I. PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedures, in accordance with LCTCS Policy# 6.038, for establishing a practice of educational assistance for eligible full-time employees of Northshore Technical Community College (NTCC) factoring financial circumstances of the college.

II. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy and procedure applies to all NTCC employees with approval from his or her supervisor and chancellor (or designee).

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Full-time Employee: An employee working 40 hours a week or 80 hours in a pay period; or, faculty placed under contract or under a letter of appointment to a permanent position for a period encompassing most or all of the entire academic year (i.e., faculty contracts or appointments of not less than 9 months). A student is not eligible if the individual’s primary status is as a student, or the individual works in a student designated position, since this is intended as an employment benefit.

B. Educational Assistance: Financial support for approved job-related educational courses, job-related professional certifications or licenses, or the acquisition of a degree. Financial support consists of the costs of tuition and applicable mandatory attendance fees.

IV. ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

To be eligible to receive educational assistance, the employee must have been employed at least one year in a full-time, permanent position and receive approval from his or her supervisor and the college chancellor, or his/her designee.
V. TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A. Course Criteria: Requests for educational assistance must be for courses that are job-related or part of a degree program. All academic courses must be taken at a Louisiana state college or university that is a regionally accredited institution.

B. Employee Eligibility: Participation is limited to a full-time employee who has been employed at least one year in a full-time permanent position and who receives approval to register for the course(s) from his or her supervisor and chancellor. Employee has received a “satisfactory” or above rating on his/her performance evaluation within the last twelve months.

C. Submission of Requests: Employees must request education assistance and receive approval prior to the start of class.

D. Course Limits: Employees may take up to six credit hours of course work per semester (or the equivalent under other than regular semester systems).

E. Reimbursement: If sufficient funds are available, NTCC will use the following procedures when reimbursing employees upon completion of appropriate courses.
   1. Employees pay the required tuition and applicable mandatory attendance fees initially and are reimbursed for the costs when the course is completed and appropriate documentation is submitted.
   2. The course must be completed satisfactorily with a grade of “C” or better, or “Pass” if a Pass/Fail course, to be eligible for reimbursement.
   3. The employee must produce documented proof of successful completion of the course before reimbursement.
   4. This benefit does not cover fees or financial penalties associated with a dropped course, a course from which the student withdraws, or other types of financial penalties due to failure by the student to meet set deadlines.

F. Continuation Requirements: Any employee receiving tuition assistance will be required to sign an employment continuation agreement. When the tuition reimbursement payment is made, the employee will be required to sign an agreement to remain an employee of NTCC for at least two months from the date of receipt (of the reimbursement payment) for each credit hour reimbursed. (For example, if 6 credit hours are taken, a continuation agreement of 12 months will be required.) If the employee separates from NTCC prior to the end of the continuation period, the amount due back to the employer will be pro-rated.

VI. EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

NTCC may allow, in accordance with LCTCS leave record policy 6.003 and the NTCC “Time & Attendance” policy HR-001, educational leave for a chosen job-related course if it is taken during the employee’s work day. However, employees are encouraged to schedule courses with minimal disruption to their regular work schedule by taking courses outside of regular work hours, on-line, or making up work hours missed with the supervisor’s approval. In all such situations, the employee’s taking of a course should not adversely affect department services and the employee must continue to meet the full responsibilities of their College position(s).
VII. TUITION WAIVER

Employees taking courses at a Louisiana college or university are encouraged to first consider using NTCC Tuition & Fee Exemption for Employees Policy# HR-023, before requesting tuition assistance under this policy.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy may be made by the NTCC Chancellor. Further, the Chancellor will also determine whether the allowances of this policy can be exercised, factoring the financial circumstances of NTCC.

IX. PROCEDURES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The eligible employee must complete an “Initial Tuition Assistance Application and Continuation Agreement” [Form HR 010]. The application/agreement is to be completed by the employee applying for tuition assistance prior to starting the course for which reimbursement will be requested. This form must be approved at all supervisory levels through the NTCC Chancellor, as applicable. Provided sufficient College funds are available, the Chancellor may determine a reimbursement in part or in full. Approval at this time does not guarantee continued approval. A copy of this form should be retained by the employee and his/her immediate supervisor and the original must be submitted to the NTCC Office of Human Resources and retained in the employee’s file.

B. The eligible employee must complete a “Final Tuition Assistance Application and Continuation Agreement” [Form HR 011] after the course has been finished and the final grade for the course has been received. The appropriate documentation of this should be attached to this form. A copy of this form should be retained by the employee and his/her immediate supervisor and the original must be submitted to the NTCC Office of Human Resources and retained in the employee’s file.

C. The NTCC Human Resources department will forward a copy of the Initial and Final Tuition Assistance Application and Continuation forms, along with any other supporting documentation to the NTCC Finance Office for reimbursement processing.

Reference:
- LCTCS Tuition Assistance for Full-Time Employees Policy# 6.038
- LCTCS Leave Record Policy # 6.003
- NTCC Time and Attendance Policy # HR-001

Review Process:

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