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# Atlanta Police Foundation

**Training & Scholarship Reimbursement Programs Policies  
and Procedures  
2010 - 2011 Academic Year**



Developed by the APD/APF Training & Scholarship  
Reimbursement Programs Committee.

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### Training Program

The mission of the Training Program is to leverage police department and community collaboration to provide specialized training not offered through the City budget to officers of the Atlanta Police Department. The Training Program Committee is established to guide the direction of and make decisions regarding Training Program activities. The Committee includes a diverse range of APD sworn and civilian staff, as well as representatives from the Atlanta Police Foundation and other stakeholder groups. All programmatic decisions will be reviewed and approved by the Training Program Committee.

### Scholarship Reimbursement Program

The mission of the Scholarship Reimbursement Program is to utilize collaboration between the police department and the community to provide all sworn and non-sworn employees of the Atlanta Police Department with the opportunity to earn a college education. The Scholarship Reimbursement Program Committee is established to guide the direction of and make decisions regarding Scholarship Reimbursement Program activities. The Committee includes a diverse range of APD sworn and civilian staff, as well as representatives from the Atlanta Police Foundation and other stakeholder groups. All programmatic decisions will be reviewed and approved by the Scholarship Reimbursement Program Committee.

## SCHOLARSHIP & TRAINING PROGRAM COMMITTEE

### 1. COMPOSITION

- a. The Training Program Committee will be comprised of a diverse range of APD sworn and civilian staff, as well as the representatives from the Atlanta Police Foundation and other stakeholder groups. *The Committee will have a minimum of 4 members plus the chair, and may have a maximum of 15 members. The Committee will be comprised of members from all Divisions of the Atlanta Police Department. Committee Members will serve one year terms, and no more than half the Committee may be replaced in a calendar year. The Committee will have permanent positions based on the following necessary assignments APF Liaison, APF Director of Programs, Recruit Unit Commander, and Professional Development Unit Commander.* All programmatic decisions will be reviewed and approved by the Training Program Committee

### 2. NEW MEMBERS/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

- a. If a vacancy position occurs on the committee, committee members will identify potential new member(s) and explain benefits of adding the individual(s) to the committee. *Atlanta Police Department Division Commanders will appoint at least one member from their Command to be on the Committee.* Once all potential new members have been identified, the committee will vote to add/deny the potential new member to the committee. This will occur once a quarter in the January, March, June, and September meetings.
- b. If any member of the committee misses over 1/3 of the scheduled meetings for the year the committee may vote to remove that committee member. If situations arise in which the

integrity of the committee is in jeopardy a 2/3 majority vote can remove any member from the committee.

### **3. RELATIONSHIP OF THE TRAINING FUNCTION TO THE COMMITTEE/ AUTHORITY OF THE COMMITTEE**

- a. ***The Training & Scholarship Program Committee (APF) and the Training Committee (APD.SOP.2080 Training) are a combined Committee*** that makes decisions on all ***training*** request ***funded by*** the Atlanta Police Foundation and makes recommendations regarding ***all other*** training ***opportunities*** provided by the Atlanta Police Academy. The committee assists by providing feedback, research and best practices on suggested training at the Atlanta Police Academy. ***This will include assisting in the development and evaluation of the training needs for the Atlanta Police Department.***

### **4. TRAINING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

- a. The Training Academy Director serves as the Training & Scholarship Program Committee Chairman. The Committee Chair has final say on whether or not APF Training Program funds are recommended for a specific training.
- b. Will guide all decisions of the Committee.
- c. Will facilitate the approval/denial ***process on all Atlanta Police Foundation funded training*** and provide adequate resources for the committee to make educated decisions.
- d. Makes final recommended rulings on appealed decisions of the committee ***in relationship to all Atlanta Police Foundation funded training.***
- e. Identifies and established working Subcommittees.
- f. ***The Training Academy Director will be responsible for reviewing the finding and recommendations of the Training Committee and taking any necessary and appropriate action as it concerns the training needs of the Atlanta Police Department.***
- g. ***The Training Academy Director will report the findings and recommendations of the Training Committee to the Chief of Police or his designee.***

## TRAINING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### PURPOSE

The City of Atlanta Police Department and the Atlanta Police Foundation are committed to employee growth and development. To support this commitment, the Training Program has been established to ensure the best possible training opportunities are available to APD employees. The program is designed to meet organizational goals by providing specialized training opportunities above and beyond those budgeted for by the City of Atlanta. This program is established to provide training opportunities for all officers and civilians of the Department.

### PROCEDURE

The Training Program Committee has developed this document to guide employees and department management through the process of requesting and obtaining specialized training.

#### 1. Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Employee – research training opportunity, fully complete and submit request for training through appropriate channels, including all necessary signatures.
- b. Unit & Section Commander – Review and approve/disapprove training request based on applicability and priority of training to department roles and responsibilities of the applicant.
- c. Division – review and approve/disapprove training request based on applicability of training to department roles and responsibilities of the applicant.
- d. Training & Scholarship Program Committee – review and recommend approval or disapproval of all requests APF Funding for training.
- e. Training Academy Director – serve as Training & Scholarship Program Committee Chairman. Committee Chair has final say on whether or not APF Training Program funds are recommended for a specific training.
- f. Atlanta Police Foundation Resource Investment Committee – make final approval and recommendation for payment of training.

#### 2. Communication of Training Needs to Training Program Committee:

- a. Any APD employee requesting APF funding for a specialized training class must utilize the Atlanta Police Foundation Training Form APD277 (Attachment A). The money allocated for this program may be used for only Training costs (tuition) and training equipment. *All other costs such as travel and lodging must go through the department approval process.* The APD277 form should be used and no other forms are needed unless there are additional expenses like travel (attach F1 form). Each applicant will fill out the form in its entirety and submit to the Training Program Committee Chairman.
- b. Any APD employee wishing to attend Specialized Training that the APF has already approved and prepaid is not required to fill out the Form APD277, but will submit information as required by the Training Program Committee Chair.

- c. Command College. Those requesting payment of Command College tuition under the APF Training Program must submit the following:
  - Request for APF Funds (APD Form 266)
  - Command College Invoice
  - Copy of Nomination by officer ranking Deputy Chief or higher. If the applicant's nomination is not from a DC or higher, the APF will require a memo from a Deputy Chief or higher stating that APF funds should be used to cover the applicant's Command College tuition. The Chief must approve all Command College attendees.

### **3. Prioritization, Review and Approval Process of Training Requests**

- a. The prioritizing, reviewing and approval process starts with the applicants' immediate supervisor. Each supervisor, in the applicant's chain of command should carefully review the training request and assess the training needs of the department, the specific unit and the applicant. There are limited amounts of funds for advanced and specialized training and *it is incumbent upon every individual in this process to utilize good judgment and leadership in either recommending or not recommending a specific training request.* If for any reason the training request is denied, indicate the reason why and send to the next supervisor on the application. The APD277 form is designed to provide the applicant's supervisors and the training committee the best and most complete information during this decision-making process. Therefore, all APD277 training requests will be prioritized, reviewed and approved by the following:
  - i. Applicant's chain of command up to the Division commander to ensure that the training is appropriate and applicable to applicant and/or unit duties and responsibilities. The applicant's supervisors will also ensure that this is *training that will substantially increase the capability of the unit to effectively do their job.*
  - ii. The applicant will hand deliver their training request to the Academy where it will be stamped in with the applicant's initials and date of receipt.
  - iii. The Training Program Committee Chair will determine if the requested training is not currently being provided and will decide whether training request should be presented to the Scholarship & Training Committee for review and approval.
  - iv. The APD Liaison will review the training request to ensure the request has all of the required information included in application.
  - v. The Scholarship & Training Committee will review and determine whether the approval of training fits within the APF Training Program budget parameters.
  - vi. SSD, A/C and Chief will determine if training is appropriate to be funded through APF funds.
  - vii. APF staff, CEO, Resource Investment Committee & Board will review, and if approved cut check for training.
- b. Special Consideration: Those applying for "Train the Trainer" type training MUST hold their IT Certification. Some special circumstances may apply; the Scholarship & Training Committee will make the final recommendation.

### **4. Notification of Approval or Denial**

- a. Notification of receipt of training request will be made to requestor within ten (10) business days of receipt. It is the responsibility of the requestor to follow up with the Training Academy to ensure that request has been received if notification has not been made within ten (10) days.

- b. Notification of training request approval or denial will be made to the requestor by the Training Committee Chair or her representative within five (5) business days of committee review and decision made during monthly Scholarship & Training Committee meetings.

## **5. Training Follow Up / Program Evaluation**

- a. The APF Training Program is made available due to the generosity of donors. The APF is required to report to those donors the status and outcome of the dollars that they provide for programs offered the APD. APF staff will work with the Scholarship and Training Committee and the Director of the Training Academy to secure the following information with regards to training offered by the Program:
  - Names of APD employees trained.
  - Cost – Benefit Analysis of training.
  - Anecdotal insight on training provided by attendees.

## **6. Appeal Process**

- a. If requested training is denied by the Training & Scholarship Committee and/or the Chair of the Committee, applicants are entitled to appeal the decision ONLY if extenuating circumstances existed in the submission of the application.
- b. Applicants may appeal the decision by respectfully submitting a letter addressing concerns to the Training & Scholarship Committee Chair. However, it should be noted that submission of training request does not guarantee approval of training.
- c. Letter should contain the following:
  - Justification or reasoning for appeal.
  - Explanation of extenuating circumstances that may have precluded approval of original training request.
- d. All appeals will be heard by the Training & Scholarship Committee. Once a decision is reached, the applicant will be contacted.
- e. All results of this process are final.

## SCHOLARSHIP REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### PURPOSE

The City of Atlanta Police Department and the Atlanta Police Foundation are committed to employee growth and development. To support this commitment, the Scholarship Reimbursement Program has been established to reimburse education expenses to those APD employees interested in obtaining higher education from an accredited university. The program is designed to meet organizational goals by assisting officers who elect to improve job performance or increase skills through education. Participation should be mutually beneficial to both the employee and the City of Atlanta. This policy is established to assist in providing higher educational opportunities for all members of the Department who meet the necessary criteria.

### PROCEDURE

The Scholarship Reimbursement Program Committee developed this document to guide employees and department management through the stages of the Program by providing information on applying for the scholarship reimbursement benefits, determining employee eligibility, determining course eligibility and reimbursing employee.

#### 1. Eligibility

##### a. **Employees Eligibility** – APD employees are eligible for reimbursement if:

- i. Employee is employed in a regular-budgeted position.
  1. At least 80% of Tuition Reimbursement Funds are allocated to sworn employees.
  2. 20% of Tuition Reimbursement Funds may be dispersed to civilian staff.
- ii. Employee has completed a minimum of two (2) years of continuous employment.
- iii. Employee is not under any type of probation or suspension at the time of submission of application or at the time of dispersion of funds.
- iv. Employee agrees to continue employment with APD for no less than three (3) additional years following reimbursed semester by signing the Service Agreement included in the reimbursement application.
- v. Employee is working toward a degree from a university regionally accredited through the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). To search for the accreditation information for the school you are considering go to the link: <http://www.chea.org/Directorries/regional.asp> and type in your school name.  
*NOTE: There are many schools that claim to be accredited, but are not regionally accredited. Please read the following article for more information about accreditation:*  
<http://adulthood.about.com/cs/fasttrackoptions/a/accreditation.htm>
- vi. Employee maintains a 3.0 overall GPA and a 3.0 GPA for the semester in which he/she is requesting reimbursement.

##### b. **Course eligibility** – all courses offered by a regionally accredited university program as determined by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) are eligible for tuition reimbursement if all of the following criteria are met:

- i. The school attended is a regionally accredited program. To search for the accreditation information for the school you are considering, go to the link: <http://www.chea.org/Directorries/regional.asp> and type in your school name.
- ii. Course will increase employee's job applicable skills and ability.

- iii. Course is included in a degree seeking program that will enhance the skills and knowledge of the employee.
- c. **Application eligibility** – all applications must be submitted by set deadlines and should be filled out completely. Eligible applications will be:
- i. Received by, stamped and dated by the Academy on or before set deadline.
  - ii. Completely and accurately filled out to include all necessary supervisory signatures.
  - iii. Accompanied by all requested receipts, grade reports and other documentation. Attachments should be legible and easy to understand.

## 2. General Guidelines

### a. Discretionary Nature of Benefit:

- i. Funds for tuition reimbursement are provided by the Atlanta Police Foundation. They are distributed based on availability, and on the application process described below. Recommendations of approval are made at the discretion of Scholarship & Training Committee which is comprised of members of the Atlanta Police Department, and final decisions regarding reimbursement are made by the Board of the Atlanta Police Foundation. Reimbursements will be made available until all funds are expended. However, **submission of a scholarship reimbursement application does not guarantee reimbursement.**
- ii. Applicants are required to follow all application instructions and submit to the Training Academy by published deadlines.
- iii. The Scholarship Reimbursement Program is awarded \$120,000 annually to provide tuition reimbursements to APD employees. Beginning Fall 2008, the funding will be distributed between Fall, Spring and Summer Semesters according to the schedule below.
  - **2010 Fall Semester (classes beginning August 1 – December 31)**
    - **\$40,000 available. Deadline for application is January 12.**
    - **Reimbursement will be made by March 1.**
  - **2011 Spring Semester (classes beginning January 1 – May 31)**
    - **\$40,000 available. Deadline for application is June 17.**
    - **Reimbursement will be made by August 1.**
  - **2011 Summer Semester (classes beginning May 1 – July 31)**
    - **\$40,000 available. Deadline for application is August 19.**
    - **Reimbursement will be made by October 1.**
- iv. Tuition reimbursement requests will generally be approved based on the following priorities:
  - Priority I: Sworn APD Employees
  - Priority II: APD Civilian Employees
- iv. The Training and Scholarship Committee will make all final recommendations regarding reimbursements, and reserves the right to make adjustments to this and other programmatic policy (such as maximum reimbursement allowances) based on circumstances and availability of funds.

### b. Benefits Allowance:

- i. *Reimbursements are permitted for out of pocket tuition expenses only.* Expenses that are covered by outside grants, scholarships or other financial aid that the student is not

required pay back will not be eligible. However, student loans are eligible for reimbursement. Fees, books and other educational expenses incurred are also not eligible for reimbursement.

- ii. Regular employees in budgeted positions are eligible for up to the annual maximum reimbursement not to exceed \$3000.00 contingent upon the availability of funds each scholastic calendar year (August to July). If the total amount requested exceeds the total amount available there will be a percentage reduction to all request to accommodate each participant. For example if 45 valid request are received for \$1,000 and there is only \$40,000 available, all 45 participants will receive the reduced amount of \$889.00
  - iii. All employees receiving tuition reimbursement must have served two (2) continuous years with the Atlanta Police Department, and are required to sign a commitment of three (3) years of continuous service upon application for reimbursement. The APD Personnel Office will notify the APF of any students who leave the Department prior to the completion of three (3) years of service. If the employee does not complete three (3) years of service, the employee must repay the Atlanta Police Foundation the full amount of the reimbursement within in 90 days of their separation date. Any unpaid balance after 90 days will be turned over to a collection agency.
- c. Loss of Tuition Reimbursement Benefits:
- i. Employees will not be reimbursed for tuition expenses if, upon course completion, they are no longer employed by the City of Atlanta Police Department.
  - ii. Employees will reimburse the Atlanta Police Foundation for all tuition reimbursements received, upon leaving employment with the City of Atlanta Police Department within the three (3) years of receiving degree (and/or) classes. Employee must repay the Atlanta Police Foundation the full amount of the reimbursement within in 90 days of their separation date. Any unpaid balance after 90 days will be turned over to a collection agency.
  - iii. Employees will not be reimbursed for tuition expenses if their overall GPA drops below a 3.0.
- d. Accommodating Employee Work and Class Schedule:
- i. Courses should be scheduled during non-working hours.
  - ii. If a course is available only during regular working hours, the final approval for flexible scheduling will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his designee.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. Employee:
  - i. Completes application and forwards to immediate supervisor for review and signature.
  - ii. Keeps a copy of completed and signed application.
  - iii. Forwards approved application and all required documents, including final grade report and receipts for paid fees to Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) by specified deadlines.
  - iv. Confirms that Academy has received application and required documents by posted date by securing receipt stating date and signature of receipt of completed application within five (5) business days of submission. (For example, if applicant submits application through interoffice mail, application should not be assumed to be received by Academy until receipt is secured.)

- b. Section/Unit:
  - i. Supervisors determine and approve, when possible, whether applicant's job performance warrants flexible scheduling.
- c. Division:
  - i. Determines and approves, when possible, flexible scheduling.
- d. Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinators:
  - i. Member of the Scholarship & Training Program Committee and/or Training Academy Staff.
  - ii. Appointed by Scholarship & Training Program Committee Chair.
  - iii. Accepts and acknowledges receipt of application to applicant within five (5) days of receipt.
  - iv. Reviews all scholarship reimbursement applications for accuracy and completion, and notifies employee if application is incomplete and/or needs attention.
  - v. Confirms eligibility of employees and courses for tuition reimbursement.
  - vi. Submits applications to Training and Scholarship Program Committee.
- e. The Training & Scholarship Program Committee:
  - i. Composed of diverse range of members representing various departments and divisions of APD and the Atlanta Police Foundation.
  - ii. Chaired by the Atlanta Police Academy Director.
  - iii. Designs overall Scholarship Reimbursement Program Policy.
  - iv. Makes all programmatic and policy recommendations including, eligibility for reimbursement.
  - v. Makes recommendation to the Atlanta Police Foundation Resource Investment Committee and Board of Directors for approval or denial of all scholarship reimbursement benefits.
- f. Training & Scholarship Program Committee Chair:
  - i. Training Academy Director.
  - ii. Identifies Scholarship Reimbursement Application Coordinators.
  - iii. Provides initial, supervisory approval or denial of employee's request for tuition reimbursement based upon employee eligibility and course eligibility to meet the needs of the department.
  - iv. Makes final recommended rulings on appealed or contended scholarship reimbursement applications.
- g. Atlanta Police Foundation
  - i. Resource Investment Committee and Board of Directors make final decisions regarding program policy as well as approval and payment of scholarship reimbursement.
  - ii. Make payment to scholarship reimbursement applicant.

#### **4. Applying for Tuition Reimbursement**

- a. Employee may obtain an Application for Tuition Reimbursement in the following ways:
  - i. By visiting Training Academy, 180 Southside Industrial Parkway, Atlanta, Georgia 30354

- ii. By downloading the procedure and application form from the Horizon Web Site.
  - iii. By downloading the Policies and Procedures and application from the Atlanta Police Foundation website at [www.atlantapolicefoundation.org](http://www.atlantapolicefoundation.org).
- b. Employee completes application, including all necessary supporting documentation, and forwards to immediate supervisor for review of completeness and approval or denial based on the employee performance.
    - i. Required Documentation includes:
      - verification of grades (by class and overall GPA),
      - detailed receipt of payment of tuition (tuition must be paid prior to receiving reimbursement) and
      - all necessary signatures.
  - c. Employee forwards approved application to Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) by specified deadlines. When delivered to the Academy, application will be stamped and dated. *The application must be stamped and dated by the academy by specified deadlines and applicant should keep a copy.* Coordinator may request additional documents if he/she deems them necessary for a committee decision.
  - d. Employee must confirm receipt by Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) of application, approval, final grade report and paid fee receipts.

## **5. Approval of Scholarship Reimbursement**

- a. Completed applications must be submitted to the Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinators by published deadlines for the semester.
- b. Once all completed applications and required documents are received for a semester, Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinators bring applications before the Training & Scholarship Reimbursement Committee for review, approval and recommendation to the Academy Director.
- c. If approved, Training Academy Director signs off and submits through Chain of Command for signatures. The APD Chief of Police has final say in recommended approval for reimbursement.
- d. If denied, Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) will notify employee. See appeals process below.
- e. Processing and reimbursement of scholarship reimbursement applications will take approximately 45 days from date of review by Scholarship & Training Committee.

## **6. Reimbursing the Employee**

- a. Final approval and check request signed by all appropriate designees is forwarded to the Atlanta Police Foundation.
- b. The APF will cut check and forward to Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) within fifteen (15) business days from date of receipt.

- c. Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator (i.e. Academy Director) will ensure employee is notified of availability of check and will ensure check is delivered to employee in a timely fashion.

## 7. Appeal Process

- a. If requested training is denied by the Training & Scholarship Committee and/or the Chair of the Committee, applicants are entitled to appeal the decision ONLY if extenuating circumstances existed in the submission of the application.
- b. Applicants may appeal the decision by respectfully submitting a letter addressing concerns to the Training & Scholarship Committee Chair. However, it should be noted that submission of scholarship reimbursement request does not guarantee approval of reimbursement.
- c. Letter should contain the following:
  - Justification or reasoning for appeal.
  - Explanation of extenuating circumstances that may have precluded approval of original training request.
- d. All appeals will be heard by the Training & Scholarship Committee. Once a decision is reached, the applicant will be contacted.
- e. All results of this process are final.

## DEFINITIONS

**Annual Maximum Reimbursement:** The amount of benefit available to an employee on a fiscal year basis, as determined by the availability of funds in the Atlanta Police Foundation Budget.

**Eligible Costs:** Costs eligible for reimbursement under the Program. Tuition only.

**Final Grade Report:** A grade report issued by an educational institution that shows the number of hours and the titles of the courses in which the employee was enrolled.

**Ineligible Costs:** A number of items fall into the category of costs that are ineligible for reimbursement under the Program. Those include:

- Tuition costs covered by grants, scholarships or any other non-repayment funding.
- Costs for books, supplies, fees, travel or parking.
- Tuition costs for grades of “D” or 69 percent and “fail” grades if the class is pass/fail.
- Grades below a cumulative 3.0 GPA.
- Tuition Reimbursement will be denied if the employee fails to comply with the guidelines of the Tuition Reimbursement Program

**Paid Fee Receipt:** An itemized receipt issued by an educational institution that shows the total amount of tuition and fees the employee paid.

**Regular Employee:** Any employee in a regular position who has completed his or her probationary period with the City.

**Tuition Reimbursement Application Coordinator:** Academy Director or his/her designee(s) that will be assigned to administer the Scholarship Reimbursement Tuition Reimbursement Program.