

Section 3-09
Employee Education Reimbursement Program
(Updated January 2024)

3.09-1 Purpose

The Department recognizes the value of working with its employees to further their education and basic training. Job specific continuing education curriculums are addressed in Section 3-08 of the Personnel Manual. However, other educational opportunities, not specifically related to an employee's direct responsibilities, but which still serve to enhance an individual's general knowledge of the industries we regulate and/or management and leadership skills in operating the agency itself are also important. To assist agency staff in pursuing advanced opportunities and recognizing that a well-educated staff enhances the knowledge base and expertise of the agency, the following Employee Education Reimbursement (EER) Program is established.

Through the EER Program, employees will be able to seek partial reimbursement for expenses, up to certain limitations, for qualifying educational courses after the course has been completed. This policy is not intended to interfere with employees fulfilling continuing education and/or specialty education requirements aligned with specific job responsibilities as prescribed elsewhere in policy or at the direction of the Department.

3.09-02 General Provisions

1. During the budgeting process preceding the fiscal year, the Department will budget a maximum aggregate amount to be awarded under this program for the next fiscal year. Awards will be conditionally granted after the employee submits an application through the process described below. Final disbursement of funds will be made after the course(s) has been completed and final documents showing completion and a satisfactory grade are provided to the Department.
2. If funds are not available, the agency is not otherwise obligated to implement any provisions of the EER. In addition, the Commissioner may terminate this program at their discretion with or without notice. To the extent possible, all applications approved prior to termination will be honored.
3. For employees who receive an award under this program, the Department will reimburse qualifying expenses up to \$4,000 per year to each employee, with a lifetime maximum of \$12,000 per employee. A maximum limit of \$2,000 will be reimbursed for any one individual course.
4. Although an educational degree or license may enhance promotional opportunities, completion of a degree program or obtainment of a license in no way obligates the Department to promote the employee to a higher pay range or grade or promote to a different position. Participation in the program does not affect the employees at will status.
5. Employees are required to sign a commitment to reimburse the Department for amounts awarded in the last year should the employee voluntarily leave employment with the Department within a year following completion of the course. Payment in full shall be made within 30 days of leaving employment with the Department. The Department reserves the right to submit any outstanding balance owed to the Attorney General of Texas and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts pursuant to state law.
6. Employees are responsible for any personal income tax that may be required as a result of this program.

3.09-03 Employee Eligibility

To qualify for the EER Program, employees must:

1. Be a regular status, full-time employee with at least four years of tenure with the Texas Department of Banking.
2. For financial examiners, be a Financial Examiner IV or above (i.e., commissioned examiner).
3. Not currently, or within the last two years, be subject to any corrective action as described in Section 5 of the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual. An employee who is placed under a corrective action while participating in the EER program will not be eligible the next fiscal year to participate in the EER.
4. Have a satisfactory job performance evaluation on file.
5. For employees who participated in the EER the previous fiscal year, have maintained a grade of A or B in the attended curriculum. If the course is only provided as “pass or fail,” a grade of “pass” is required.
6. Employee may not have a “hold” status with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.
7. Have submitted a qualifying application as described below.

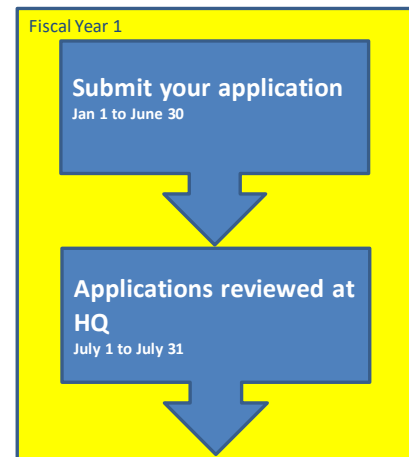
3.09-04 Application and Application Review Procedures

Employees who wish to participate in the EER Program must submit a qualifying application on the form prescribed in **Form 3-A**. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. The following documents are required to be submitted by **June 30th** of each year preceding the anticipated class attendance¹:

1. A detailed description of how the course content will benefit the employee’s professional development and support the Department’s mission (See **Form 3-A**).
2. Copy of the applicant’s degree plan from an accredited university or college (if applicable) and course description(s).
3. Class schedule for the proposed course(s). If not available at the time of application submission, then immediately when it becomes available.

Reviewers will be assigned by the Deputy Commissioner to review the submitted applications, with decisions made by **July 31st** of each year. If sufficient funds are available, all qualifying applications may be approved under this program. If the total number of qualified applications submitted by June 30th exceeds the funds allocated for the program, the reviewers will rank the applications based upon various criteria, including the following:

- Department’s need for the skill or degree being sought by the employee;



¹ Applications submitted after this timeframe may be considered by the Department if all of the funds designated for the EER Program have not already been allocated.

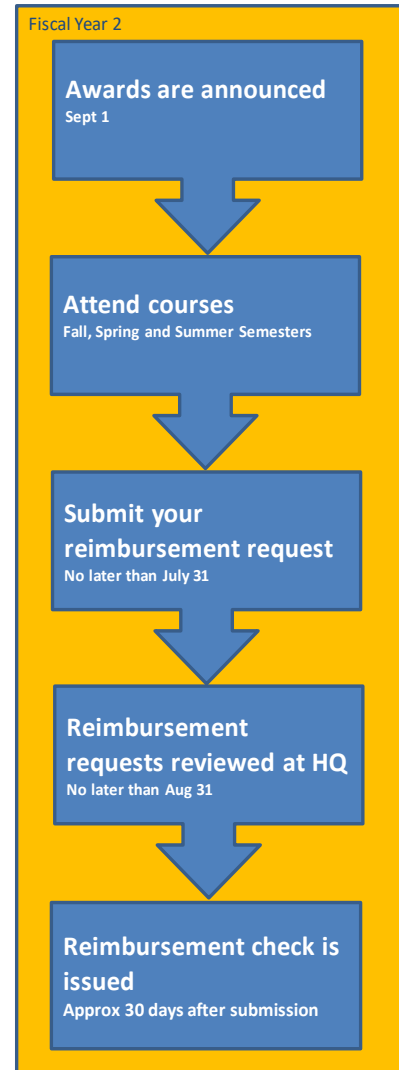
- Number of employees in each Division of the agency who have applied for the EER in the current cycle;
- Employee's tenure with the Department; and,
- Quality of the application.

The Commissioner will make the final determination of awards and will notify the recipients of the maximum amount of reimbursement. Awards will be announced in September of each fiscal year.

3.09-5 Course Requirements

To qualify for the EER Program, courses must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be part of a degree or certificate program from an accredited university or college. Individual courses and seminars will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Must generally relate to the business or service industries that the Department regulates, e.g. general business, accounting, economics, or law. For example, it would be permissible for a financial examiner to pursue a law degree. It is also permissible for an attorney to pursue an advanced business degree. Other permissible curriculum includes MBA programs, and courses required to obtain a CPA, or other specialized licenses.
3. Must be limited to the courses the employee wishes to take during the approaching fiscal year.
4. Foreign language programs will be permitted on a case-by-case basis, if the employee is likely to use the foreign language in their day-to-day work.
5. Online courses from accredited institutions are permitted.
6. The employee must be able to attend the class without causing an undue hardship on the employee's work schedule. The EER in no way obligates the Department to allow an employee to take courses during work hours. Attending class must not result in any additional expense for the Department.
7. Courses which the employee is repeating due to poor performance are not eligible for reimbursement under the EER for subsequent attempts.
8. Courses for which the employee is receiving financial aid from another source that will cover part or all of the applicant's tuition are not eligible for reimbursement under this program.



3.09-6 Allowed Expenses

1. Only expenses for tuition, textbooks, workbooks, lab fees, and other mandatory fees are eligible for reimbursement under the EER program. No expenses relating to mileage to and from the school, food while attending the school or general expenses may be claimed. No optional fees or late charges may be claimed.
2. Employees may only request reimbursement for course expenses for courses that have been approved through this process. Employees may not request reimbursement for course expenses that were incurred in prior years.

3.09-7 Reimbursement Procedures

Employees who have been approved through the application process described previously will be reimbursed under this program when they submit the following documents with the prescribed Reimbursement Application form (**Form 3-B**):

1. Final invoices from the respective course provider showing actual expenses incurred.
2. End of semester grade reports showing the employee received an end of semester grade for each individual course of A or B.
3. Grade reports must be submitted before **July 31st** to be considered valid. The Department reserves the right to deny reimbursement claims submitted after this date.