

**ALLEGAN COUNTY
POLICY**



**TITLE: EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE
POLICY NUMBER: 509**

APPROVED BY: Board of Commissioners

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2020

1. **PURPOSE:** To aid and encourage employees and elected officials to complete educational courses that are job related and/or deemed beneficial to their positions, Allegan County provides educational assistance for approved tuition, books and fees.
2. **POLICY:**
 - 2.1. **Eligibility:** Non-represented full-time and part-time regular employees who have completed at least 12 months of employment and elected officials (defined as the Prosecuting Attorney, Treasurer, Clerk/Register, Drain Commissioner, Sheriff and their Chief Deputies, as well as the County Board of Commissioners) with the County are eligible to apply for educational assistance. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement are eligible in accordance with the terms of their current agreement. Courses must be taken from an accredited two (2) year or four (4) year institution. Seminars, workshops, and other training sessions, which do not provide credit, are excluded under this policy. Class attendance and homework assignments must be completed on the employee's own time. Paid Time Off may be used if authorized by the employee's department head.
 - 2.2. **Application:** Employees must obtain prior written approval from their department head and the Executive Director of Human Resources regarding the classes selected and eligible expenses for reimbursement. Elected officials shall submit their application directly to the Human Resources Department for processing. Requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the first day of class. Forms can be obtained on the County Intranet under Human Resources.
 - 2.3. **Reimbursement:** Educational assistance will be administered by the Human Resources Department. Reimbursement for a completed course will be at one-hundred percent (100%) for tuition, textbook and lab fee expenses only up to maximum of \$3,000 per calendar year, provided a grade of "C: or better is attained. Reimbursement will be processed as a non-taxable expenditure to the extent permitted by law. Request for reimbursement must be made within 30 days of completion of course and must include an official grade transcript and a receipt verifying that the tuition and other eligible expenses for the course(s) have been paid in full. The County will not provide reimbursement if the tuition or other eligible expenses were covered by scholarships, grants, veterans benefits, etc.
 - 2.4. **Repayment:** If an employee voluntarily separates from employment with the County within 12 months of reimbursement of tuition and other eligible expenses, the employee will be liable for repayment of such reimbursement on a pro-rated basis and such amount

will be deducted from the separating employee's final payroll check prior to distribution. If an elected official has received tuition reimbursement and is subsequently defeated in an election, the repayment provision is waived. If, however, an elected official chooses not to run for re-election, they are liable for the repayment.