



*To enhance mission performance, TSA is committed to promoting a culture founded on its values of Integrity, Innovation and Team Spirit.*

*NOTE: Pursuant to Section 101 of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114 (n)), this directive establishes Transportation Security Administration (TSA) policy and supersedes the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) orders, policies, guidance, and bulletins regarding Tuition Assistance issued under the FAA Personnel Management System. This directive is TSA policy and must be applied accordingly.*

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides TSA policy and procedures for the *Tuition Assistance Program*.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all full-time, permanent TSA employees. For individuals currently in the Career Resident Program (CRP), and the Presidential Fellows Management Program (PMFP), any tuition assistance will be handled as stated in Section 6.
3. **AUTHORITY:** The Aviation and Transportation Security Act, Pub. L. 107-71 (ATSA)
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
  - A. **Covered Education:** Academic training provided by an accredited institution that contributes significantly to meeting identified agency training needs, resolves an identified agency staffing problem, or accomplishes goals in the agency's strategic plan. Training paid for by another Federal agency is not covered.
  - B. **Eligible Employees:** Full-time, permanent TSA employees and individuals currently in the CRP and PMFP.
  - C. **Good Standing:** For purposes of this directive, "Good Standing" means free of any pending disciplinary action or pending appeal of any disciplinary action, and maintaining a performance rating of "Achieved Expectations" or above.
  - D. **Rate of Adjusted Pay:** The rate of basic pay and locality pay before any deductions.
  - E. **Tuition Assistance Application Package (TAAP):** A collection of the following documents:
    - (1) Standard Form (SF) 182, *Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training Form*;
    - (2) TAAP Justification Statement, wherein employee explains how the course relates to the TSA mission;
    - (3) [TSA Form 1117, Continuous Service Agreement](#);
    - (4) A copy of the course description and the schedule of fees;
    - (5) A copy of the receipt from school showing tuition paid;

- (6) SF 1164, *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*; and
- (7) Transcript, Official Grade Report, Certificate of Completion, or other official proof of passing grade/completion of course.

**5. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- A. The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital (AA/OHC) is responsible for developing policy and procedures for tuition assistance.
- B. The Office of Human Capital (OHC) is responsible for:
  - (1) Providing technical guidance concerning the administration of such programs; and
  - (2) Maintaining records of each determination made under this authority.
- C. Program offices are responsible for:
  - (1) Using fair and consistent application of policy and procedures when approving employees to receive tuition assistance;
  - (2) Obtaining approval from the employing office approving official(s) (Assistant Administrators (AAs), Federal Security Directors (FSDs), Special Agents in Charge (SACs), or their designees) and requesting a certification of the availability of funds prior to authorizing any payments under this directive;
  - (3) Providing required information to the servicing payroll office to process any assistance payments made under the authority of this directive; and
  - (4) Ensuring that the TAAPs are processed according to the provisions of this directive.

**6. POLICY:**

- A. Tuition assistance may be granted to reimburse the costs of eligible employees for the costs of covered education in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,000 per fiscal year. Non-tuition expenses for items such as books, travel expenses, and parking are not covered.
- B. Employees shall pay the accredited institution for their tuition expenses (out-of-pocket) before receiving tuition assistance from TSA for completed courses.
- C. Recommendations for tuition assistance will normally be made by the immediate supervisor with approval by senior management within the employing office (e.g., AAs, FSDs, SACs or their designees). Determinations on tuition assistance must be made in writing and document the criteria used to determine the amount of assistance.

D. Any program office seeking to provide tuition assistance to an employee pursuant to this directive must verify that they have sufficient funds to support the program/related payments.

E. Service Agreements:

(1) Before any tuition assistance can be paid, employees must sign a written continuous service agreement with TSA and commit to serve 1 year within TSA, regardless of the amount of assistance authorized. The employee's TSA Form 1117 should be modified to reflect this requirement.

(2) A service agreement may specify employment conditions considered appropriate, such as, but not limited to, the employee's position and the duties he/she is expected to perform, work schedule, or level of performance. However, the service agreement in no way constitutes a right, promise, or entitlement to continued employment nor does it limit management's right to take corrective or disciplinary actions as otherwise appropriate.

(3) Periods of leave without pay, or other periods during which the employee is not in a pay status, do not count toward completion of the required service period. The service completion date must be extended by the total amount of time spent in a non-pay status. However, absence because of unformed service or compensable injury is considered creditable toward the required service period upon the employee's return to duty.

**NOTE:** For employees in the *Career Resident Program* and *Presidential Management Fellows Program*, any assistance under this directive will not begin until an employee is permanently assigned to a program office that decides to make such payments to the employee.

F. In order to continue receiving tuition assistance, the employee must:

(1) Receive a final grade of "C," earn a "Pass," (if the course is taken Pass/Fail) or receive a "Certificate of Completion;" and

(2) Remain in good standing as defined in Section 4C.

G. An employee who, voluntarily or because of performance or misconduct, fails to complete the agreed upon period of service may be responsible for repayment of the full amount of assistance received, based on the provisions of the service agreement. If an employee fails to reimburse TSA, the amount outstanding will be recovered from the employee under established debt collection procedures.

H. Consistent with [TSA MD 1000.4, Waiver of Employee Indebtedness](#), repayment may be wholly or partially waived if recovery would be against equity and good conscience and not in the best interest of the Government.

I. This directive does not apply to tuition costs that have been paid for courses not preapproved by TSA.

J. Tuition assistance payments made under the authority of this directive are in addition to an employee's rate of adjusted pay and are not subject to the aggregate limitation on pay. These benefits are subject to Federal income tax, FICA, and Medicare withholding, and any State or local income tax withholdings that may be applicable. Tax withholdings will be deducted at the time of payment.

**7. PROCEDURES:**

- A. Eligible employees must submit a TAAP with all applicable information completed to his or her supervisor no later than 2-weeks prior to the start of a course. The application will then be submitted to the Business Management Office (BMO) within his/her program office for approval.
- B. The BMO will confirm the availability of funds, approve or deny the employee's request, and inform the employee of the decision.
- C. In order to receive tuition assistance for approved, covered education, employees will then submit the proper documentation to complete the TAAP such as a copy of the receipt from school showing tuition paid; a completed SF 1164; and Transcript, Official Grade Report, Certificate of Completion, or other official proof of passing grade/completion of course, no later than 30 days following the completion of the course, or by the end of the fiscal year.

**8. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE:** This policy is approved and effective the date of signature unless otherwise specified.

**APPROVAL**

*Signed*

*12/29/2010*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony Savastana  
Acting Assistant Administrator for Human Capital

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**EFFECTIVE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Distribution: Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Assistant Administrators, Area Directors, Federal Security Directors, Special Agents in Charge, Business Management Offices, Administrative Officers, and HR Specialists

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