TULANE UNIVERSITY
Law School

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT GUIDE

How to Request Academic Financial Assistance From Your Employer

A survey of U.S.-based companies revealed that 46% of organizations offer tuition assistance to their employees.[1] Does your employer offer this benefit? Whether your company offers tuition reimbursement or not, speaking to your management team about financing your degree can be a bit nerve-racking. Follow the guidelines below to set yourself up for a successful reimbursement conversation.



1. Know Your Benefits

Check your employee handbook or employee benefits portal, or connect with an HR representative to find out if your organization has an established program or history of providing tuition reimbursement. If support is available, review the details, including the payment protocol. You may be required to pay upfront and be reimbursed later, or your organization may pay the academic institution directly. If your company does not offer reimbursement benefits, you can make a proposal to your employer to fully or partially fund your studies. Review any other types of employee assistance your employer may offer, taking note of the applicable situations and eligible employees. This information will help you build a strong funding proposal.

Typical conditions for an employer to provide education assistance include:

- **Satisfactorily completing coursework:** A minimum grade in each of your courses may be required to be eligible for assistance or reimbursement
- **Company tenure:** You may need to be employed for a certain amount of time before you can use the education assistance benefit
- **Commitment to the company:** Your company may require you to stay on for a certain number of years after the last support payment
- **Applicable courses of study:** Your company may only pay for courses that are relevant to the business or your position

2. Reach Out to Your Network

Find out if any of your co-workers have received assistance from your employer to finance their education. How did they go about the process? You can also reach out to connections you know at other organizations to find out how their management handles education financing.

Discuss the following topics with your contacts:

- What arguments were most convincing/persuasive?
- Did they make any missteps during the conversation?
- Would they have done anything differently?
- Do they have any advice about how your boss might respond?
- Is there an ideal approach to get support for your request?

1. Retrieved on June 25, 2024, from shrm.org/topics-tools/research/employee-benefits-survey

3. Outline Your Program Details

Ensure you have complete information about the program you're interested in before you meet with your employer. Jot down the answers to the questions you anticipate receiving from your management team. How will earning your Master of Jurisprudence improve your skills and make you a better employee? Being prepared with this information will help ease any concerns your employer may have and will present you in the best possible light.

You should have all of the essential information about the graduate school/program to which you are applying. Consider the following questions:

- What school or schools are you applying to?
- Are you applying to a full-time or part-time program?
- Is it online, on campus or a hybrid program?
- What is the **tuition** for the program?
- How long do you expect it will take you to complete the degree?
- How much time per week do you expect to spend on coursework?

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4. Underscore How Your Growth Will Benefit the Organization

While your employer may believe in the value of continuing education and understand your desire to grow as a professional, they will still want to hear how they will benefit from offering you graduate school tuition reimbursement. Clearly outline how your program will contribute to your professional development and how it will make you even more valuable to the organization. Speak with confidence and pull together a presentation or handout if you think it would help make your case.

Be ready to discuss how you will be able to:

- Make critical decisions with clarity and foresight, backed by legal know-how
- Communicate effectively with legal counsel, colleagues and peers on legal issues
- Understand core legal concepts and how to read legislation and regulations
- Promote ethical practices and sound standards—compliance or otherwise—within your organization
- Lead conversations on legal issues, offer informed opinions and make decisions from a solid legal foundation

Whatever you want to get out of your law program, provide specific examples of projects and organizational goals at work that will benefit from your growth in the degree or certificate program.

Practice Your Pitch

Once you've gathered and organized the information you need, practice your pitch and do a trial run with a co-worker or other trusted professional. Ask them to come up with questions so that you can get more comfortable responding to questions that your management team might ask. If you think you're missing any information about your chosen online Master of Jurisprudence program, schedule a call with our admissions team. ***Good luck with your conversation!***

Schedule a Call **Start Your Application**