

**SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE
HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT
SIP-2165**

SUBJECT: Educational Release Time for Classified Employees

REFERENCE: Title 135, Legislative Rule, West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, Series 55, Human Resource Administration

ORIGINATION: February 17, 2004

EFFECTIVE: November 30, 2017

REVIEWED: October 14, 2022

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to provide a rule for granting and documenting educational release time for the classified employees of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College.

SECTION 2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

- 2.1 This procedure shall apply to all full-time regular classified employees as defined by Title 135, Legislative Rule, West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, Series 55, Human Resource Administration, who have been employed by Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College for a minimum of six months and are not in a probationary status.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 None.

SECTION 4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College encourages employees to take advantage of educational opportunities for career development and improvement. To achieve this end, a combination of flexible work hours, annual leave, and educational release time may be used to permit employees to attend classes. It shall be the policy of the Board of Governors to allow full time regular classified employees of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College to receive educational release time in accordance with the provisions provided herein. Southern will provide reasonable opportunity for eligible classified employees to obtain educational release time. However, educational release time is not an entitled benefit nor a guarantee. Educational release time that coincides with the employee's regular work schedule will be deemed credited work time for payroll purposes and should be documented accordingly on the employee time records.

SECTION 5. BACKGROUND OR EXCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Part time, casual, and temporary classified employees and faculty are excluded from the provisions of this procedure. Full time regular classified employees who are serving in a probationary period are not eligible for educational release time.

SECTION 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 6.1 This procedure allows a classified employee to take ONE class per semester during work time, PROVIDING that the needs of the department are such that the employee's absence will not disrupt services. Educational release time may be granted for actual in-class time and reasonable travel time to and from class. A combination of flexible work hours, annual leave, and/or educational release time may be provided for travel time.
- 6.1.1 Courses must be taken through a regionally accredited institution.
 - 6.1.2 Educational release time may be granted for courses that are job related; and/or in pursuit of undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral studies.
 - 6.1.3 The employee must have been employed for six months prior to the beginning of the term in which the course is taken.
 - 6.1.4 During emergency or overtime situations, the employee must work as assigned.
 - 6.1.5 Under no circumstances shall approval and use of educational release time create a situation for regular overtime or compensatory time. If the workload is such that the employee must work additional hours each week due to being in class, the employee must use schedule modification to attend the class and count the additional hours as regular time.

SECTION 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 Primary Responsibility
- 7.1.1 The Office of Human Resources shall have primary responsibility for the implementation and oversight of the provisions of this procedure. Employees and supervisors are responsible as follows:
 - 7.1.1.1 Employees – Employees are responsible to make requests for educational release time far enough in advance for proper consideration by the supervisor. The appropriate forms must be completed in detail and submitted to the supervisor in accordance with the time frames specified in this procedure. Employees are responsible for compliance with all applicable sections of this procedure.
 - 7.1.1.2 Supervisors – Supervisors are responsible for compliance with all applicable sections of this procedure.
- 7.2 Procedures:
- 7.2.1 Requests must be made at least three weeks prior to the beginning of the release time and be made on the appropriate form attached to this procedure. Employees are to present the Educational Release Time Request Form to his/her immediate supervisor.
 - 7.2.2 Prior to granting educational release time, the supervisor will consider the number of employees in the department and the number requesting educational release time, to ensure there is no disruption of services. Supervisors will make recommendation for approval or denial to the unit administrator within five (5) working days.

- 7.2.3 Within five (5) working days of receipt, the unit administrator will approve or deny the request. A copy of the final decision will be returned to the supervisor and the original will be sent to Human Resources.
- 7.2.4 Upon receipt, the supervisor will provide a copy of the final decision to the requesting employee.
- 7.2.5 The employee must present evidence of course completion by presenting the end-of-course grade report to the immediate supervisor. The supervisor will forward the report to Human Resources for inclusion in the personnel file.
- 7.2.6 In the event the classified employee receives a failing grade (unsatisfactory, “F” or other failure designation), or fails to provide evidence of course completion, the employee will be ineligible for educational release time under the terms of this procedure for a period of one calendar year from the date on the end-of-course grade report.

SECTION 8. CANCELLATION

- 8.1 None.

SECTION 9. REVIEW STATEMENT

- 9.1 This procedure shall be reviewed on a regular basis with a time frame for review to be determined by the President or the President’s designee. Upon such review, the President or President’s designee may recommend to the Board that the procedure be amended or repealed.

Attachments: SIP-2165.A, *Educational Release Time Request for Classified Employees*

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Revision Notes: August 31, 2006 – Procedure clarified to reflect practice of allowing educational release time for employees on an improvement plan and added Unit Administrator signature for approval.

December 2012 – Procedure revised to address unforeseen circumstances with regular overtime due to approval of educational release time and excessive hardships due to absence based on approval of fast track scheduled classes.

June 7, 2017 – Procedure reviewed no changes were made.

October 14, 2022 – Revisions reflect updated references and removal of Section 6.1.6 referencing courses no longer made available. No changes to attachment.