
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33601**

**SUBJECT: BOARD POLICY - SECTION NUMBER: 07.15.00.00
 EXPENDITURE OF COUNTY FUNDS FOR LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS**

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 21, 2007

SUPERSEDES: October 1, 2006

Purpose:

To make a legislative finding of a public purpose to pay the license and certification costs for permanent employees who come within the budget jurisdiction of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

Policy:

The BOCC hereby makes a legislative finding that it serves a public purpose to pay or reimburse County permanent employees for the costs of licenses and certifications which are required for their positions or which give a benefit to the County. The payment may also include the applicable application, application review, or testing fees, if any. This Policy addresses payments for any permanent employee who is assigned to an Agency or Office which falls under the budget jurisdiction of the BOCC.

Responsibilities:

The Home Rule Charter of Hillsborough County provides for separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches. The Charter provides that the legislative findings of a public purpose be made by the BOCC and this policy covers such finding for the payment of licenses and certifications of permanent employees when otherwise permitted by law. The BOCC hereby delegates the ongoing implementation of this policy to the County Administrator, Constitutional Officers, or Office Executives for their respective employees as the Charter delegates authority to handle administrative and personnel matters to these individuals. Accordingly, each Agency Head, Constitutional Officer or Office Executive who makes payments under this policy shall make appropriate budgetary provision for payments of licenses and certifications for its employees.

General Criteria for Payments and Reimbursements:

Payments and reimbursements for licenses and certifications will adhere to the following criteria:

1. Expenditure of public funds must fulfill a legitimate public purpose and must comply with all current laws, statutes and regulations.

2. Expenditure of public funds for licenses and certifications will not be authorized to satisfy pre-hire minimum qualifications or promotional qualifications.
3. Payment for licenses and certifications will be denied when:
 - a. The license or certification being sought or renewed is not directly related to an employee's position.
 - b. An employee is unsuccessful in completing the necessary requirements of a license, license renewal, certification, or recertification program.
4. Reimbursements are available to all BOCC permanent employees in active status who have completed their initial probationary or conditional probationary periods. Employees seeking a license or certificate must utilize time outside regular work hours or while on authorized annual leave, unless attending a County authorized training class or seminar. There is no reimbursement for initial license or certification for employees that are:
 - Working in a position where a license or certification is required at initial hire as a pre-hire minimum qualification. An employee must have acquired that license or certification prior to employment.
 - Provided a period of time to obtain the required license or certification as a condition of employment. An employee must pay for the license or certification with their own funds when a period of time is allowed as a condition of employment
5. Employees promoted and serving a conditional probationary period who are required to renew a license or certification will be eligible for reimbursement.
6. Licenses and certifications that are preferred but not required may be reimbursed under this policy provided:
 - a. The agency budget is funded adequately to support reimbursement for preferred licenses and certifications
 - b. The reimbursement meets all other general criteria which are set forth in this policy.
 - c. The reimbursement is subject to at least one of the following factors that must be considered prior to approval of the reimbursement
 - i. Payment or reimbursement for preferred certification supports implementation of agency strategic decision units in the approved budget; or
 - ii. Payment or reimbursement for preferred certification supports realization of BOCC approved initiatives, or
 - iii. Payment or reimbursement for preferred certification supports agency improvement in efficiencies and effectiveness in service delivery.
7. Each agency should develop a list of professional licenses and certifications eligible for payment or reimbursement in accordance with this policy.
8. Permanent employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with incentive provisions for licenses and certifications will not be paid or reimbursed under this policy.
9. Agencies intending to pay or reimburse employees for licenses or certifications must do so from funds which are in the agency budget. State funds cannot be used for the reimbursement of commercial drivers' licenses (CDL's). Reimbursement for ordinary driver's licenses will not be available under any circumstances.

10. In the event a classification requirement regarding a license or certification changes as a result of a change in law, policy, rule or professional designation, agencies will add the newly designated license or certification to the list of professional licenses and certifications eligible for payment or reimbursement.
11. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure they maintain and renew any license or certification that is required for their position. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Approved By: Board of County Commissioners

Approval Date: March 21, 2007