



The Texas A&M University System  
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service

## Standard Administrative Procedure

### 31.99.01.99.01 – Employees As Students

Approved: July 12, 2007

Revised: August 2, 2022

Next Scheduled Review: August 2, 2027

#### Summary

TEEX recognizes the value and contribution of its employees by providing educational reimbursement and educational release time for employees pursuing a degree from an accredited college or university. These programs provide employees with an opportunity to further their growth and advancement. If an employee meets the following criteria, the employee may be able to utilize both the release and reimbursement programs together. Professional development or training identified by the employee's supervisor does not qualify for either of these programs. Employees may also request a flexible work schedule or use vacation time to accommodate class hours for a degree-seeking program.

#### Definitions

Fiscal year – period beginning September 1 and ending August 31

Budgeted position - Any position created to fill a labor need that is utilized at least 20 hours per week up to 40 hours per week and the continued employment is for a term of at least 4 1/2 months.

Release time – administratively approved time that an employee may spend away from the employee's normal work duties for the purpose of attending classes in pursuit of a graduate or undergraduate degree.

Accredited college or university - a college or university that is recognized by the [Department of Education](#), [Council of Higher Education Accreditation](#), or both. This would include regional accrediting agencies.

#### Requirements

##### 1. General Program Requirements

1.1. The following are program service commitment eligibility requirements

- 1.1.1. Education Reimbursement - Employee must have been employed in a full-time, budgeted position at TEEEX for no less than 12 consecutive months prior to applying for the program
- 1.1.2. Educational Release Time – Employee must be employed in a full-time, budgeted position at TEEEX. No minimum length of service required
- 1.2. Employee must be in and remain in good standing with the Agency
  - 1.2.1. Employee shall not have any active performance management (i.e., disciplinary) plans on file in Human Resources
  - 1.2.2. The employee’s most recent performance evaluation must reflect the employee is meeting the supervisor’s performance expectations
- 1.3. Employee may be in pursuit of any of the following degrees: Associate’s, Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate level degree
  - 1.3.1. Pursuit of professional certifications are not eligible for either of these programs
- 1.4. Pursuit of degree must be from a nationally or regionally accredited college or university
- 1.5. The employee’s participation must not adversely affect workload or performance, including travel requirements
- 1.6. The degree program must be relevant to the employee’s current position or a future agency position they wish to obtain

## **2. Educational Release Time**

- 2.1. Course load must not exceed four credit hours in any semester or summer session unless the division director grants a written exception
- 2.2. Educational release time is limited to 3 hours per work week
- 2.3. Courses must be offered during the employee’s regular work time in which attendance at a designated time is required. Courses may be in-person or live online
  - 2.3.1. Courses that can be completed at the discretion of the student do not qualify for release time
- 2.4. Release time will not count as hours worked for purposes of FLSA overtime
- 2.5. Release time must not interfere in any way with the accomplishment of job duties or the work of the division/department
- 2.6. Utilization of this program must be approved by the employee’s supervisor and division director
- 2.7. Procedures
  - 2.7.1. Employee will complete and submit applicable agency forms and submit for approval prior to usage
  - 2.7.2. Each release time interval used for course attendance will be recorded in Workday within the appropriate pay period
  - 2.7.3. Upon completion or discontinuation of the degree plan, the employee will notify their supervisor and HR in writing

## **3. Educational Reimbursement Program**

- 3.1. Program is operated at the discretion of the TEEEX Agency Director or designee and may be suspended as needed
- 3.2. Program acceptance priority will be given by a combination of degree type, institution, relevancy of degree to current TEEEX position and date of approved application
  - 3.2.1. Degree type priority: Program acceptance will be extended to individuals working toward the following degrees in order of priority: first Associate's, first Bachelor's, Master's and PH.D. (if not under the TAMUS PH.D. program)
  - 3.2.2. Institution priority - Program acceptance will be extended to individuals attending the following accredited colleges and/or universities in the following priority order: State of Texas Community Colleges, all Texas A&M University System Universities (TAMUS), other Texas Public Universities outside of TAMUS, other accredited private and/or public colleges and/or universities
  - 3.2.3. Relevance priority – acceptance priority will be given to those applications that provide well documented degree relevancy to their current TEEEX position
  - 3.2.4. Date of approved application – if applications are equal in all other priority categories, the date in which the approved application was received in Human Resources will determine priority acceptance
- 3.3. Program participation requires an application. A submitted application does not guarantee program acceptance
- 3.4. The agency will only provide reimbursements for one degree per employee during a lifetime
- 3.5. Reimbursements will be for tuition, other required educational fees and books up to an agency established maximum per fiscal year
- 3.6. The agency will establish a lifetime reimbursement maximum which a program participant must not exceed
- 3.7. Acceptance into the program will be for 4 years or until an employee earns their degree, whichever one occurs first
- 3.8. Employees that change degree programs after acceptance into the program will be required to reapply for the program
- 3.9. Employee must already be accepted into the college or university from which they will complete courses before applying to the program
- 3.10. The program maximum fiscal year allowance is made available to the employee at the start of each fiscal year. Once the allotted fiscal year funds are depleted, no further reimbursements can be made for the rest of the fiscal year
  - 3.10.1. Reimbursements will only be made for courses completed after the employee's program acceptance date
  - 3.10.2. Reimbursement will only be provided for courses completed within the same semester or semester equivalent as the reimbursement request

- 3.10.3. Reimbursement window will be limited to three times per fiscal year
- 3.10.4. Reimbursement will only be provided for undergraduate courses with a final grade of “C” or higher or graduate or doctoral courses with a final grade of “B” or higher. Courses that are dropped or given an incomplete grade are not eligible for reimbursement
- 3.11. Proper documentation of final course grade(s) and reimbursable expenses will be required before a reimbursement request is approved
- 3.12. If no reimbursement is requested within a fiscal year the employee will be dropped from the program. The employee may reapply

## **Quality Assurance Measures**

Human Resources continuously monitors the implementation of this SAP and will adjust as needed if new requirements are put forth by the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS).

## **Related Statues, Policies, or Requirements**

TAMUS Regulation, [31-99-01, Employees Registering As Students](#)

TAMUS Regulation, [33.05.01 Use of Public Funds for Employee Training or Education](#)

## **Appendix**

None

## **Office of Responsibility**

Human Resources  
(979) 458-6801

## **Revision History**

Approved July 12, 2007  
Revised October 20, 2017