

# Beaumont HEALTH

Title <b>Tuition Assistance</b>	Location <b>ALL Beaumont Health</b>	Functional Area <b>Benefits, Human Resources</b>
Policy Owner <b>VP Benefits</b>	Document Type <b>Policy</b>	Effective Date <b>08/01/2016</b>

## I. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE:

To provide financial assistance to employees who pursue completing a higher education degree or vocational/technical program in a Beaumont Health job-related field for the purpose of enhancing their skills and knowledge and improving job performance, recognizing both contribute to our mission to provide compassionate, extraordinary care every day.

## II. POLICY:

### A. Eligibility

Active employees who are classified as full-time or part-time employees (0.5 FTE or greater) prior to the start of the course are eligible to apply for reimbursement for qualified tuition expenses. (For purposes of this policy, "active" means employees who are not on a leave of absence at the time of taking the course.) Employees classified as contingent Nursing Assistants and pursuing a Nursing degree and continuously working a minimum of twenty hours per week during the course period and for two years after reimbursement will also be eligible to apply for reimbursement for qualified tuition expenses. Eligible employees may apply for Tuition Assistance on or after the first of the month following his/her date of hire.

### B. Termination of Eligibility

Eligibility ceases upon notice of termination of employment. No reimbursements will be made to former employees, to employees who have given notice of resignation, or who have been notified that they will be involuntarily terminated. This includes situations in which approval of such reimbursement was previously provided and/or the course was satisfactorily completed prior to the date of termination. The only exception to this will be to employees whose jobs are eliminated and who are eligible for severance. In that case the employee will be eligible for reimbursement for any approved courses that are in session at the time of their job elimination if the employee submits proof of satisfactory course completion within six months of their severance termination date. An employee whose job is eliminated and who is eligible for severance is ineligible for reimbursement for courses enrolled in after he or she has received notice of job elimination.

### C. Types of Assistance

Assistance, when approved, is given in the form of tuition reimbursement after successful course completion. Successful completion of a course shall be evidenced by a report from the school showing a passing grade of at least "C" or better for undergraduate courses and "B" or better for graduate courses. A "C" is defined as the equivalent of a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. A "B" is defined as the equivalent of a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. If grades are not normally awarded, a statement of satisfactory completion must be presented; for instance, this may include a pass/fail situation.

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## **D. Approved Schools**

Courses taken at an accredited community college, junior college, college, university, or vocational/technical school will be eligible for consideration.

## **E. Courses Eligible for Reimbursement**

Courses from accredited schools that will result in completion of a Beaumont Health job-related degree or vocational/technical program.

Eligibility for reimbursement of courses will be determined by any of the following criteria:

- Coursework relevant to the employee's current job assignment;
- Coursework relevant to a position within Beaumont Health for which the employee is being trained; or
- Coursework relevant to other positions within Beaumont Health for which the employee does not currently hold and is not currently being trained.

Employees may apply for tuition reimbursement for required non-nursing courses while receiving education assistance under the terms of the BSN Nursing program agreement.

## **F. Amount Reimbursed**

Full-time employees are eligible for a maximum tuition reimbursement of \$3,000 annually. Part-time employees (0.5 FTE or greater) and eligible contingent Nursing Assistants are eligible for a maximum tuition reimbursement of \$1,500 annually. Eligible employees who receive assistance from outside sources (scholarships, grants, GI Bill, fellowships, and other stipends) are eligible for tuition reimbursement only if the cost of the tuition exceeds the amount of assistance received.

## **G. Income Tax Information**

The taxability of the Tuition Assistance program is determined by federal regulations and is subject to change. If the benefits are considered taxable during a tax year (i.e., January 1 to December 31) they must under federal law be reported by Beaumont Health as taxable income to the employee.

## **H. Employment Commitment**

The employee must agree that if he or she voluntarily leaves Beaumont Health, he or she will repay Beaumont Health the full amount of any tuition reimbursements received during the twenty-four month period preceding the employee's termination date. Repayments will be immediately due and payable to Beaumont Health upon termination, unless Beaumont Health and the employee mutually agree to alternative repayment arrangements.

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Eligible contingent Nursing Assistants must agree to continuously working twenty hours per week for a period of two years after receiving reimbursement. If he or she voluntarily reduces his/her work schedule or terminates employment within two years of receiving reimbursement, employee will be required to repay Beaumont Health the full amount of any tuition reimbursements received during the twenty-four month period preceding the employee's reduced work schedule or termination.

## **I. Expenses Not Reimbursed Under This Policy**

1. Seminars, workshops, certifications\*, re-certifications\*, licensing, re-licensing, or training classes
2. Entrance exams or preparation courses for entrance and license exams.
3. Courses retaken and previously reimbursed
4. Any books, supplies, and deposits
5. Any registration fees, application fees, lab fees, or parking fees
6. Any travel expenses
7. Any elective courses that are not part of the curriculum
8. Any costs prior to becoming eligible under this policy
9. Courses taken on an "audit" basis

\*Professional licenses and certifications are specifically not covered under this policy. Decisions regarding the fees and expenses associated with maintaining licenses and certification exams are left to the discretion of the department/business line.

## **III. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all employees within all entities of Beaumont Health System, Botsford Health Care, and Oakwood Healthcare Inc. and all business units, affiliates, and corporate offices of all three entities.

Employees covered under a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their contract for details about their tuition reimbursement plan.

## **IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Full-time: Budgeted at 1.0 FTE
- B. Part-time: Budgeted at 0.5 FTE or greater
- C. Accredited: Accreditation is a process of validation in which colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning are evaluated. The purpose of accreditations is to ensure that a college's programs meet a certain minimum standard. Accreditation in higher education is a collegial process of self-review and peer review for improvement of academic quality and public accountability of institutions and programs. This quality review process occurs on a periodic basis, usually every 3 to 10 years.

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## V. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Management has an affirmative responsibility to support the development of his/her employees. They are responsible to confirm that the employee is eligible for participation in the program.
- B. The Benefits Department has the responsibility to administer the Tuition Assistance program, approve reimbursement and update the policy.
- C. The Payroll Department has the responsibility to issue payment to the employee as notified by the Benefits Department.
- D. Employees are personally responsible to enroll in courses, pay tuition to institution, and submit all appropriate documentation to Benefits Department in a timely manner.

## VI. PROCEDURE:

To qualify for and receive tuition reimbursement, the employee is required to:

- A. Prior to the start of the course, complete the Tuition Assistance Request Form and signature from his/her manager before enrolling in the course.
- B. Prior to the start of the course, submit the completed form to the Benefits Department along with a course program/summary and schedule. Employee to retain a copy of the completed form until the course is completed. The Benefits Department will review the application and send employee an approval or denial letter within 14 days of receipt.
- C. Employee will enroll, pay the tuition and complete the course.
- D. Employee will obtain evidence of satisfactory completion of the course as well as a statement/receipt reflecting the amount of the tuition paid (such as a tuition statement or receipt of payment for tuition) and submit them to the Benefits Department within 90 days of course completion. Contingent Nursing Assistants will also need to provide proof of continuously working 20 hours per week during the course period along with manager's attestation. Any additional paperwork that may affect the amount to be reimbursed (i.e., grants, scholarships, GI bill, etc.) should accompany the paperwork. Detailed instructions regarding acceptable forms of documentation can be found on the Tuition Assistance application.
- E. Approved reimbursements will be deposited, along with the employee's regular pay, into the employee's bank account for those employees who have direct deposit of their pay. Other employees will receive the reimbursement in the paycheck they receive. Reimbursement will generally occur within 30 days or two pay periods following submission of all of the appropriate paperwork.

## VII. REFERENCES:

None

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## VIII. DISTRIBUTION:

A list of those locations or positions or electronic access to which the new or revised policy document is distributed.

## IX. REVIEW AND REISSUE DATE:

This date will be three years from the month and year in which the policy is finalized, unless the department would like to establish an earlier date. All policies are to be updated when changes to policies or procedures occur or every three years whichever occurs earlier.

## X. DISCRETION TO MODIFY POLICY:

Beaumont Health periodically reviews and revises its policies. This policy, as with all others, is subject to change at Beaumont Health's discretion without prior notice. This policy supersedes all prior written policies on this subject. This policy is located on the Beaumont Intranet.

## XI. ATTACHMENTS:

Tuition Assistance Application (see attachment tab)

## CORPORATE AUTHORITY:

Beaumont Health ("BH") as the corporate parent to William Beaumont Hospital, Botsford General Hospital, and Oakwood Healthcare Inc., ("Subsidiary Hospitals") establishes the standards for all policies related to the clinical, administrative and financial operations of the Subsidiary Hospitals. The Subsidiary Hospitals, which hold all health facility and agency licenses according to Michigan law, are the covered entities and the providers of health care services under the corporate direction of BH. The Subsidiary Hospitals' workforces are collectively designated as BH workforce throughout BH policies.