

Oak Ridge Operations Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials

Background

Public Law 107-107 was amended on December 28, 2001, to include the following new provisions in Section 1112, paragraph 5757:

An agency may use appropriate funds or funds otherwise available to the agency to pay for (1) expenses for employees to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and (2) examinations to obtain such credentials. The authority under this section may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position.

Applicability

The provisions of this policy statement are applicable to all ORO employees occupying permanent positions.

Policy Statement

ORO will reimburse employees up to \$300 per calendar year for expenses incurred to obtain professional credentials deemed advantageous to the government. Employees who incur expenses associated with one or more of the categories included on the attached List of Pre-Approved Professional Credentials and Examinations may submit requests for reimbursement, through their supervisor for concurrence, to the Oak Ridge Financial Service Center (ORFSC).

Requests for reimbursement of expenses related to credentials and examinations not already included on the Pre-Approved List will be reviewed to assess the advantage to the government. The review will be conducted by a committee chaired by the Training and Development Group (TDG), Human Resources Division; one union representative when the requestor is a member of the bargaining unit; and one subject matter expert. The committee will be convened by the TDG on an as needed basis. Supervisors who receive requests for reimbursement for credentials and examinations not included on the Pre-Approved List should forward the request(s) to TDG as soon as possible in order to assure that all requests can be considered by the committee. The committee's decision will be accepted as final by all parties and is not grievable. The TDG will notify the requesting employee and his/her supervisor of the committee's decision and forward the request to the ORFSC for payment as appropriate.

All requests for reimbursement must be submitted using the attached form and must include clearly identifiable receipts associated with expenses incurred. Employees must achieve a grade of “Pass” or at least “C” on all examinations in order to be eligible for reimbursement, and must submit verification of such grades. If reimbursement is being requested for more than one credential or examination, all claims must be itemized on one voucher. Under no circumstances will the amount of reimbursement exceed \$300 for the combined total expense of all credentials and examinations.

Reimbursement for all requests, including those on the Pre-Approved List, is subject to funding availability. During periods when funding is limited and restrictions have been imposed by senior management in order to conserve funds, reimbursement up to \$300 will be limited to only those credentials and examinations that are required in order to meet minimum Office of Personnel Management qualification requirements for Federal employment. Taxes are not reimbursable under this policy.

Responsibilities

Employees will:

1. Achieve a grade of “Pass” or at least “C” on examinations.
2. Remain prudent in their requests for reimbursement, submitting requests only for credentials and examinations that they believe to be advantageous to the government.
3. Submit completed requests for reimbursement on Form xxx, with associated receipts and written justification as required, to the ORFSC in January of each calendar year.

Supervisors will:

1. Review and concur in requests for reimbursement for expenses directly associated with the cost of professional credentials for credentials and examinations included on the ORO Pre-Approved List of Credentials and Examinations.
2. Forward requests for reimbursement of expenses related to credentials and examinations not included on the Pre-Approved List to TDG in a timely manner in order to be considered when the Review Committee convenes in February of each year.

The Human Resources Division will:

1. Maintain and update the Pre-Approved List of Credentials and Examinations as needed, and make it available on their web site to promote ease of access.

2. Provide a representative of the Training and Development Group to serve as Chair of the Review Committee.
3. Convene the Review Committee in February of each year.

The Oak Ridge Financial Services Center will process requests for reimbursement directly to the employee's bank account within 10 working days of receipt.

The Planning and Budget Division will establish a funding source and code in support of this initiative.