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**Ames Fire Department  
Standard Operating Guidelines**

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Book: 1 – Organization

Section: V – Personnel Policies and Procedures

Chapter: 3 – **Educational Reimbursement**

Date Approved: 04-29-2011 Revision No.: New Approved by



**PURPOSE:**

This guideline will provide a method for determining how Ames Fire Department (AFD) members can receive reimbursement for higher educational courses attended.

These additional departmental policies clarify and *do not supersede* educational reimbursement program procedures within the guidelines of the City of Ames Personnel Policies and Procedures and the Agreement: City of Ames and International Association of Firefighters, Local 625.

**POLICY:**

Varying tuition costs and numbers of firefighters attending college classes can significantly impact the funds available. Advance preparation, by both firefighters and fire officers, is necessary to determine the projected educational costs, so its impact may be absorbed in the training budget.

Though the intent of this policy is not to provide support for entire college degree programs, members that have begun a degree program must meet with the Fire Chief (or his/her designee) to discuss their program of study. This will allow for cost anticipation and budget funds to be requested in advance.

**PROCEDURES:**

Members seeking reimbursement approval, for participation in an external educational course(s) from a regionally accredited college or university, should submit the following:

- A written request to the department head prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Requests should include the following information:
  - Title and description of the course.
  - Dates of attendance.
  - Cost estimate, including textbooks (only if unavailable from department) and fees (if required).
  - The educational assistance option desired.
  - Justification for participation and the course's relatedness to the job.

Fire Administration may use the following criteria for determining reimbursement eligibility:

- The amount of City-allocated budget funds available for training purposes shall be a limiting factor. Currently this amount will be capped annually (based on the

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calendar year) at an individual member's reimbursement of up to 12 college credit hours or \$2000.00 annually, whichever is lower.

- Funding priority will be based on the following:
  - Firefighters enrolled in classes related to a two-year fire and/or EMS-related program or Fire Specialist Certification.
  - Fire Officers enrolled in classes related to a two-year fire and/or EMS-related program.
  - Firefighters or Officers enrolled in classes related to a four-year fire and/or EMS-related program.

**REFERENCES:**

Agreement: City of Ames and International Association of Firefighters Local 625

City of Ames Personnel Policies and Procedures