CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE - POLICY 961

Career Development Procedure

Overview

College of Lake County encourages employees to take advantage of all opportunities that will assist them in the development of their job-related skills and, in turn, enhance their job proficiency. In order to endorse and facilitate such skills development, CLC provides a Career Development Program to eligible Board-established employees for enrollment in career path directed coursework at educational institutions. In order to encourage such continued career development, the College shall administer a program that provides a financial award based on completion of a college degree/certificate while on an approved career development plan.

Please see Policy 961 Compensation for Career Development Activities. Note: separate Policies, procedures and forms apply to Tuition Reimbursements and/or Tuition Waivers that are used in conjunction with the Career Development Policy and Procedures.

The procedures are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements

Full-time or part-time employees who have completed twelve months of continuous employment in Board-established positions shall be eligible to receive the benefit in a Career Development Plan.

Plan Requirements

Eligible employee must meet with supervisor or department head to discuss their interest and reasons for pursuing the proposed plan. The written plan must be signed/approved by the supervisor and sent to Human Resources to be placed in the employee’s personnel file. The employee and the supervisor must retain a copy of the approved plan. The plan request form can be found on the Human Resources website at:
http://dept.clcillinois.edu/per/hrlinksnew.html

The employee must have satisfactory job performance in their current position (e.g. last performance review overall rating “meets expectations” or higher and not currently on a Performance Improvement Plan); the performance evaluation for the previous fiscal year must indicate that the employee meets the requirements of the job.

If an employee transfers to another position a new career development plan must be confirmed by the new supervisor.

Effective July 1, 2015
CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE - POLICY 961

Courses may be taken at any accredited college, university, institute, technical/trade school, or professional organization. This includes classroom and on-line courses.

Employees must be enrolled in a career certificate program, and the certificate program is subject to the approval of Human Resources.

Only one award per level can be earned by an employee, and an employee cannot earn an award for a lower level certificate and/or degree if the employee has already received an award for a higher level degree.

Employees are required to complete a new career development plan for each award.

*Degree Award Amounts*

**Certificate Program - $500**

**Associate’s Degree - $1,000**
Note: If employee was already awarded for a certificate program, then amount of award for associate’s degree would be $500.

**Bachelor’s Degree - $2,000**
Note: If employee was already awarded for an associate’s degree, then amount of award for bachelor’s degree would be $1,000.

**Master’s Degree - $2,500**
Note: If employee was already awarded for a bachelor’s degree, then amount of award for master’s degree would be $500.

**Doctorate Degree - $3,500**
Note: If employee was already awarded for a master’s degree, then amount of award for doctorate degree would be $1,000.

The award will be a lump sum amount added to base salary, and will be based on any degree already compensated for through a career development plan earned while working at the College of Lake County in a benefit eligible position. The maximum award any one person could earn will be $3,500 total.

Employees who file an intent to retire four (4) years prior to their retirement date cannot earn more than 6% of the previous year’s base salary. The degree award will be adjusted accordingly if an employee falls under this rule.

Effective July 1, 2015
Employees enrolled in a Career Development Plan under the prior Policy 961 in place through June 30, 2015, as of June 30, 2015, will be grandfathered to receive 2% increases for a previously approved plan. Such employees, including those who received an increase to base salary while working toward a degree, will be eligible for a degree completion award per the begin/complete terms listed above, but the award will not be added to base salary.

**Degree Award Request Procedure**

It is the employee’s responsibility to report the earned career certificate program and/or degree to Human Resources.

Eligible employees will complete required career development request for award form and provide supporting documentation available on the Human Resources website: [http://dept.clcillinois.edu/per/hrlinksnew.html](http://dept.clcillinois.edu/per/hrlinksnew.html).

The career development request for award form must be completed by the employee for approval no later than February 1 and July 1 of each year. Eligible employees must provide supporting documentation by February 1 and July 1. As a special provision for new employees pursuing a degree at time of hire, the employee may submit a form within 30 days of date of hire to participate in the Career Development Program, provided consideration was not made with the accepted offer of employment. Any benefit award for such new hires shall require twelve (12) months of continuous service with no retroactivity before the award is added to base salary upon completion of the degree. Documents used to support career development activities must be official transcripts showing academic degree earned or original certificate confirming completion.

Paperwork submitted on February 1 will be submitted to the February Board meeting effective the date following Board approval. Paperwork submitted July 1 will be reported to the July Board effective the date following Board approval. Awards for degrees earned outside these dates will not be retroactive. For example if an employee earns a degree at the end of the summer semester the next time that employee can apply for a degree award will be February of the next year and is not retroactive to July 1st of the previous year.

Degrees must be from a regionally accredited, degree-granting college or university.

If enrolled in an Associate degree or certificate level program the degree or certificate must be earned at the College of Lake County (if courses are available), prior to taking courses from other educational institutions.

Certification for attending conference, seminars, and workshops are not eligible for this plan.

Effective July 1, 2015
Termination of Eligibility
Any falsification or misrepresentation of degree information or certificate will result in the denial of career development award and may be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

Eligibility for the degree award increase shall cease during any period in which the employee is on leave of absence unless such leave is granted for professional or educational purposes related to the job.

Eligibility for the degree award increase shall cease when an employee separates from employment.

Other

The purpose of the Career Development Plan is to encourage continual learning, enhance employees’ skills, improve workplace performance, and educational development. Participation in this plan should not interfere with the staff member’s ability to carry out regular position responsibilities or assignments. The employee must obtain supervisory approval to participate in a Career Development Plan using the appropriate Plan Request form.

Courses may not be taken during work hours if they are available during the employee's non-work hours. For credit courses that are never offered outside of work hours and not offered online, the employee's supervisor, with authorization of the department Administrator, may grant approval for the employee to participate in class during his/her scheduled work hours on a non-precedent setting basis. In considering such requests, the employee's supervisor must verify that the employee's attendance at class will not adversely affect his/her job performance or department services or productivity. For courses approved to be taken during work hours, the employee shall use appropriate leave or, if approved by their supervisor, adjust their work schedule to make up the time taken during their work day. The employee shall be required to make up work time during the designated pay week.

Employees may appeal any decisions made under this Career Development Procedure by submitting a written appeal to the President of the College, within 60 days of the decision.
Questions regarding these procedures should be directed to Human Resources.

These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Executive Director, Human Resources.

FAQs

Q. If I currently have a plan on file under the old policy for a 2% increase do I still need to submit a new career development plan if I am pursuing a degree?
A. Yes, if you had a career development plan on file prior to July 1, 2015 that plan was for a 2% increase and not for an earned degree. The earned degree policy became effective July 1, 2015.

Q. Can I receive multiple awards if I earn more that one certificate or more than one of the same degree?
A. No, only one award per level can be earned by an employee. For Example: If an employee was already awarded for receiving a master’s degree while at the College, the employee cannot receive a second award for another master’s degree.

Q. Can I receive an award for a lower level certificate and/or degree if I receive a degree award for a higher level degree?
A. No, an employee cannot earn an award for a lower level certificate and/or degree if the employee has already received an award for a higher level degree.

Q. Does a career certificate program need to be from an accredited institution?
A. Generally, an approved certificate program under this Policy should be from the College of Lake County. If the College does not offer the certificate program, then the certificate must be completed at an accredited institution.

Q. Does the plan need to be approved by an Administrator if the department Administrator is not the direct supervisor?
A. Yes, there is a signature required on the form.

Q. What happens to employees that currently have more than one plan on file under the old policy?
A. Employees will have until July 1, 2018 to complete courses under the old plans toward the 2% increases.

Q. What happens to employees that started a new plan between June 23, 2015 and July 1, 2015?
A. Those with approved plans during this period of time will fall into the “grandfather” clause, and any eligible degree completion award would not be added to base salary.

Effective July 1, 2015
CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE - POLICY 961

Q. Can employees that start a contracted cohort program earn a degree award through career development?
A. No, contracted cohorts will fall under a different program. Employees that begin a degree under an individual cohort program will be eligible for benefits under this program.

Q. If I separate from the College then return again and receive additional degrees will I be eligible to receive the full award?
A. If the employee was already awarded for a degree level prior to separating from the College, then amount of award for next degree would be reduced per degree award amounts. For Example: If an employee was already awarded for a master’s degree prior to separating from the College, and then return again and earn a PhD degree then the amount of award for degree would be $1,000.