



INDIANA
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
AND ITS **WorkOne** CENTERS

TO: All Indiana Department of Workforce Development Employees

FROM:  Randy Gillespie, Chief Financial Officer

DATE: April 12, 2011

SUBJECT: DWD Policy 2010-16
Indiana Department of Workforce Development's "Go Out and Learn"
(GOAL) Tuition Assistance Program

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define all the parameters, guidelines and procedures for the administration of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) GOAL program which began January 1, 2008.

Rescission

DWD Policy 2007-38, The Indiana Department of Workforce Development's "Go Out and Learn" (GOAL) Tuition Assistance Program beginning January 1, 2008, issued May 2, 2008

Content

DWD enthusiastically offers GOAL to employees as an incentive to pursue certification and higher education programs that can enhance their tenure, career development and employability. GOAL is administered in-house by DWD Accounting and offers two convenient methods for payment of tuition, course fees and required textbooks. Complete program information about GOAL is available on FAZIO, DWD's Intranet Web site. Inquiries may be directed to DWDGOAL@dwd.in.gov.

Benefit Amount

Eligible employees have access to up to \$5,000 per the State of Indiana's fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for payment of tuition, required fees (e.g., athletic development, student activity, facility, lab, etc.), and required textbook fees for approved coursework during the specified academic term. Expenses submitted to GOAL will be considered during the fiscal year in which the academic term or coursework begins (i.e., the first day of class) and will be deducted from the total \$5,000 available for that fiscal year. Unused GOAL funds do not accumulate or carry over from year-to-year.

Participant Eligibility

All of the following criteria must be met to obtain and maintain GOAL eligibility:

- 1) Regular (not intermittent and not temporary), permanent (not probationary/working test period) full-time (not part-time) DWD or DWD embedded employee status,
- 2) Completion of six (6) full consecutive months of one of the above statuses,
- 3) Employee has not received any discipline or been on a Work Improvement Plan in the three (3) months preceding the date of submitting the GOAL application,
- 4) Enrollment in a certificate, state licensure or degree-seeking program administered by an accredited institution (e.g., trade, technical or vocational school, community or junior college, college or university, or certified training institute),
- 5) GOAL policy guidelines and procedures compliance.

Coursework Eligibility

All coursework and GOAL funding must be **pre-approved** through the GOAL application process.

All core and elective courses required for completion of a certificate, state licensure, associate's, bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree program offered through, or in association with, an accredited training or educational institution, school or professional organization are eligible for GOAL funding.

Additional eligible coursework includes:

- 1) Credit/no-credit and pass/fail courses.
- 2) Refresher courses and courses being audited.
- 3) Online courses.
- 4) Preparatory coursework for certification or state licensure (e.g., CPA, PHR/SPHR, ISBA, etc.)

Employees are encouraged to consult with DWD Accounting prior to course registration if questions or concerns exist regarding eligible coursework.

Course Attendance

Course attendance and study time may not occur on State work time. All classes should be scheduled outside of scheduled work hours.

Application Process

DWD employees **must obtain pre-approval** for GOAL funding and verify GOAL eligibility prior to each course registration. **DWD may require completion of core classes first** and then fulfillment of the degree required electives. Employees may also be required to provide justification for classes to ensure they pertain to their degree requirements.

As program administrators, DWD Accounting is available to answer questions, provide guidance on applications and required documentation, grant pre-approvals and verify eligibility for the program. The Chief Financial Officer is the final approving authority for all applications.

The DWD GOAL application form can be found on FAZIO under Forms and Reports, Human Resources Employees, and Employee Programs. The application should be completed online and then printed. The following steps then need to be taken with the application:

- 1) Attach all required documentation to the GOAL application, and
- 2) Obtain approval signatures from the employee's supervisor and Deputy Commissioner on the GOAL application, and
- 3) Submit the GOAL application, with required documentation attached, to DWD Accounting for consideration.

Required Documentation - To Be Attached to the GOAL Application

For Reimbursement Requests:

- 1) Proof of payment (e.g., cancelled check, charge card receipt, etc.), and
- 2) Original receipts (photocopies of receipts cannot be accepted) showing itemized tuition, course fees and/or textbook expenses; the items that are to be reimbursed must be highlighted, and
- 3) State Form 53788, "Vendor Information" - required with the initial GOAL application for reimbursement and in the event of an address change and/or bank or bank account change, (this form can be found on FAZIO under Forms and Reports, Accounts Payable),
- 4) A photocopy of official grade/class completion documentation issued by the institution or school.

For Direct Payment Requests (paid directly to the institution or school):

- 1) Account statement or enrollment invoice itemizing tuition, course fees and/or textbook expenses, and
- 2) Course registration or class schedule verifying the academic term and course numbers/titles.
- 3) Within thirty (30) days of course completion, a photocopy of official grade/class completion documentation issued by the institution or school.

Participant Disqualification

Employees who fail to comply with all guidelines and procedures set forth within this GOAL policy will be disqualified from GOAL eligibility. Additional causes for disqualification include (but are not limited to):

- 1) Failure to complete a course funded (wholly or partially) by GOAL.
- 2) Failure to earn an average grade of B minus or above per semester (average based on the number of classes taken in the semester) or Credit or Pass on courses funded (wholly or partially) by GOAL.
- 3) Failure to provide required documentation as noted in Required Documentation section (above).
- 4) Voluntary resignation or termination for cause prior to course completion.

The supervisor of a disqualified employee will be promptly notified that the employee is not eligible to participate in the GOAL program.

An employee disqualified from GOAL eligibility will be required to reimburse GOAL in full for any monies disbursed in connection with the cause for disqualification, i.e., dropped or failed course, failure to provide required documentation, etc.

Additionally, an employee will be subject to disciplinary action if falsified documents have been submitted in seeking financial reimbursement.

Goal Fund Restrictions

Financial assistance other than a loan (i.e., Perkins, Stafford loan, etc.) and scholarship awards must be adjusted and deducted from the total enrollment invoice amount due prior to submission of the invoice to GOAL for payment consideration. GOAL funds are to be used to cover tuition, course fees and textbooks; the funds are not to be used as general financial assistance.

Additionally, GOAL funds cannot pay or reimburse:

- 1) Bank finance charges.
- 2) Deferred payment or installment fees.
- 3) Equipment rental or purchases.
- 4) Fees for certification exams or state licensure exams (e.g., CPA, PHR/SPHR, ISBA, etc.).
- 5) Fees for undergraduate and graduate entrance exams (i.e., SAT, GMAT, LSAT, GRE, etc.).
- 6) Preparatory coursework for undergraduate and graduate entrance exams (e.g., SAT, GMAT, LSAT, GRE, etc.).
- 7) Graduation or diploma expenses.
- 8) Healthcare premiums or expenses.
- 9) Late fees, fines or penalties (e.g., late registration, late payment, library, parking, etc.).
- 10) Parking expenses.
- 11) Refundable charges or security deposits.
- 12) State sales tax (e.g., on textbooks, etc.).
- 13) Transcript fees.
- 14) Any other fees or expenses that are not specifically for tuition, required course fees, or required textbooks.

Payment Process

Upon final verification of GOAL funds availability (subject to the employee's \$5,000 annual cap) and employee eligibility by DWD Accounting, the final approval signature of the DWD Chief Financial Officer will be obtained and payment or reimbursement processing will begin. The employee will be notified immediately of any issue concerning GOAL funds availability or GOAL eligibility.

An "Authorization to Invoice" will be issued to the institution or school by DWD Accounting upon final approval of the request for direct payment. The Authorization requests the institution or school submit an invoice billable to GOAL on behalf of the eligible employee for allowable charges.

All enrollment invoices submitted to GOAL for payment and all receipts submitted to GOAL for reimbursement must comply with the Auditor of State's required format as approved by DWD Accounting. All payees are required to be registered with the Auditor of State by completing State Form 53788, "Vendor Information" so that payments can be made by direct deposit. The form can be found on FAZIO at Forms and Reports, Accounts Payable.

Institutions and schools unable or unwilling to comply with the Auditor of State's guideline to register by completing the Vendor Information form cannot be paid by the Auditor of State's Office. In these situations, employees may opt to pay expenses up-front and later submit a GOAL application and eligible receipts for reimbursement consideration.

Employees unable or unwilling to comply with Auditor of State guideline to register by completing the Vendor Information form cannot be paid by the Auditor of State's Office. In these situations, employees may opt to submit a GOAL application and required documentation for consideration of direct payment to the institution or school.

All GOAL funds are disbursed directly from the Auditor of State's Office to the designated payee. While payment requests are processed as quickly as possible, usually within 35 days, there is no guarantee of payment date.

Policy Exception

Any deviation from this GOAL program policy must be approved by the agency's Commissioner or his/her designee.

Effective Date

Immediately

End Date

Upon rescission

Ownership

DWD Accounting

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

10 North Senate Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46204

DWDGOAL@dwd.in.gov

Action

All DWD employees must follow this policy when requesting consideration of funding through the GOAL program.