than the rate of tuition at the University of Illinois.
- An employee planning additional education requiring a course of study longer than one class (as distinguished from a single class), and/or leading to an additional degree or certificate of completion should discuss such plans in advance with the Director.
- Optional non-educational expenses, including travel to and from campus, are not included.
- Each person receiving a tuition grant must present evidence of satisfactory completion of the course with at least a "C" average to receive reimbursement.
- Employees must request reimbursement for tuition within six months of course completion.
- The Library expects that the employee who has received reimbursement for continuing education shall remain with the Library for a minimum of one year following completion of any course. If an employee who has received a tuition grant resigns or is terminated for cause within one year of completion of that course work or program, the employee will repay the amount of the grant to the Library within twelve months, unless a waiver of this requirement is granted by the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library will attempt to accommodate class schedules. However, classes must be taken on the employee's own time and must not interfere with satisfactory performance of job duties.

Tax consequences, if any, as a result of Library reimbursement under this plan are the sole responsibility of the employee. Taxable earnings, if applicable, may be added to overall earnings and reflected on an employee's W-2.

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