

TITLE: Education and Certification Assistance

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**CENTURA HEALTH
PORTER ADVENTIST HOSPITAL**

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

ISSUE DATE: 12/73
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APPROVED BY: Oswaldo Muller _____ / / _____

REPLACES: _____

PURPOSE:

To make known the principle and guidelines governing education assistance for associates.

SCOPE:

All associates

POLICY:

Porter Hospital recognizes that an associate's continued professional development is essential to the continued success of Porter and the associate and wants to invest in that development. As a result, Porter will reimburse associates for a portion of tuition, books, and fees for approved course work at accredited colleges, universities, trade or vocational schools if approved course work is related to the associates career or healthcare related. Additionally, associates will be reimbursed for the cost of registration for certification examinations administered by their professional organization certification program. Such certification must be related to the associate's area of professional practice.

GUIDELINES:

A. Eligibility

Full and part-time (full-time is defined as someone who regularly works 70 hours per pay period and part-time is defined as someone who regularly works 40 hours or more per pay period) associates who have worked for Centura Health a minimum of six months are eligible for education and certification assistance. An associate who changes to other than full or part-time, or is terminated prior to completion of a course is not eligible for tuition reimbursement. The reimbursement amount will be based on the associate's status at the time of their course completion. However, associates who are approved for education or certification assistance and then are laid off as a result of reduction in force will be reimbursed, based on the status of their employment at the time their assistance is approved. Associates on a leave will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Associates who are on a corrective action plan (not to include verbal warnings) will not be eligible to participate in the education or certification assistance program until they have written documentation that they have been taken off of their corrective action plan by their manager.

1. Associates receiving grant monies from Pell Grant will be eligible for book reimbursement. Should the tuition reimbursement monies exceed the Pell Grant monies, the difference will be paid to the associate.
2. Associates receiving Scholarship funding will be eligible for book reimbursement up to the tuition reimbursement amount allotted for the associate's full time or part time status.
3. Postgraduate study: Full-time associates will be eligible to apply for Education Assistance after completion of one (1) year of employment. Postgraduate programs will normally be approved only for associate management level positions.

B. Acceptable Courses

1. Education

Courses sponsored by an accredited college, university, trade or vocational school may be covered. Course work must be directly related to the associate's career with Porter or the degree must be healthcare related. *Conferences, seminars and CEU courses are NOT covered under Education Assistance ~ these can be paid through department's budget if available and pre-approved.*

2. Certification

Examinations sponsored by nationally recognized professional organizations and board certification programs may be covered. Certifications must be directly related to the associate's area of practice with Porter. Fees related to the renewal of certification will also be covered under this provision. *Conferences, seminars and CEU courses are NOT covered under Certification Assistance ~ these can be paid through department's budget if available and pre-approved.*

C. Application

Associates seeking education assistance should complete an Education Assistance Application and forward it to their manager PRIOR to the beginning of the course or registering for the certification exam. Once approved by their manager, the original application will then be forwarded to Human Resources for their approval. Human Resources will then approve or deny the application based on the hospital's financial resources, appropriateness of the certification or education program, and the associate's status. Once approved by HR, a letter will be sent to the associate's home in order to verify approval or denial of the application. Approval for reimbursement for one time period does not indicate approval for other periods.

D. Reimbursement

Within 60 calendar days following course completion, the associate should submit a transcript of grade report indicating successful completion of the course or notification of successful completion of the certification examination, appropriate receipts indicating payment of tuition and expenses or examination registration fees, and a copy of the approval letter that they received from Human Resources to the Human Resources department. Human Resources will submit the appropriate paperwork to payroll and the education reimbursement will be processed at the next available payroll date on the associate's regular paycheck.

E. Education Assistance Amounts

Maximum annual reimbursement based on a calendar year and subject to budgetary restrictions is as follows:

Full-time Associate - \$3,000 per calendar year

Part-time Associate - \$1,500 per calendar year

Passing in a Pass/Fail course - 100% Reimbursement

Passing Score on Certification Exam - 100% Reimbursement

Undergraduate - Grade C or Above - 100% Reimbursement

Postgraduate - Grade B or Above - 100% Reimbursement

Lifetime cap - \$15,000

F. Repayment Policy

Eligible associates are signing a repayment agreement when completing the educational assistance request form. If you voluntarily terminate your employment within the period guidelines listed below, under this agreement, you are obligated to reimburse the Company for any payments made during that period. i.e. Associate must remain employed at Porter (6 months or 12 months depending on the course level) from the completion of the course.

6 months:	Undergraduate Program, Pass/Fail Courses & Certifications
1 year:	Postgraduate (Masters)