

**TO: ALL COUNTY PERSONNEL**  
**FROM: ROBERT WEISMAN**  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**  
**PREPARED BY: HUMAN RESOURCES**  
**SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE TUITION REFUND PROGRAM**  
**PPM #: CW-P-008**

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**ISSUE DATE**  
**June 1, 2009**

**EFFECTIVE DATE**  
**June 1, 2009**

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**PURPOSE:**

To promote a program encouraging Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioner (hereinafter "County") employees to improve their effectiveness through education and training, to increase their efficiency and ability to carry out their job duties, and to fulfill the public purpose of the County organization.

**UPDATES:**

Future updates of PPM# CW-P-008 will be the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources.

**POLICY:**

The Tuition Refund Program will provide employees with reimbursement of the tuition costs for approved course work, which will enable them to improve their performance in their current positions and/or prepare them for increased or other responsibilities within the County organization. Employee Tuition Reimbursement for Fire Rescue Bargaining Unit employees shall be in compliance with Fire Rescue's Operational Procedure No. III-3.

Qualifications: All employees who take approved coursework related to (a) their job, (b) career advancement or redirection within the County organization or (c) leading to a degree relating to their job or to a career advancement or redirection within the County organization will be entitled to a refund of their paid tuition costs. Books and special fees are not covered under the Tuition Refund Program.

Eligibility: All part-time (20 hours or more) and full-time permanent-status employees (i.e., those who have successfully completed their initial probation period prior to the course completion date) are eligible to participate in the Tuition Refund Program.

Refund Amount: "Tuition" is defined as the cost per credit hour. Costs for books and other special fees beyond cost per credit hour are not covered. The maximum annual reimbursement per employee is \$1,200 per fiscal year for undergraduate courses or \$1,800 per fiscal year for graduate level courses. Employees who qualify for similar benefits under the G.I. Bill, other tuition refund programs, grants or scholarships are not eligible for full tuition reimbursement from the County.

Satisfactory Completion: Tuition is refunded at 100% upon satisfactory completion of the course. Satisfactory completion is a grade of "C" or above in graded undergraduate courses and a grade of "B" or above for graded graduate courses. No refund will be provided for course work resulting in a grade below "C" for undergraduate courses, below "B" for graduate courses. For ungraded courses, such as correspondence courses, pass/fail courses, employees receiving a certificate of completion or similar document will receive a refund of 100% of their paid tuition costs. Correspondence courses which do not differentiate between tuition and material costs will be eligible for a 100% refund.

Coursework: is defined as any course of study, training, or education given by an accredited educational institution which in the judgment of the Director, Human Resources, or his/her designee relates to the employee's career field, career advancement, or redirection within the County organization. Certification training, seminars, conferences or conventions related to or required to perform in the employees' job classification are reimbursed under the Travel PPM #CW-F-009.

Employee Obligation: - Employees receiving reimbursement up to \$850 per fiscal year under this program will be obligated to continue working for the County for a minimum of one year following satisfactory completion of the course work. Employees receiving \$850 or more in tuition refund within a fiscal year will be obligated to continue working for the County for a minimum of two years following satisfactory completion of the course work.

Employees who are overpaid or who resign or are discharged from the County prior to the expiration of the required obligation period will reimburse the County for any tuition refunds received. The County may recoup the funds through deductions from the employee's paycheck(s) and/or through such other collection means as the County elects to use. Employees who are discharged due to reduction in force or layoff will not be required to reimburse the County for tuition refunds received. The Director, Human Resources, may grant a waiver of such obligation at his/her discretion, based upon employee hardship, upon written request and documentation of hardship by the employee. As a condition of eligibility to participate in the Tuition Refund Program, all employees must enter into a contract with the County agreeing to the above repayment provisions.

### **PROCEDURE:**

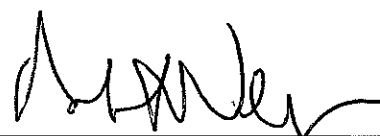
Employees electing to participate in the Tuition Refund Program will submit to their Department Head a completed "Application for Tuition Refund" (attached) no later than five (5) days

following the close of course registration. Department Heads will affix their recommendation to the application and forward it to the Human Resources Department.

All applications, whether or not they are recommended by the Department Head, will be reviewed by the Director, Human Resources, or his/her designee(s), who will coordinate the program, make final determination of approval, and notify all applicants of the action taken, and authorize payments.

To request reimbursement, approved applicants must submit their tuition receipt and official grade or completion notification, as applicable, to the Director, Human Resources, no later than forty-five (45) calendar days from the course ending date.

Beginning each fiscal year Human Resources will budget a general fund line item used exclusively to accommodate tuition reimbursements for all County departments and divisions. However, all amounts expended on behalf of employees in departments that receive revenue outside Ad Valorem taxes or provide revenue-generating services will be charged directly to the same exclusive line item in said departments' budgets.



**ROBERT WEISMAN**  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

**Supersession History:**

1. Administrative Order 7-6, dated 5/87
2. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 7/1/88
3. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 2/1/91
4. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 1/29/96
5. PPM# CW- P-008, dated 1/15/99
6. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 11/2/00
7. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 1/17/01
8. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 10/1/02
9. PPM# CW-P-008, dated 10/1/08