

POLICY GUIDELINE

309 – Tuition Assistance Program

Effective Date: April 1, 1991

Revision Dates: 2/00; 1/01; 4/01; 1/03; 1/04; 01/05; 5/06; 3/08; 1/09; 2/11; 1/12; 1/13; 12/14; 4/16; 1/19; 9/19 ; 01/22

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to support the educational goals of our employees who are looking for advancement in their careers here at Southwest General.

Policy Statement:

Southwest General will make tuition assistance available in a limited amount to employees to encourage them to continue their education through courses of mutual benefit to the employee and the organization. All tuition reimbursement will be subject to Federal, State and Local tax withholding laws.

Definition of Terms:

Direct-Pay – Southwest General will pay the school directly for tuition and eligible expenses, as defined in the partnership agreement.

Resources:

Lawson, Internet

Policy Authority:

Vice President, Human Resources

Related (Supporting) Policies:

None

Implementation Procedures:

A. General Information

1. Junior college, college, university, technical, trade, online distance learning courses and challenge exams (i.e. “test out courses”) that are applicable to the employee’s current role or another role at Southwest General will be considered for tuition assistance under this policy.
2. Seminars, CEU’s, certifications/re-certifications, webinars and workshops will not be processed under Policy 309.
3. The institution where the course is taken must be accredited by the State Board of Education or Board of Regents.

4. Class attendance must not interfere with the employee's normal work schedule, and will not be considered work time.
5. Tuition Assistance will not pay for books, parking, graduation fees, and testing to receive certification, unless otherwise specified in a partnership agreement.

B. Eligibility Requirements

1. An employee will become eligible for tuition assistance after successful completion of the introductory period. This is subject to change under the approval of the VP of Human Resources, based on position requirements or needs.
2. The employee must remain in either full-time or half-time status throughout the period of agreed assistance.

C. Application for Reimbursement

1. Interested employees must complete a Request for Tuition Assistance (**Form #12518**), which can be obtained from the intranet under Hospital Forms) and forward it to their Director for approval/denial before taking the class.
2. Before the class begins, application forms must be submitted to the Education Department. The following must be attached:
 - Course requirements for the degree/pursued program of study.
 - Class registration form.
 - Payment schedule form with payment receipt.
 - a. If the application does not meet the requirements of the policy or has been disapproved, it will be returned to the employee with the reason indicated.
 - b. If the application does meet the requirements of the policy, the employee will receive a letter indicating approval.

D. Application for Direct-Pay Assistance (only applicable for pre-approved schools/programs)

1. Interested employees must complete the school's program application.
 - a. If the application does not meet the requirements of the policy or has been disapproved, the employee will receive a letter with the reason indicated.
 - b. If the application does meet the requirements of the policy, the employee will receive a letter indicating approval.
2. A Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) waiver authorizing the school to disclose education records to Southwest General is required to be completed as part of the application process, and it must remain active to receive direct-pay assistance. Refusal or revocation of said authorization will result in denial of or removal from direct-pay assistance, and the Application for Assistance detailed above will be required to receive tuition reimbursement.

E. Assistance

1. Tuition assistance will be paid to/for eligible employees based on the following schedule, except when budgetary limitations apply:

Degree Type	Annual Maximum Allowance			
	Nursing Major Full Time	Nursing Major Half Time	Non-Nursing Major Full Time	Non-Nursing Major - Half time
Graduate/Doctorate/ Ph. D Degree	\$7,500	\$3,750	\$4,500	\$2,250
Bachelor Degree	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$3500	\$1750
Associate Degree	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$2000	\$1000

2. Tuition assistance may be denied if the employee is not following the course requirements for the degree/program of study identified
3. Proof of course completion with a grade of not lower than a "C-" or a certificate of satisfactory completion in an undergraduate course, or not lower than a "B-" or a certificate of satisfactory completion in a graduate course is required. Grades must be submitted to the Education Department within **10** days following completion of the course.
 - a. Direct-pay participants may have their grades submitted by the school to the Education Department on their behalf.
4. A budget is allocated each calendar year for tuition assistance. In the event requests for tuition assistance exceed the Health Center education budget, priorities for reimbursement may be established. Employees requesting assistance will be notified if funds have been exhausted.
5. Following approval of tuition reimbursement, a check will be mailed to the employee's home.
6. Employees will be required to return tuition assistance monies received to the Education Department if the employee voluntarily *terminates or changes their employment status to anything other than full-time or half-time employment or is terminated for cause* within 12 months after completing the course(s). The amount owed equals anything paid within that timeframe.
7. Direct-pay participants will be billed for and required to return tuition assistance monies which exceed the annual maximum allowance and/or for courses completed with a grade lower than required.

8. In the event the tuition assistance program requirements are not met, Southwest General Health Center is authorized to withhold, as payroll deduction, the amount owed for tuition assistance.

Nursing Majors and Nursing Administration

- ADN

Majors:

- MSN - Administration
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Acute Care Adult Gero NP
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Acute Care Pediatric NP
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Adult- Gero NP
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- CNS (all)
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Family NP
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Neonatal NP
 - MSN - Advanced Practice- Pediatric NP
 - MSN - CNM
 - MSN - CRNA
 - MSN - Informatics
 - MSN - Education
 - MSN/MBA (dual degree only)
- BSN
 - DNP
 - Nursing Administration
 - Ph.D

Non-Nursing Majors:

- Accounting
 - Biology
 - Business Administration
 - Communications
 - Education
 - Engineering
 - Finance
 - Health Care Administration
 - Health Information Technology
 - Health Sciences
 - Human Resources
 - Information Technology
 - Law
 - Liberal Arts
 - Management
 - Marketing
- Liberal Arts
 - Math
 - Medical Billing
 - Nutrition
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Organizational Development
 - Pharmacy
 - Physical Therapy
 - Physician Assistant
 - Psychology
 - Public Health
 - Radiology
 - Respiratory Therapy
 - Science
 - Social Work
 - Theology

Attachments:

None

Applicability: (Select all that apply)

WHO: Employees Physicians Volunteers Contractors Other:

SITES: **All Sites** – (if not all, check applicable sites)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brunswick Medical Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifeworks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Middleburg Medical Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Center Main Campus | <input type="checkbox"/> Oakview |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Off Campus Business Locations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospice | <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest General Medical Group Physician Offices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongsville Medical Center |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> The Surgery Center on Bagley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

APPROVED:

William A. Young, Jr.
President and CEO
Southwest Community Health System