DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BULLETIN NO. 85 **September 2014**

EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Bulletin is to outline the policy and establish guidelines and procedures of the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (Department) employee training and development process.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Department to provide employees with the opportunity for training and professional career development. Mayor's Order 85-172 and Chapter 13 of the District Personnel Manual (entitled *Employment Development*) outlines the District Government's policy, authority, and responsibility to provide for an effective employee development program. Nothing in this Bulletin precludes a Department employee from pursuing any other training or educational program on their own initiative; provided, that such participation does not conflict with the employee's assigned duties or is contrary to the mission of the Department.

III. Types of Training

A. In-Service Training: In-Service Training is conducted either:

1. By civilian or military personnel of the United States Government or the District of Columbia Government, acting in their official capacities.

2. On property owned or substantially controlled by either Government.

B. On-The-Job Training: The Department, administered through the Training Academy (TA), offers several on-the-job training programs that may require off- site travel, registration and completion of educational and technical courses as a part of the program curriculum. These programs include, but are not limited to:

1. Recruit Training, Emergency Medical Training and Certification, Cadet Program, Back to Basics Training, and Specialized Rescue Training.

C. Outside Training: Outside Training is conducted by educational establishments in or through non-District government facilities. The Department may approve "Outside Training" for employees when training of a similar kind cannot be obtained through "In Service Training" recommended by the Department.

IV. Outside Training: Requests to Attend and Travel Requests

A. Requests for employee training or travel must be submitted in the form of Special Report accompanied by a Training and Travel Form 1. This request shall be expedited through the chain-of-command, to the Assistant Chief of Services (AFC-S) or as warranted the Fire Chief, for approval. Only the original documentation will be accepted. Members wishing to attend training should not register until they receive authorization to do so; the exception being a request for free training within 50 miles of the District of Columbia. Request for free training is still subject to the same approval process and will be granted based on the operational needs of the Department. All training or travel for individuals or groups must also be approved by the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety Office prior to members attending training.

B. Requests must be received by the AFC-S at least 75 days before the start date of the requested class or conference. Untimely requests will not be processed. The information provided will be reviewed and utilized to prepare the necessary cost analysis and official request for approval, which must then be submitted through the appropriate Deputy Mayor to the City Administrator. All endorsing members shall cause any reports submitted to them to be expedited up the chain of command.

C. Contents of Special Report: The following information should be included in a member's Special Report requesting training and/or travel:

1. Employee's name as listed on the government ID that will be used during travel
2. Employee's current job title;
3. Employee's date of birth ;
4. Contact phone number for employee during time of travel;
5. Title of training;
6. Importance of training to the employee's current job function;
7. Location of training;
8. Dates of training/travel;
9. Preferred method of travel, including departure and destination locations (Requests may include fees for parking, taxi or public transportation. The reimbursement process for these expenses is described more fully in Section III(I) of this Bulletin);
10. A full copy of the training pamphlet verifying dates and times of the requested conference training as well as the cost, location and course agenda; and
11. Information showing at least three hotels near training location (in case event location is sold out). Please note that room rate must be at or below the lodging allowance for that local area. Current rates can be found at www.gsa.gov .

D. Training Form 1: The D.C. Training Form 1 (Revised 2014 or subsequent update) must be prepared and signed by the member requesting to attend training. The immediate supervisor shall sign in the supervisor's box. The member must submit the original Training and Travel form to the AFC-S through the Chain of Command. The Form 1 should reflect the primary desired date of training; any other desired dates shall be stated

on the Special Report. If the initial requested date cannot be arranged, the Administrative Captain will confer with the member and select one of the alternative dates indicated on the Special Report. Once an alternative date is agreed upon the DFC-TA and the AFC-S will be notified.

E. The Department will notify the employee through the chain of command whether the request is approved or denied. Given the number of requests that must be processed, it may take some time before the member receives any notification. The employee's supervisor, the Captain at the TA, and as appropriate the Deputy Fire Chief will receive an e-mail notification from the Office of the Fire Chief of the training approval, denial or a request for additional information to complete the travel arrangements.

F. Should approved training require any travel payment, the employee will be contacted by the purchase cardholder selected by the AFC-S.

V. Post-Training Requirements

A. The employee shall submit the following within ten (10) business days after returning from the training/ travel:
   1. Travel Expense Report;
   2. Original airline/train tickets;
   3. Original transportation receipts i.e. taxi, shuttle, parking or gas receipts (if applicable); and
   4. Hotel receipt showing room is paid in full

B. Contents of Travel Expense Report: Once training is completed, a staff member in the Office of the Fire Chief will send a Travel Expense Report to the employee's District e-mail address. The employee must complete and return the form (with original receipts) to the AFC-S in order for the request to be processed for reimbursement. Per- Diem requests (if any) should be included in this report. Most reimbursements take at least thirty (30) days to process, and are generally mailed to the member's home address.

C. After the training is completed, the employee must furnish a copy of their certificate of completion to the Administrative Captain at the Training Academy. Failure to furnish the required documents may result in the employee being charged annual leave for the period of the class and/or may result in the employee being held responsible for the tuition and all other related cost.

VI. Outside Training: University of the District of Columbia Tuition Reimbursement

The D.C. Fire and EMS Department has a long standing relationship with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and uses its courses as a guide on establishing course curriculum and criteria. The Department offers employees the opportunity to obtain an Associates, Bachelor or Master's Degree from the University of the District of Columbia through the tuition reimbursement program. Tuition reimbursement is available for the following degree programs offered by UDC.

Associate Degree Program:
Associate in Fire Science Technology
Associate in Applied Science in Nursing
Associate in Computer Science Technology

Bachelor Degree Programs:
Bachelor of Art in Administration of Justice
Bachelor Science in Nursing
Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science
Bachelor Science in Business Administration

Graduate Degree Programs:
Master of Science Homeland Security (MSHS)
Masters Public Administration (MPA)

VII. REGISTRATION

There will be no registration for UDC classes conducted at the D.C. Fire and EMS Training Academy. Registration for all classes will take place on the main campus. Employees must bring their official D.C. Fire and EMS Department identification at the time of registration to assist in the process of receiving in-state tuition cost for classes).

A. BACHELOR AND GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (NON-NURSING)

Employees seeking admission to the Graduate and Bachelor Degree Programs (non-nursing) should be guided by Department Memorandums.

VIII. TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

Employees may seek tuition reimbursement for classes taken during any Semester or Quarter of an Academic school year and must comply with all the provisions outlined in this Bulletin.
The tuition re-imbursement rates were increased in the Fall 2013 semester; this increase is based upon the total cost in Fiscal year 2014 of the minimum credit hours to be considered enrolled fulltime for the academic school year. Any previous tuition reimbursement request still being processed will be honored. The following are the approved tuition reimbursements amounts:

A. Undergraduate Student- Tuition assistance is subject to budgetary capabilities of the Department. The Department is allowing members to request reimbursement of up to $2000.00 per semester/session for no more than two undergraduate courses. The maximum tuition allowed is $5,800.00 per academic year. An academic year or school year is a twelve-month period that includes the Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and the Summer Session or equivalent Semester Quarters. The Summer Session reimbursement is for 2 classes only.

1. Department members who previously registered, been approved and have submitted tuition reimbursement packages will be entitled to receive tuition reimbursement for classes that were successfully completed during the Fall 2012 , Spring 2013, Summer 2013 and Fall 2013 Semester's or Quarter's.

2. For paragraph (1) above the reimbursement amounts allowed by the Department cannot exceed sixteen hundred dollars ($1,600.00) for no more than four undergraduate courses during the Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Summer 2013 sessions (2 classes only). The maximum tuition allowed per academic year is four thousand eight hundred dollars ($4,800.00).

B. Graduate Student – The request for reimbursement for graduate level courses may be granted at a rate of up to $3500.00 per semester/session for no more than two graduate courses in one session. The maximum tuition allowed is $9,500.00 per academic year. An academic year or school year is a twelve-month period that includes the Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and the Summer Session.

3. Department members who previously registered, been approved and have submitted tuition reimbursement packages will be entitled to receive tuition reimbursement for classes that were successfully completed during the Fall 2012 , Spring 2013, Summer 2013 and Fall 2013 Semester's or Quarter's.

4. For paragraph (3) above the reimbursement amounts allowed by the Department cannot exceed sixteen hundred dollars ($1,600.00) for no more than two graduate courses during the Fall 2012, Spring 2013 and Summer 2013 sessions (2 classes). The maximum tuition allowed per academic year is four thousand eight hundred dollars ($4,800.00).

C. The Department will reimburse tuition costs to those employees who complete each course in which they are enrolled and earned at a minimum letter grade of a C (i.e., a person who obtains a C- or below is ineligible for reimbursement). Employees must submit the information outlined in this Bulletin to the Administrative Captain no later than 40 days after the end of the semester for which the participant is seeking reimbursement.

D. Scheduling Classes: It is the current policy of the Department that members schedule their classes during non-duty hours. However, supervisors are encouraged to work with their subordinates to allow them to attend classes through approved trades and duty hour exchanges so long as these adjustments can be made without negatively impacting workload or operational needs of the Department.

E. The Department may at its discretion grant Administrative Leave in order to facilitate attendance. This authorization is subject to the approval of the Fire Chief and the requirements and limitations of Chapter 13 of the District Personnel Manual.

IX. Covered Charges:

Tuition reimbursement is designed to cover tuition and mandatory fees related to the course(s) only. Participants are responsible for all other expenses -including, but not limited to, charges for books, transportation, parking, application, readmission, graduation, add/drop fees, and all other such fees or service charges.

A. Non-Covered Charges: Tuition reimbursement will not be approved for costs that are covered by other assistance programs, such as Veteran's Assistance ("GI Bill"), Public Service Employment Programs, and Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (PELL), etc. However, reimbursement may be sought for certain expenses not covered under the above-mentioned programs. Approval of such will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and at the discretion of the AFC-S and final approval of the Fire Chief. Application Procedure: Employees seeking tuition reimbursement must comply with the following provisions:

B. Before Registration: Before registering for any UDC course, members applying for tuition reimbursement must complete and submit, either by email or by hand-delivery, the following forms to the Administrative Captain assigned to the Training Academy (all forms are available on the Department LAN):

1. DC Government Employee Training Authorization (DCTF- 1)
2. Career Development Plan and Agreement (DCFEMS Form 9911)
3. Obligated Service Agreement (DCFEMS-Form UN-38-A)
4. Where requested, the member's social security number must be accurately identified on documentation submitted to the Department

C. After Course Completion: Members are required to obtain a grade of C or better in each course in order to receive reimbursement from the Department. No later than 40 days after the end of that semester for which the participant is seeking reimbursement, the employee must give the Administrative Captain of Training the following:

1. A transcript of grade(s); and
2. A paid receipt indicating the tuition expense.
3. An account summary indicating a zero balance for the semester.
4. A copy of the member's people-soft time and attendance for the time the member was on Administrative leave.
5. A completed form 175.1
6. A copy of the letter of acceptance from the Training Institution.

D. The Administrative Captain will forward all completed documentation to the DFC-TA for review and submission to the AFC-S. Upon approved by the AFC-S, the Budget Office shall institute payment to the employee within 30 days of receipt. The Department is authorized to pay all or any part of the reimbursable expenses of an approved course. Reimbursement payments will be sent to the address of record with the District Government.

E. Tax Considerations: After the member is reimbursed, the District government will issue a Form 1099 providing notification to the Internal Revenue Service. The taxability of reimbursements is subject to existing provisions of Section 127 (or any other relevant section) of the Internal Revenue Code. Generally, educational expenses qualifying as job-related are not reportable as income to the employee. However, it is recommended that members obtain appropriate tax advice about reporting and deducting such reimbursements.

X. Tuition Reimbursement for Additional (Non-UDC) Studies

A. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Bulletin, additional (non-UDC) studies may be approved at the Fire Chief's discretion.

B. Each application for payment or reimbursement of additional (non-UDC) expenses will be considered independently and judged on its own merit with respect to relevancy to the Fire and Emergency Medical Service Department's mission and the particular employee's job description and career path. The following are some of the factors that will be considered in determining whether training is appropriate for reimbursement by the Department:

1. Relevancy to the mission of the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department
2. Length of course
3. Completing the course for which reimbursement is requested and receiving a passing grade of at least a C or equivalent.
4. Educational Standing and accreditation of the facility offering the course
5. Cost of tuition, travel, per diem, supplies, material, or other related expenses
6. Relative time frame of the course offering
7. Fund availability
8. Employee service record including his/her length of service, disciplinary history, duty assignments and previous training
9. Expected benefits to the Department and/or to the District of Columbia Government
10. Employees knowledge, proficiency, skill, and qualification and the extent to which these qualities are likely to be improved by the training

C. If the additional course request is granted by the Fire Chief, members will be reimbursed according to the process set forth in this Bulletin.

D. Reimbursement request will not be granted for remedial courses, non-approved educational courses, GED courses of study, or any other job training initiatives not germane to the fire, emergency medical and rescue profession.

E. In the case of a dispute regarding a reimbursement request determination, the AFC-S decision may be appealed to the Fire Chief whose decision is final.

XI. Obligated Service Agreement

A. Employees entering into the Obligated Service Agreement (DCFEMS-UN Form 38) must remain with the District of Columbia Government for the period of time set forth in the Agreement.

B. In accordance with D.C. Official Code §1-613.0l (d)(l)(B), an employee selected for training in a facility not controlled by the District of Columbia must agree in writing to pay to the District government the amount of all expenses incurred in connection with the training, other than his or her salary, if the employee voluntarily leaves District government service before the end of the period for which he or she had agreed to serve.

C. An employee who enters into an Obligated Service Agreement must give the Department a minimum of one month advance notice in writing before separating from District government service in accordance with F.D. Special Order 7 series 2013.

D. In accordance with D.C. Official Code §1-613.0 1 (d)(4), an Obligated Service Agreement may not be necessary under the following situations:

1. When an employee is selected for training provided by a manufacturer as a part of the normal service contract as a result of purchase or lease or demonstration of a product under a procurement contract;

2. When an employee is selected for training that does not exceed 80 hours of duty time within a single training program; or

3. When an employee is selected for training that is given through an independent study course

E. The District government may recover the incurred training expenses as provided in Chapter 29 of the District Personnel Manual, Employee Debt Set-Offs. The right of recovery of the amount of expenses incurred in connection with the training pursuant to D.C. Official Code §1-613.0l (d)(1)(B) and 13 DPM §1310.6 may be waived, in whole or in part, by the Mayor or the Department, if recovery would be against equity and good conscience, or against the public interest.

XII. National Fire Academy (NFA) and Emergency Management Institute (EMI)

A. Members of the Department are encouraged to attend the National Fire Academy (NFA) and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. These educational entities are part of the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and provide quality expert instruction <u>at no tuition expense to the employee.</u>

B. The core function of these two institutions is to provide a platform for the federal and local governments to standardize, develop, and increase knowledge and leadership skills among emergency services stakeholders. This is accomplished through instruction and curriculum specific to the Fire, Rescue and the Emergency Medical Services profession.

C. Department members seeking definitive information regarding course offerings and class availability should visit http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/

D. Per Mayor's Order **2013-196**, all requests for training, travel, and/or reimbursement must go through a pre-approval process. Unless the member will cover their own cost for the NFA meal ticket, it is required that the directives outlined in Sections III and VII of this Bulletin be followed.

E. Members requesting permission to attend the NFA shall submit the following to the Administrative Captain at the TA:

D.C. Training Form 1 (Revised 2013-1) or most recent update

1. A Special Report requesting administrative leave with endorsements through the chain-of-command. The final endorsed report, with the appropriate signatures, must be submitted to the AFC-S at least 75 days in advance from the scheduled start date of the course.

2. A completed General Admission Application (FEMA Form 119.25.1), which is located on the internet at www.training.FEMA.gov.

F. Once the pre-approval process has been completed all documentation will be returned to the TA to be submitted to the NFA for approval. If approved, the member will be notified by NFA correspondence. All members will receive a welcome packet that outlines information pertaining to training, transportation, lodging, dress code, and food services (**including meal ticket prices**). Any and all certificates acquired can be added to the members training file upon request and submittal of copies of certificates to the Training Academy's certification office.

G. The NFA meal policy requires members who are registered and staying on campus to purchase a meal ticket from Guest Services -regardless of whether a member chooses to eat. The cost of all meals may not exceed the per diem rate (noted below). Members will be reimbursed when the course is completed and all supporting documentation is submitted. Additional questions can be directed to the Administrative Captain at the TA (202) 673-3251.

H. Members attending the NFA who request reimbursement for meals, and any other approved expenditures incurred while on the NFA campus, shall submit a Travel Expense Report, which will be provided by Office of the Fire Chief staff. The form should be filled out and returned to the Administrative Captain upon course completion. The Travel Expense Report must be accompanied by original receipts for any expenditure from Guest Services or any other establishment where meals were acquired. This documentation should be submitted, and received by the Accounts Payable Office within ten (10) business days of the employee's return from training.

1. The per diem rate based on calendar year 2013 for Emmitsburg, MD (Frederick County) is currently $56.00 per day. Members will only receive $42 (75%) for the first and last days of NFA training (i.e., the 12-day stay at NFA roughly equates to a possible $644.00 reimbursement). Rates are based on the Federal Government reimbursement rates and are adjusted when the Federal per diem rate is adjusted.

2. It will take approximately 30 days to receive reimbursement once the required documentation is submitted to the Training Academy and then forwarded to the Accounts Payable Office. Members will receive a check by mail to the address listed on the expense report. In addition, members are reminded to review Article 15 of the Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department Order Book.

XIII. Training Records

A. Upon completion of any Department sponsored training except that provided through UDC, employees will submit an evaluation of the training through their supervisor using DC Form 1207A. The purpose of collecting evaluations is to obtain important information concerning course usefulness and, in the case of in-service training, to obtain important information concerning where and how to make changes in course content and presentation methods.

B. Additionally, employees shall submit a copy of their certificate of completion to the DFC of Training per 13 DPM § 1313.1.

C. The Training Academy will maintain a training record of each employee which shall include information as:

1. Training course and subject taken
2. Training course and subject completed
3. Enrollment date
4. Grade and degree obtained

This information may be maintained in an electronic and/or print version. Accuracy of the content of the training records kept at the TA depends greatly upon accurate and timely submission of all course work and certifications by the employee. Employees who apply and are approved for Department sponsored training must submit copies of their certificates, diplomas and transcripts to the TA within the prescribed timeframes as the courses are completed.

D. Each employee is held responsible for notifying the Training Academy, in writing, of his/her desire to include additional training materials in their individual training record.

XIV. List of Forms

The following Forms are available on the Department local area network (LAN). Employees requiring assistance, as it relates to filling out these forms, should contact the Administrative Captain at the Training Academy.

DC/TF-1	Request for Training and Travel (Revised 2013, or subsequent revision)
DC/TF-lA	Obligated Service Agreement
DC/TF-9911	Career Development Plan and Agreement