

 <div> <b>PA TURNPIKE COMMISSION POLICY</b>  <i>This is a statement of official Pennsylvania Turnpike Policy</i> </div>		<b>NUMBER:</b> 4.04  <b>APPROVAL DATE:</b> 03-18-2014  <b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 03-18-2014  <b>REVISED DATE:</b> 01-07-2025
<b>POLICY SUBJECT:</b>  Professional Credential, License, and Association Membership Program	<b>RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:</b>  Human Resources	

**A. PURPOSE:**

To establish a Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) policy to provide financial assistance for Professional Credentialing, Licensing, and Professional Associations in which membership clearly promotes the PTC's mission, goals, and objectives and is a benefit to the PTC's operations and its employees' professional growth and development.

**B. SCOPE:**

This policy letter applies to all full-time PTC employees who have at least 6 months of service and have successfully completed their probationary/introductory period.

**C. GENERAL POLICY:**

The PTC may, at its sole discretion, provide reimbursement to Eligible Employees for job-specific expenses related to obtaining and maintaining Professional Credentials and Professional Licenses including, but limited to, the coursework, prep classes, books, online materials, or distance learning programs. Additionally, payment/reimbursement may be made for Professional Association Memberships that have a direct relationship to the job the employee performs.

**Professional Credential or Certification**

A Professional Credential/Certification issued by a national or state agency or widely recognized Professional Association may be covered under this Policy if the Professional Credential/Certification is either required by the employee's position or directly related to the employee's duties. This also includes renewals for previously obtained Professional Credentials/Certifications.

**Eligible Expenses**

As related to obtaining a Professional Credential or Certification, the following may be covered:

- Prep programs and examinations. These must be completed during non-work hours. Coursework may be completed through traditional classes or through non-traditional programs, such as online programs.
- Recertification credits, continuing education, professional development hours, etc.

- Textbooks, online resources, practice questions, etc.
  - Reimbursable costs shall not include tools and supplies that may aid the employee with the prep course, exam, etc. (e.g., computer hardware, software, calculators), parking fees, transportation, or other optional expenses.

### **Professional License**

A Professional License issued by a national or state agency or Professional Association that an employee is statutorily required to possess and maintain to practice the profession for which they are employed may be covered under this Policy.

This may include Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDLs) for employees who do not require a CDL to perform their job currently, if the employee's potential career path could include a position requiring a CDL.

This also includes renewals for previously obtained Professional Licenses, with the exception of CDLs. CDL and physical examination renewals are not eligible for reimbursement under this Policy. These may be covered through your department.

### **Eligible Expenses**

As related to obtaining a Professional License, the following may be covered:

- Prep programs and examinations. These must be completed during non-work hours. Coursework may be completed through traditional classes or through non-traditional programs, such as online programs.
- Recertification credits, continuing education, professional development hours, etc.
- Textbooks, online resources, practice questions, etc.
  - Reimbursable costs shall not include tools and supplies that may aid the employee with the prep course, exam, etc. (e.g., computer hardware, software, calculators), parking fees, transportation, or other optional expenses.
- Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Training Program, including the required class, initial driving testing, drug testing, physical examination, and license. Program must fall within reasonable standard costs.

### **Professional Association Memberships**

A Professional Association Membership in a Professional Association, organization, society, or other group that adds to an employee's professional growth and development, adds value to the PTC's operations, and provides knowledge and benefits that can be shared throughout the PTC may be covered under this Policy. Professional Association Memberships are to be jointly used, where possible, to preclude unnecessary duplication within the PTC and should not be acquired in the name of an employee unless the benefit to the PTC is significant.

### **Ineligible Expenses under this Policy**

The PTC shall not pay or reimburse expenses incurred by an Eligible Employee for:

- Professional Credentialing, Licensing, or Professional Associations that are solely for the benefit of an employee and not specific to their position at the PTC.
- Renewing an employee's Professional Credential that has been suspended, revoked or inactive.

- Late fees or penalties due to untimely renewal. Late fees and penalties are the sole responsibility of the employee.
- Any portion of any dues or fees that are designated for an Association's lobbying efforts.
- Dues or fees for any Association that discriminates based on race, color, religion, gender (including gender identity and expression), marital status, protected veterans' status, citizenship status, national origin, age, disability, sex (including pregnancy) sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.
- Post-secondary Education courses taken at an Eligible Education Institution, which may be eligible for reimbursement under Policy 4.01 - Educational Assistance Program.

The PTC reserves the right to determine which Professional Credentials/Certifications, Licenses and Association Memberships are appropriate for payment/reimbursement. Human Resources will review all requests, determine priorities, and approve or disapprove requests based on the PTC's policy and/or annual budget established for these programs.

If any provision of this policy is inconsistent with the terms of a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the terms of the CBA shall control.

#### **D. DEFINITIONS:**

Educational Assistance Program: The Educational Assistance Program (PTC Policy #4.01) provides for Tuition Reimbursement to employees who successfully complete an approved Post-secondary Education course in support of their professional and personal self-development goals. The Educational Assistance Program also provides for Student Loan Debt Reimbursement in accordance with, and during the duration of, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

Eligible Education Institution: a college, university, vocational school or other postsecondary educational institution that is accredited and participates in a federal financial aid program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 or is certified by the Department of Education as eligible to participate in a federal financial aid program but chooses not to participate.

Eligible Employee: a full-time PTC employee who has at least 6 months of service and has successfully completed their probationary/introductory period.

Post-secondary Education: Courses taken at accredited colleges, universities, vocational, and/or trade schools.

Professional Association Membership: Membership in an association formed to further the interest of individuals engaged in a specific profession, to assist in advancement of a particular profession and serve the public. Professional Association Memberships provide network and collaboration opportunities, and allow members to attend relevant events, seek advice from industry leaders, and expand professional networks.

Professional Certification: Credentials awarded to individuals who demonstrate proficiency and knowledge in a specific field or occupation.

Professional Credential: Credentials earned and awarded by an academic institution or a recognized professional organization to verify one's professional qualifications or knowledge to perform specific job duties. This could include a Certification, accreditation, or designation.

Professional License: Any license required by a regulated profession that is issued by a competent authority for recognizing professional qualifications in the jurisdiction where one intends to work.

#### E. PROCEDURES:

##### **Professional Credentials/Certifications/Licenses**

Please note, only the option for reimbursement is available for obtaining and renewing Professional Credential/Certifications/Licenses. Once the employee has successfully obtained and/or renewed their Professional Credential/Certification/License, including passing any required exams or meeting any other criteria, they may submit for reimbursement of their related expenses within 90 days of obtaining their Professional Credential/Certification/License. Reimbursement will not be made for requests received beyond the 90-day time limit.

To request reimbursement, employees should select the ***Personal Card*** option on the Professional Credential, License, and Association Membership form found in Service Now. Employees will be required to attach proof of obtaining their Professional Credential/Certification/License to this form, as well as receipt of payment. Examples of acceptable proof include:

- Copy of Credential/Certification/License
- Email confirmation
- Letter from issuing organization stating completion

The employee's immediate supervisor should review the request and make a recommendation for approval/disapproval. Unbudgeted requests will also require the next level supervisor/manager approval.

Upon completion of the above steps, HR will then approve or deny the request. The employee will receive notice of this decision via email from ServiceNow.

Once the employee receives appropriate approval, the employee must submit an ***Expense Report*** in Vendor Portal to obtain reimbursement.

##### **Professional Association Membership**

For Professional Association Memberships, employees may choose to submit for payment or reimbursement for the cost of the membership. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within 90 days of obtaining the membership. Requests for reimbursement made beyond the 90-day time limit will be denied.

##### **Payment**

To request payment, employees should select either the ***Travel Card*** or ***Check Required to Vendor*** option on the Professional Credential, License, and Association Membership form found in Service Now.

The employee's immediate supervisor should approve or deny the request. Unbudgeted requests will also require the next level supervisor/manager approval.

Upon completion of the above steps, the employee will receive notice of this decision via email from ServiceNow.

#### Reimbursement

To request reimbursement, employees should select the **Personal Card** option on the Professional Credential, License, and Association Membership form found in Service Now. Employees will be required to attach receipt of payment for the membership.

The employee's immediate supervisor should approve or deny the request. Unbudgeted requests will also require the next level supervisor/manager approval.

Upon completion of the above steps, the employee will receive notice of this decision via email from ServiceNow.

Once the employee receives appropriate approval, employees must submit an **Expense Report** in Vendor Portal to obtain reimbursement.

This policy letter is intended to provide guidance and appropriate controls with respect to this policy. The PTC recognizes that specific or unique circumstances may occur that require exceptions be made with respect to strict application of, or adherence to, this policy. Such exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Director of Human Resources.

Professional Credentials are issued in the name of the employee; therefore, if an employee's Professional Credential becomes suspended, revoked, or inactive, or if the employee leaves PTC employment during the credential period, the employee shall immediately notify HR. In such circumstances, the employee may be required to reimburse the PTC on a *pro rata* basis the cost of the Credential.

The employee must remain employed with the PTC for a period of one year following the date of reimbursement or they may be required to reimburse the PTC for any amounts paid pursuant to this policy.

The PTC shall use its discretion to determine the appropriate method to recoup any overpayments or other monies due from the employee for amounts paid pursuant to this policy.

The PTC reserves the right to modify this program at any time, including, but not limited to, terminating the program, lowering the level of reimbursement for participants, or changing the requirements for eligibility based on budgetary constraints.

*This Policy Letter supersedes all previous Policy Letters on this subject.*