NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY	EP:	3.6
	REVISION:	10
EMPLOYEE POLICY	DATE:	12/18/2012

PLEASE REFER TO THE PORTION OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES ENTITLED DISCLAIMERS WHERE YOU WILL FIND A STATEMENT WHICH PERTAINS TO ALL EMPLOYEE POLICIES, INCLUDING THIS ONE.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose

1.1 The Authority is committed to helping its salaried employees pursue professional growth and development and encourages the use of the Educational Assistance Program for courses leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree or a certificate program that is of mutual benefit to employees and the Authority.

Eligibility

2.1 The Educational Assistance Program is available to full-time or part-time salaried Authority employees and transitional employees, who maintain a performance rating of "achieved expectations" or better. Generally, employees who receive a performance rating of "partially achieved" or "did not meet expectations" are not eligible to receive benefits under this program. (However, there may be instances when supervisors determine that the overall performance of employees with a rating of "partially achieved expectations" may have sufficiently improved to allow them to receive benefits under this program (see section 8.4 for additional details). Provisional and temporary employees, including cooperative employees and developmental interns, are not eligible for the Educational Assistance Program. (See EP: 3.1, Salaried Employees' Eligibility for Benefits, for definitions of employee categories.)

2.2 Eligibility for the Educational Assistance Program ends upon termination or separation from employment as a NYPA employee. Courses started prior to an employee's employment date or while on a leave, or courses that are completed after an employee's termination or separation from employment, are not eligible for reimbursement (see section 3.1 and 8.5 for additional details). Courses started prior to an approved FMLA medical leave are eligible for reimbursement at the discretion of an employee's immediate supervisor (see section 8.5 for additional details).

2.3 School attendance will be at times other than an employee's normal working hours.

Reimbursement to the Authority

3.1 All benefits under this Policy are contingent upon the employee's continued employment with the Authority for a continuous period of at least one year for undergraduate degree programs and two years for graduate programs, such period to begin from the employee's last payment towards a degree or certificate program either in process or earned. If the employee leaves NYPA's employment before the end of the commitment period (for a reason

other than a reduction in force), the employee agrees to repay in full all monies expended by NYPA on behalf of the employee in connection with the applicable degree program.

Eligible Institutions and Programs

4.1 In order to be covered by the Educational Assistance Program, the degree or certificate program must be obtained from a regionally accredited educational institution. On-line or distance educational course work (course work taken via the internet) from a regionally accredited educational institution may be reimbursable pending review and approval by an employee's immediate supervisor or Department Head/Business Unit Head or Regional Managers at the facilities, Business Group Head and Corporate Human Resources. Fees for proficiency examinations (CLEP for example) are reimbursable only if employees pass the examination and college credit is granted. Fees for review courses are reimbursable only if the course is completed in full and employees obtain a completion certificate. (Employees will be reimbursed for the same or similar review course only once.) A certificate program means an advanced program sponsored by a college or university leading to the award of a specialized certificate. It does not include stand-alone courses such as Dale Carnegie and others. Courses that are not part of a degree or certificate program are not covered by the Educational Assistance Program. The costs for approved courses are covered by individual Business Unit budgets.

Approval

5.1 At Headquarters (WPO, Albany Office), the degree or certificate program must first be approved by an employee's immediate supervisor, the Business Unit/Department Head and the Business Group head in accordance with this policy. Approved requests should be forwarded to Human Resources for final determination of eligibility for the Educational Assistance Program. At all other facilities, the degree or certificate program must be approved by an employee's Department Head and Regional Manager in accordance with this policy. Approved requests should be forwarded to site Human Resources for final determination of eligibility for the Educational Assistance Program.

5.2 Approval for educational assistance is contingent upon a careful review that the degree or certificate program supports or improves skills required for (1) the employee's current position or (2) a potential future assignment with the Authority. The degree or certificate program should also be in line with the employee's NYPA career development objectives. Supervisors who approve an educational assistance program application should include the skills the employee will learn in the degree or certificate program in the Developmental Plan section of the employee's Performance Plus Document ("PPD"), and measure the application of those skills on the job in the Performance Assessment Summary section of the employee's PPD.

5.3 If the degree or certificate program is aimed at a new career field, there must be a reasonable expectation that job opportunities will exist in the new field within the Authority, and that

the employee will qualify for those opportunities. A reasonable expectation, however, is not a guarantee that a position will be available at the time the degree or certificate program is completed. Therefore, reimbursement for tuition and fees will be at half the financial level of reimbursement for undergraduate degrees. At Headquarters, the Business Group Head where this expected opportunity will exist is also required to approve the proposed degree or certificate program. At all other sites, the Regional Manager where this expected opportunity will exist and Human Resources will be required to approve the proposed degree or certificate program.

Reimbursement for Expenses

6.1 Employees are responsible for payment of tuition and eligible required fees when registering for courses at eligible institutions. Tuition and eligible fees will be reimbursed only after successful completion of the course(s) at a minimum grade level of "C" or its equivalent or a "P" in a pass/fail course (limited to two courses per degree curriculum) and provided employees are employed by NYPA at the time the course is completed. If requested, Human Resources will provide a school with verification of an employee's eligibility for the program. For employees that are approved for Educational Assistance after September 1, 2012, reimbursements are limited to one reimbursement per season. Seasons are defined as Spring, Summer I, Summer II, Fall and Winter.

6.2 For undergraduate courses, the Authority will reimburse 100% of tuition, books, lab and computer fees, and mandatory course registration fees up to a maximum reimbursement of $2,000 per season (as defined above). For undergraduate or graduate courses aimed at a new career field, the Authority will reimburse 100% of tuition, books, lab and computer fees, and mandatory course registration fees up to a maximum reimbursement of $1,000 per season.

6.3 For graduate courses related to an employee's current career field, the Authority will reimburse 100% of tuition, books, lab and computer fees, mandatory course registration fees, and thesis/dissertation supplies up to a maximum benefit of $3,000 per season.

6.4 Ancillary fees that may be required by the educational institution (either mandatory or optional), including but not limited to fees for application, late registration, student activities, health care services, student licensing, matriculation, graduation or diploma are not reimbursable. Parking fees are not reimbursable. Applications for non-routine items not mentioned in this paragraph must be submitted to Human Resources for consideration.

Initial Application Process

7.1 Employees must submit an initial Application for Educational Assistance to their immediate supervisor at least 30 days before the registration period. The application must include a copy of the degree or certificate program curriculum. Applications for review courses must be accompanied by a description of the course. Late applications, if accompanied by a written

explanation, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Updated course curriculum may be requested on occasion.

7.2 At Headquarters, an employee's immediate supervisor, Business Unit/Department Head and Business Group Head must approve a request for educational assistance. Approved requests should be forwarded to Human Resources for final determination of an employee's eligibility for the program at least two weeks prior to registration. At the sites, Department Heads and Regional Managers must approve an employee's educational assistance requests. Approved requests should be forwarded to the local Human Resources Department for final determination of an employee's eligibility for the program at least two weeks prior to registration. Rejected requests will be returned with the reason for disapproval.

7.3 If an employee transfers to a new degree or certificate program or school, or transfers to a new Business Unit/Department within the Authority, a new Application for Educational Assistance must be approved.

Reimbursement Process

8.1 If the degree or certificate program is approved, in order to receive reimbursement, a completed Educational Assistance Program Request for Reimbursement Form must be submitted to Human Resources, along with the following items, no later than thirty (30) working days following receipt of evidence of satisfactory course completion:

- an itemized bursar's receipt for tuition and eligible fees paid;
- a grade report, official transcript or certification of completion of the course(s) documenting a grade of "C" or better, or a "P" in a pass/fail course(s);
- a sales receipt with book titles and prices itemized by the bookstore;
- original documentation indicating completion of a review course, if applicable;
- original documentation from school itemizing necessary supplies for a graduate level thesis/dissertation and an original sales receipt for the supplies, if applicable;
- copy of degree after completion of course curriculum.

8.2 Employees who receive financial aid, such as a scholarship, grant or reimbursement from any alternate source must report it and the amount on the Educational Assistance Program Request for Reimbursement Form. This amount will be deducted before computing the allowable reimbursement. Employees who fail to report amounts of financial aid or any other type of reimbursement on the reimbursement form, will be liable for return of the reimbursement award, and face possible exclusion from future Educational Assistance Program eligibility. Any falsification or misrepresentation of information will result in the denial of educational assistance.

8.3 If approved, employees will receive their reimbursement in a subsequent paycheck. Original documents will not be returned.

8.4 Generally, employees are not eligible for reimbursement for courses started after they receive a performance rating of "partially achieved expectations" or "did not meet expectations". Courses started prior to receiving a rating of "partially achieved expectations" or "did not meet expectations" will be reimbursed. Employees will be eligible for reimbursement once again for courses started after they achieve and maintain a performance rating of at least "achieved expectations" or in instances when supervisors determine that the performance of employees with a rating of "partially achieved expectations" has sufficiently improved.

8.5 Courses started prior to an employee's employment date, or while on a non-FMLA medical leave or a personal leave without pay, are not eligible for reimbursement. Courses that are completed after an employee's termination, or while on a non-FMLA medical leave or personal leave without pay, are not eligible for reimbursement.

8.6 Courses started prior to an approved FMLA medical leave are eligible for reimbursement at the discretion of an employee's immediate supervisor. Courses started during an approved FMLA medical leave are not eligible for reimbursement.

Tax Consequences

9.1 For undergraduate and graduate level courses, the IRS allows the first $5,250 in employer-provided educational assistance in a calendar year to be considered as non-taxable income. Educational assistance above $5,250 per year may qualify for "favorable tax treatment" as a working condition fringe benefit, as defined in IRS Publication 15-B Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits. Requests for favorable tax treatment will be forwarded to the Law Department and when necessary, will confer with the Accounting Department to determine if the educational assistance qualifies for exclusion as a working condition benefit.

9.2 While the Authority may initially determine that an employee's educational assistance reimbursement is not taxable income, the Internal Revenue Service's decision is controlling in such circumstances and the Authority disclaims any responsibility for additional taxes, assessments, fines, or penalties imposed by the IRS. Employees are advised to consult with their own qualified tax professional, if they have tax questions.

Vice President, Human Resources

1/24/13
Date