

TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT RELEASE

POLICY NUMBER: 600-02	EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/04/2013	APPOINTING AUTHORITY APPROVAL: 
REPLACES POLICY DATED: 01/06/2008	AUTHORITY:	

I. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance and procedure to the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) employees in obtaining release time for attending training and development programs that will enhance their abilities and potential. Training may be provided through relevant division funding. Additionally, bargaining unit employees may access available training funds through Workforce Development Fund (WFD); exempt employees may access Exempt Professional Development Program (EPDP) or tuition reimbursement. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for those times when employees may be approved to use leave with pay when utilizing WFD or EPDP funds.

II. POLICY

A. It is the policy of DAS to provide training opportunities that are designed to improve productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of government service by development and better utilization of talents, abilities and potential of employees.

1. Permanent employees may at times be released during normal work to attend training and to participate in non-Agency training programs.
 - a. Training shall be directly related to the work in the employee's agency and specific to his or her position.
 - b. Training shall lead to improvement of the employee's skills and job performance or skill expansion.
 - c. Reasonable effort will be made to equitably distribute such training opportunities among employees.
2. Employees may be granted reasonable amounts of leave with pay to attend work-related professional meetings. Release for bargaining unit employees will be granted based on contractual provisions for professional meetings.
3. Release time for training programs or professional meetings shall be paid at regular rate and shall not exceed eight (8) hours in any given day.
 - a. If the training is **required** by the manager, it will be funded through the division budget unless the employee agrees to utilize available WFD or EPDP funds.
 - b. Employees are encouraged to use WFD or EPDP funds, as relevant.

- c. The employee must secure approval to attend training in advance of the training date.
4. There will be no release from scheduled work hours to attend college courses.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. *Position and agency related training programs:* training programs, while not required for the employee's current position, are related to the development of skills or knowledge, which may enhance an employee's ability to perform. Examples include: effective communication in the work environment or software applications that enhance the employee's ability to participate on projects or perform assignments.
2. *Continuing education courses for the maintenance of State licenses or compliance with state classification specifications:* courses that are required for employment in the employee's present classification or licensure, and are not automatically considered position or agency related, or professional development meetings.
3. *Interaction with Workforce Development / Exempt Professional Development Program:* employees may be eligible to apply for and be granted Workforce Development (WFD) or Exempt Professional Development Program (EPDP) funds. If the employee wishes to be released during work hours to attend training or a professional development meeting, the employee is required to process the request through his or her immediate supervisor for review and approval.
4. *Paid release time-* employees may be assigned or released during the work shift to attend non-agency training or to attend work-related professional meetings. Release time for training programs or professional meetings shall be paid at regular rate and shall not exceed eight (8) hours in any given day. There will be no release from regular scheduled work hours to attend college courses.

III. PROCEDURE

A. TRAINING or PROFESSIONAL MEETING RELEASE TIME REQUEST PROCESS

1. Divisions will determine appropriate format for requesting paid leave under this policy.
2. By the employee submitting a request, the employee is considered "on notice" of any required schedule change to facilitate attendance.
3. Should the release affect the safety or wellbeing of the public or the operational effectiveness of the division/office, effort will be made to find an alternative training plan.

- a. The alternative plan will be acceptable to all parties.
 - b. The needs of the public and operational effectiveness for the work unit must receive first priority.
4. When the training does not encompass the employee's total work shift:
- a. Arrangements must be made with the supervisor concerning leave usage, or
 - b. Employee must report for work during time not in class.
5. Should release time be denied, personal leave, vacation or compensatory time from available balances may be requested and used under the usual section practices.

B. REIMBURSEMENT/PAYMENT GUIDELINES

1. Cost of training, including any travel costs, requested by the employee will be paid by the employee or by funds available to the employee through WFD or EPDP.
2. Supervisors may not assign job-related training and require the employee to use his or her funds provided by WFD or EPDP. If a supervisor or manager requires an employee to attend training, expenses associated with training will be paid from the divisional budget unless the employee agrees to use WFD or EPDP. Any associated travel cost issues should be discussed and worked out in advance.

C. ATTENDANCE – CANCELLATION

1. Employees must complete the registration process for the course in conjunction with receiving approval for release time or applicable leave. The employee must comply with WFD or EPDP guidelines to receive payment.
2. An employee registered for any training session is required to attend the session.
3. If the employee cannot attend a training session, he or she is responsible to cancel with the training provider as stipulated in the relevant cancellation policy.
4. An employee who registers for a training session and does not attend, may be required to reimburse the Department, or applicable fund, for any cost paid.
5. If the employee is forced to miss the training due to an emergency occurring that day:
 - a. The employee is required to contact his or her supervisor and the training provider to explain the absence.
 - b. Supporting documentation of the emergency may be required.

IV. REVISION HISTORY

Date	Description of Change
12/01/2005	Original Policy issued
1/06/2008	New appointing authority
1/04/2013	New appointing authority