

FY 16 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Q: How do I enter an EDF Application for Reimbursement?

- A. Complete an EDF Application for Reimbursement in OAKS HCM by logging into myOhio.gov. Select “Career Resources”, then select “EDF Reimbursement Request”. For further assistance you can access the job aid – EDF Application for Reimbursement.

Q: What do I need to do to be reimbursed?

- A. Complete the EDF Application for Reimbursement with the following documents within 90 calendar days upon completion of your class/event:
- a. Proof of cost (Brochure, flyer, web page, provider letter that shows what the course/event costs)
 - b. Proof of payment (front and back of cancelled check, copy of credit card statement, paid receipt submitted on provider letterhead, which should include your names on all documents)
 - c. Proof of completion (Certificate of attendance or completion, letter grade, letter acknowledging attendance on provider letterhead) **Badges will not be accepted as proof of attendance**

Q: When will I receive my reimbursement?

- A: Generally, within 30 calendar days from the date of submission.

Q: How will I receive my reimbursement?

- A. The eligible reimbursement amount will appear in your paycheck.

Q: Now that I receive my reimbursement in my payroll check, is it taxable?

- A: No, not unless the reimbursed amount of \$5250 is exceeded. There is no change from previous years.

Q: Does Employee Development Funds (EDF) offer prepay of tuition or for events.

- A: No, tuition and/or events cannot be prepaid.

Q: How much money is allotted per employee group per fiscal year?

The following table lists the maximum reimbursement limits per employee group per fiscal year. Note the maximum combined per year per employee. For FOP and SEIU employees the maximum total for events and/or tuition individually or combined is \$3,000. An exempt employee may only use \$1,500 for events per fiscal year and an OSTA employee may only use \$5,000 for events per fiscal year.

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LIMITS	EXEMPT	FOP B.U. 2	OEA SCOPE B.U. 10	OSTA B.U. 1 & 15	SEIU 1199 B.U. 11 & 12
Maximum Amount—Tuition	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$7,500	\$3,000
Maximum Amount—Events	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,500	\$5,000	\$3,000
TOTAL COMBINED MAXIMUM PER EMPLOYEE PER FISCAL YEAR	\$4,500	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$7,500	\$3,000

ELIGIBILITY

Q: How do I find out if my school or college is accredited?

A: Coursework must be provided by accredited college or university named in the U.S. Department of Education’s Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs. Click the following link and follow the instructions to verify the status of your college or university name - <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.

Q: What grades are eligible to receive tuition reimbursement?

A: Employee must attain a “C” grade or better, or receive a “pass” if assessed on a pass/fail basis or satisfactory to receive tuition reimbursement.

Q: Can I get reimbursed for “credit for life experience” if the university offers it?

A: Yes, if the experience meets the college/university criteria, the college/university meets the accreditation criteria and the college/university allows academic credit for the “credit for life experience.”

Q: What is not eligible for reimbursement under the events program?

A: Generally, non-instructional fees, combined fees, general fees including memberships, subscriptions, licenses, certifications, matriculation, course fees, testing or examinations, computer hardware, software, non-instructional field trips, travel expenses e.g. parking, travel, food or lodging expenses.

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Q: Can I be reimbursed if my federal student loan pays for all or part of the cost of the course?

A: Yes, because you have to repay the loan.

Q: Can I be reimbursed for courses or events paid for in part or in whole by scholarships, grants or military discounts?

A: No, scholarships, grants and military discounts do not have to be repaid. If a course or event is paid in part by a grant or scholarship and you paid for the balance, we will reimburse you for the part you paid.

COURSE ELIGIBILITY

Q: How do I know if my class qualifies for reimbursement?

A: Courses/events are expected to provide knowledge and/or skills, which support the major job classifications as listed in the Classification Specifications manual posted on the DAS HRD Workforce Administration Web page.

POLICY & PROCEDURES

Q: Can I be reimbursed for the cost of my Social Worker's (Real Estate, Counselor, Nurse's etc.) examination or license?

A: No, licensing fees are not eligible for reimbursement through EDF. We will reimburse you for the coursework to prepare you for the licensing examination or continuing education courses to maintain your license.

Q: Will I be reimbursed for membership fees? (Professional organization)?

A: No, membership fees in professional organizations *are not* eligible for reimbursement through EDF.

Q: If a provider doesn't give proof of attendance for an event I've attended can I still be reimbursed?

A: No, Proof of attendance is required. You will be required to obtain a letter on the provider's letter or email from the provider's email account that certifies your attendance or completion of course/event. Your name, the event name and date of completion must be on the proof.

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Q: How long do I have to submit my documents after my course/event is over?

A: You have ninety (90) calendar days from the last day of your course or event to submit your documentation.

Q: Can I be reimbursed for books?

A: Yes. Employees must attain a “C” or better, or receive a “pass” if assessed on a pass/fail basis or satisfactory. You must submit an itemized list of book charges and a paid receipt. EDF does not pay for taxes or shipping and handling.

Q: What are the alternatives to submitting online?

A: All applications must be submitted through myOhio for Reimbursement.

Q: If my application and/or documentation submission is not correct or incomplete, what will happen?

A: You will be notified of the error or missing information by email. You will have to **resubmit** the document with the correct and/or complete information then notify EDF by email (EDFunds@das.ohio.gov) that you resubmitted the documents.

Q: If I don't use all of my current fiscal year funding, will it carry over?

A: No, the funds expire at the end of the fiscal year.

Q: I was in the bargaining unit and now am an exempt employee. How long do I have to wait to use exempt benefits?

A: You are eligible when your new employment status is posted in myOhio.

Q: Do I have to complete probation to participate?

A: If you are an exempt employee upgrading or transferring from a bargaining unit employee, you must complete your initial probation as a state employee to be eligible to participate **and your class/event has to start after your initial probation**. If you are a bargaining unit employee there are no restrictions regarding probation.

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Q: Can I use events funds to take courses offered at a college or university?

A: Yes. If the course offers continuing education credits (CEU's) you must use event funds. If the course offers academic credits, you then use the tuition reimbursement fund.

Q: Are online seminars/workshops eligible for reimbursement under the Professional Development Events Policy?

A: Yes, online seminars/workshops are eligible for reimbursement if they meet the following criteria: 1) completed in the eighteen (18) months and 2) offers a certificate of completion or continuing education units (CEUs)

Q: If I get laid-off after my course/event starts will I still be reimbursed?

A. Eligible employees who as a result of a layoff are separated or moved to a bargaining unit are still eligible for reimbursement if all other requirements are met and the following conditions are in place:

- 1) Application for reimbursement of a course/event is submitted before the status change date in OAKS HCM.
- 2) The course/event start date is within 90 calendar days after the employment status change date in OAKS HCM.

Q: Will I get release time to attend classes/events during working hours?

A: Authorization of release time for employees to attend classes/events is at the discretion of the employing agency, pursuant to their internal policies. Check with your personnel officer or supervisor.

Q: If my request for reimbursement is rejected is there an appeal process?

A: Yes, the Request to Appeal form is available on the DAS HRD Web site under Downloadable Forms. Complete the form and submit by email to the Ohio Learning and Professional Development Office (OLPD). You will receive a response within 30 days of receipt of the appeal.

Q: Where does the money come from?

A: The program is administered by the DAS Human Resources Division funds according to:

- Exempt employees: participating agencies contribute a set amount for each worked/approved leave hour for each full-time and part-time permanent exempt employee.

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- Bargaining unit employees: the fund amount and individual limits are determined during collective bargaining and written into each bargaining unit contract.