

ARTICLE 16: EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Orientation programs and on-site training courses are provided to instruct and acquaint employees with policies, procedures, and job requirements. Employees may participate in special courses, workshops, and conferences at other organizations, colleges, and universities, or attend scientific meetings, professional society meetings, research conferences, and industrial conventions and shows.

When required by and approved in advance by the department head/division leader, time spent in attendance at such programs, courses, workshops, meetings, and conferences is time worked.

Internal Training: LLNS provides employee training in various fields and topics of interest to the Laboratory. These training courses are either assignment-related or career-related and are taught by LLNS employees or by non-employees under contract.

External Training: External training includes courses, seminars, and workshops offered by universities, professional associations, and private companies. When a department head/division leader approves a request for an employee to undertake assignment-related or career-related off-site training, the department/division pays fees, travel, and other expenses as necessary. External training is only used when the required skill, knowledge, or training is not readily available at the Laboratory.

A. Education General

Unit members may take academic courses and are eligible for tuition and/or fee reimbursement when:

1. The employee is in a career indefinite or flexible-term appointment.
2. The course is assignment-related or is part of a unit member's approved Academic Plan.
3. The unit member files a completed and approved Education Assistance Form with the Laboratory's Training and Development Division prior to the start of the course.

B. Academic Plans

Employees in a career indefinite or flexible term appointment may submit academic plans for acquiring the academic training needed to qualify for a specific Laboratory job or assignment. Each plan is reviewed and approved by the employee's department head/division leader and the Laboratory's Training and Development Division. Approval of the plan is based on the relevance of the degree/discipline to LLNS, quality of the program, funding availability and potential for individuals to meet anticipated workforce needs.

C. Education Assistance

Unit members, except participants in a State-approved Unilateral Apprenticeship Training Program, are provided the following education assistance when a course is approved as assignment-related or when the course is approved as career-related. Education assistance for participants in a State-approved Unilateral Apprenticeship Training Program is exclusively that provided by the Program.

1. Time Off to Attend Classes

Unit Members are expected to take classes during non-working hours or to work with their supervisor to adjust their work schedules around class time when operationally

feasible. Time off with pay is not allowed for travel, study, library, assignment or faculty consultation time.

2. Fee Reimbursement

Employees may be reimbursed for tuition, laboratory fees, and other fees required for registration when the employee submits proof of successful course completion and receipts for payment of fees to the Laboratory's Training and Development Division.

Reimbursement is allowed also when employees are forced to withdraw from a course because of work requirements, as confirmed by their department head/division leader, provided they submit evidence from the instructor that their work in the course was satisfactory at the time of forced withdrawal. Otherwise, employees who terminate before completion of a course are not to be eligible for reimbursement.

3. Repayment of Tuition Assistance

Employees who voluntarily terminate employment, or are terminated for cause within twelve (12) months of completion or withdrawal from an approved undergraduate or graduate degree program must repay 100% of their tuition reimbursement. Employees who voluntarily terminate employment, or are terminated for cause after one (1) year but less than two (2) years from completion or withdrawal from an approved undergraduate or graduate program must repay 50% of their tuition reimbursement.

Repayment will be waived if the employee is prevented from satisfactorily completing courses due to extended illness or disability as confirmed with LLNS Health Services Department, the employee leaves LLNS as a result of reduction in force or layoff, or work requirements necessitate withdrawal from a course, as confirmed by their department head/division leader. Employees must provide and submit evidence from the instructor that their work in the course was satisfactory at the time of forced withdrawal.

D. Safety-Related Training

The Employer and the Union agree that workplace health and safety are of paramount importance. To that end, they agree to collaborate with respect to issues relating to safety training and to submit said issues to the Joint Safety Committee in accordance with Article 13.