



## The Corporation of the Town of Essex

Section:	<b>Corporate – Human Resources</b>
Subject:	<b>Staff Training &amp; Development</b>
Policy Number:	<b>001</b>
Approval Date:	<b>January 21, 2008, February 7, 2022</b>
Approved By:	<b>R03-01-013, R22-02-042</b>
Prepared By:	<b>D. E. Hunter, Brandi Sieben</b>

### Objective

The Town of Essex is committed to supporting training and development opportunities that enhance the performance of individual employees and the municipality as a whole. To this end the objective of this policy is to build a learning culture in the Town of Essex and to guide and promote the development of the Town of Essex as a learning organization committed to the lifelong learning of its employees.

To further this objective, The Town’s commitment to training and development is supported by an annual allocation of funding through the Town’s operating budget.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote and support employee development as a means to ensuring that employees maintain necessary skills and job qualifications;
- Provide opportunities for employees to add to and improve their skills to support future advancement and inter-departmental transfers within the Town of Essex;
- Promote shared accountability between the employee and the Town of Essex for an employee’s professional development; and,

- Ensure access to and fairness and equity in the application of employee professional development opportunities.

## Scope

This policy applies to all permanent full and part time employees, including firefighters.

## Definitions

**Competency** – a competency is the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and behaviours to successfully perform tasks in a defined work setting.

**Conference and Convention** –Event that enable employees to keep well-informed of current developments in their field of expertise. It provides the opportunity to exchange ideas and share experiences with professionals from similar backgrounds and/or working environments

**Corporate Leadership Team** - – the Corporate Leadership Team as referred to under this Policy refers to a team consisting of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director, Corporate Services, Director, Development Services, Director, Infrastructure Services, Town Solicitor/Clerk, Manager, Communications and Manager, Human Resources of the Town of Essex.

**Educational Course** – A program or course offered by an accredited education institution or professional association, in which the course has a grade or pass/fail criteria. These are courses taken on the employee' own time and not during work hours.

**Educational Institution** is defined as:

- A. University - An institute of higher learning granting degrees, certificates, accreditation and/or related approved programs, comprising of one or more undergraduate programs approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.
- B. College – An institute of higher learning granting diplomas, certificates, accreditation and/or related approved programs. The college could be a constituent unit of the University or an institution for specialized instruction as approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.
- C. Polytechnical School – usually it is not deemed to be a traditional University. The degree, diploma, certificate, accreditation's and/or related approved programs are focused on the professional world. The Polytechnical school program must be registered and approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.
- D. U.S. Post-Secondary Institutions - Will be approved only if the program is not available in surrounding Canadian areas, subject to the other regulations under the policy and overall cost. The institution must be recognized by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

E. Accreditation and/or Certificates – An institute and/or Association offering accreditation and/or certificates at a post-secondary level leading towards a recognized accreditation, degree, diploma or designation, i.e., Certified Municipal Manager, Certified Water Licensing. Program registration requires pre-approval by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

**Employee** – For purposes of this Policy, “employees” are deemed to include only permanent full time and part time employees of the Town of Essex.

**Employee Development** – professional growth through the practical application of knowledge, skills and abilities including an exposure to a diversity of ideas and experiences, through many means of training, formalized activities of mentoring and coaching, and exchanges.

**Individual Development Objective** - is a written objective within the performance management process, with the purpose to enhance individual capabilities, skills and competencies to improve on-the-job-performance and for career development.

**Learning** – is the acquisition and creation of new knowledge and ideas that change the way an individual perceives understands and acts.

**Performance Management Process** - a method by which the Town evaluates and develops its people’s skills, behaviours and individual performance in order to improve organizational performance. It is an ongoing process where the Manager/Supervisor and the employee work together to plan, monitor and review an employee’s strategic objectives, individual development objectives and competencies.

**Professional Development** – formal process dedicated to maintenance and improvement of professional standards, skills and abilities that are required to perform as a professional in a dedicated area of expertise.

**Senior Management Team**– the Senior Management Team as referred to under this Policy refers to a team consisting of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director, Corporate Services, Director, Development Services, Director, Infrastructure Services, Town Solicitor/Clerk of the Town of Essex.

**Training** – is the process of acquiring specific knowledge or skills that are required to perform a particular job or activity and in carrying out day to day operations. Training may be delivered through a variety of methods including, a course, workshop, seminar, or webinar.

**Workshops, Seminars, Webinars** - learning activities usually of limited duration that focus on a specific concept, method, technique, system or program.

## Responsibilities

**Employees** – All employees are encouraged to commit to a process of learning throughout their careers and take primary responsibility for managing their own career development by:

- examining current skills and identifying areas for further improvement or development
- seeking opportunities for ongoing skill/competency enhancement
- demonstrating a willingness to learn by taking advantage of relevant training opportunities
- keeping skills and knowledge up to date to meet changing needs of the workplace
- communicating career development needs to their manager

**Council** – Council will create and foster a learning environment by:

- ensuring the availability of sufficient resources to promote a corporate training and development strategy
- allocating funds to training and development based on an agreed upon percentage of annual full-time Salaries and Wages
- ensuring that the percentage used to determine the annual allocation for training and development does not fall below 2.4% of annual fulltime Salaries and Wages, excluding Council and Committees of Council

**Senior Management Team** – The Senior Management Team will create and foster an environment that facilitates and enhances skills training and career development of staff by:

- establishing overall learning goals consistent with strategic and operating objectives of the Town of Essex
- administering the Policy in a consistent manner thereby ensuring equitable and fair access by all employees to the resources available for training and development activities
- Consult with Human Resources Division for identifying Corporate Training and Development opportunities and offerings
- Ensure preparation of an annual report on training and development activities for the past year as set out in this policy and present the annual report to Personnel Committee.

**Department Directors/Managers** – Directors and Managers will create and foster an environment within their respective areas of responsibility, as well as corporately, that facilitates and enhances skills training and career development of staff by:

- consulting with staff on training and development activities based on strategic and operational objectives
- in cooperation with staff, identify staff development needs in relation to the work unit

- providing opportunities for non-union staff to define their individual development objectives annually, at a minimum
- administering the Policy in a consistent manner thereby ensuring equitable and fair access by all employees to the resources available for training and development activities
- providing staff members with the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge outside the work unit that will allow staff to grow within the organization

**Human Resources Division** –will provide support to the Corporate Leadership Team, Directors, Managers and Employees in carrying out their training and development responsibilities by:

- managing annual training budget and report bi-annually to Corporate Leadership Team on the status of resources available for staff training and developing
- conducting training needs assessment in consultation with the Senior Management Team
- providing input on corporate training and development opportunities and offerings
- providing support to individual employees in developing individual career development plans through research on availability or programs and cost
- providing support to Department Directors/Managers in the implementation of staff training and development opportunities within a work unit
- investigating and initiate employee wide training sessions such as OMERS, FSEAP training offerings
- prepare annual report to Personnel Committee on Training and Development

## Eligible Training & Development Costs

The following costs related to training and development are deemed eligible for full funding by the Town of Essex:

### **Training, Conferences, Conventions, Workshops, Seminars and Webinars:**

**Registration Fees** – Registration fees for an employee’s attendance at seminars, workshops, training sessions and conferences and conventions deemed to meet the approved work-related learning goals of an employee and/or the employer; must be pre-approved by the employee’s manager and director; fees will be paid by the employer at a rate of 100%. Note that pre and post conference events that do not include a learning component will not be eligible for reimbursement, unless pre-approved by the CAO.

**Miscellaneous Training-Related Expenses** – The Town of Essex shall assume allowable costs associated with attending an approved learning event in accordance with the Town’s Travel and Business Expense Policy (Policy 025). Note that meal allowance will not be

reimbursed to employees if the learning event is within a fifty-kilometer radius of the employee's regular work facility. The Town will not reimburse meal expenses for any meal that is covered as part of the registration fee or a hotel stay, including a continental breakfast.

### **Educational Courses**

To qualify for tuition reimbursement, an employee must be a permanent full-time employee and have completed their probationary period prior to enrolling in a particular course of study.

Tuition Fees that are either directly related to the employee's current job or as part of the Town's succession plan, would be eligible to be reimbursed at 100% upon successful completion up to a maximum of \$1500 per calendar year. For example:

- Individual courses taken independently of enrolment in a degree, diploma, certificate or designation program; or
- Courses leading to a college diploma, university degree, professional certificate, diploma or designation.

Tuition Fees that are related to the organization's function but not directly related to the employee's current job or division/department function would be reimbursed at 50% upon successful completion up to a maximum of \$1000 per calendar year. For example:

- Individual courses taken independently of enrolment in a degree, diploma, certificate or designation program; or
- Courses leading to a college diploma, university degree, professional certificate, diploma or designation.

Eligible tuition reimbursement expenses include tuition fees, relative textbook and examination fees (if required). The employee will supply proof of payment and passing grade to be eligible for tuition reimbursement. All requests for tuition reimbursement must be pre-approved by the employee's Director and the CAO, and all claims for reimbursement must be made within 60 days of completing the course. Non-tuition related fees are ineligible for reimbursement, including, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Deferred or late registration penalties
- Fees for an extension
- Parking fees
- Course credit transfer fees
- Student Association fees
- Transportation expenses
- Meals
- Reference Books

- Miscellaneous supplies or equipment

In the event an employee terminates his/her employment or is discharged by the Town (excluding layoff), the employee will be responsible for reimbursing the town for the tuition reimbursement using the following scale:

Completed Year of Service by Employee since date of tuition reimbursement Payment (any 12 month Period)	Amount to be repaid by the Terminated and/or Discharged Employee
Less than 6 months	100%
Within 6 months to 1 year	75%
Within 1 year to 1 ½ years	50%
Within 1 ½ years to 2 Years	25%

The amount owing by the Employee will be calculated by the Finance Division, reviewed by both Human Resources and the outgoing Employee. Any amounts owing will be deducted from the final pay, and in the case the repayment amount exceeds the final pay, a cheque for the balance owing would be due by the final day of employment.

If the Town requests an employee to attend an education course which is considered to be required for the position and in the Corporation’s interest, full assistance will be given to the employee and as such, the course will be paid by the Town at a rate of 100%. In such cases, since the initiative is taken by the Corporation, the provisions of an employee to repay the Corporation if they leave its employment, will not apply.

**Corporate Training and Development Sessions** – Costs to acquire the services of a consultant or organization to provide onsite/off-site training and development will be fully paid for by the Town of Essex. All other costs to attend a corporate training and development session will be paid in accordance with the Town’s Travel and Business Expense Policy (Policy 025). Note that meal allowances will not be reimbursed if the learning event is within a fifty-kilometer radius of the employee’s regular work facility.

**Professional Memberships** – The Town of Essex will pay for an employee’s membership in eligible professional organizations. While professional memberships will continue to be budgeted at the departmental level, eligibility for reimbursement of professional memberships must be approved by Department Directors.

## Procedure for Approval & Reimbursement of Training and Development Requirements

**Requests for Training** –Employees requesting to attend training (workshop, seminar, and webinar) or a conference or convention, must complete a Travel and Business Request Form

with all associated fees, and attach all pertinent information regarding the training to their manager for consideration. Once the employee's manager has approved the training request, it will be forwarded to the Department Director for final approval. The completed approval form will be forwarded to HR for budgetary review. Participation in any training event will not be reimbursed unless it has been approved by the Department Director prior to the employee attending that training.

The reimbursement of costs associated with Training and Development opportunities is subject to the requirements specified under "Eligible Training and Development Costs" section of this policy. Any requests for payment or reimbursement of costs related to a training and development opportunity must be approved by Department Director.

**Conferences and Conventions – Post-Attendance Requirements** - Attendance at a Conference or Convention requires that an employee prepare a brief report to their Director at the conclusion of the Conference/Convention on the benefits of an employee's attendance at such Conference/Convention.

## **Procedure for Approval of Educational Courses and Tuition Reimbursement Requirements**

**Requests for Educational Course** - Employees requesting to attend an educational course through an accredited education institution or professional association (eg. AMTCO, OMMI, Ontario Good Roads Association), must complete an Educational Course Tuition Request Form with the course fees, and attach the course outline and learning outcomes. Approval process flow for educational courses will be as follows:

- Manager reviews request and course content to assess eligibility and to determine if the educational course is directly related to the employee's current job, or if the course is not directly related to the employee current job but related to the organizations function.
- If approved, the Manager will submit to Human Resources to review for budgetary considerations.
- If there are no budgetary restrictions, Human Resources will forward to the Department Director and then CAO for final consideration, if there are budgetary restrictions it will be returned to the Manager.
- If the Department Director and CAO approve the educational course request, a copy will be sent to the employee and Human Resources for the employee file.

**Requests for Tuition Reimbursement:** Within 60 days of the employee successfully passing the educational course, they will complete and submit Educational Course Tuition Reimbursement Request Form along with proof of payment (tuition, books) and passing grade and/or marks to their manager for approval. The manager will forward to Human Resources to reconcile submitted fees with original request and provided back to the employee. Once approved the employee will complete and submit a cheque request to be reimbursed.

## Annual Report on Training & Development Strategy

On an annual basis the Human Resources Division will provide a report on training and education costs. It will be provided to the Corporate Leadership Team for and to present a final report to Personnel Committee identifying:

- Detailed information of training and development spending by type of learning (eg. training, conferences, corporate training, formal education, etc.) and by employee group.
- A breakdown of learning expenditures (eg. tuition fees, workshop and seminar fees, training consultants, purchase of training packages, conference fees) and learning-related expenditures such as mileage, meals, accommodations, etc.
- Historical statistics on days dedicated for learning and training costs per employee
- Details on future short-term and long-term learning plans
- New learning opportunities and techniques available

## References and Related Documents

- Business Expense Policy
- Travel and Business Request Expense Form
- Travel Business Expense Reconciliation
- Conference/Convention Post Attendance Report
- Educational Course Request Form
- Tuition Reimbursement Request Form

## Acknowledgement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and understand the Staff Training & Development Policy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHANGE RECORD LOG

Revision Level	Revision Date	Prepared By: (Position Title)	Approved By: (Position Title)	Description of Change
A	12/01/2021	B. Sieben Manager, HR	D. Sweet CAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Scope section to Policy</li> <li>• Updated definitions for: Training, Learning, competency, employee development. Removed definitions for: Personal Career Development, organizational development. Added: conferences and conventions, workshop, seminars and webinars, education institution, education course, performance management process, individual development objective. Senior Leadership Definition.</li> <li>• <b>Responsibilities:</b> Council – remove: police in bullet three, encouraging all staff to participate in the training and development strategy; Participating in the development of overall learning goals and strategies for the organization that are consistent with the strategic and operating objectives of the Town of Essex. SMT: remove: consulting with employees, Department Heads and Supervisors for purposes of identifying and providing opportunities for staff to grow in the organization through training and development, add: Consult with Human Resources Division for identifying Corporate Training and Development opportunities and offerings. Change Department Heads to Department Director. Human Resources removed assist SMT in bullet 7.</li> <li>• <b>Eligible Training &amp; Development Costs:</b> added Note that meal allowance will not be reimbursed to employees if the learning event is within a fifty-kilometer radius of the employee’s regular work facility. The Town will not reimburse meal expenses for any meal that is covered as part of the registration fee or a hotel stay, including a continental breakfast., Removed Books and Miscellaneous written materials., Added Educational Courses. Added educational courses information and repayment chart. Updated: requests for Training removing CAO from approval process and adding HR for budgetary review. Added Educational courses section including reimbursement table.</li> <li>• <b>Procedure for Approval of Educational Courses and Tuition Reimbursement Requirements:</b> update requests for training to include The completed</li> </ul>

				<p>approval form will be forwarded to HR for budgetary review. Training can be booked only after the Director’s approval and HR’s budgetary review. Remove the requirement for CAO approval for training. Remove: In the absence of prior approval by the Senior Administration Team, all training costs, including costs to attend a Conference or Convention, will be the sole responsibility of the employee. Change member of senior administration to Department Director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Procedure for Approval of Educational Courses and Tuition Reimbursement Requirements</b> – added new procedure for tuition/educational courses.</li> <li>• <b>Annual Report on Training and Development:</b> removed: education subject-specific training, employee orientation training, management development training, degree/diploma/certification training, and added: training, conferences, corporate training, formal education, removed: A review of effectiveness of learning in relation to short-term and long-term strategic learning plans, Progress in multi-year training programs, updated final report to Personnel Committee and removed Council</li> <li>• Added References and Associated Documents section</li> </ul>