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## 1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 Three Links Care Society is committed to supporting professional development and training opportunities that enhance the performance and quality of life of employees and support our strategic objectives.
- 1.2 Three Links will provide financial assistance to employees through their annual budget for higher level education, accredited training programs, individual courses and some related expenses.
- 1.3 This policy applies to Three Links employees that have worked 800 seniority hours and is in addition to any existing employee contract provisions.
- 1.4 Three Links contractors may negotiate professional development opportunities within their respective agreements. Three Links' Board and volunteers may access dedicated program funds for professional development and training opportunities.
- 1.5 In addition to this policy, Three Links will continue to provide regular in-service education opportunities for employees and volunteers to help maintain their skills and enhance knowledge of new developments in the health care field in areas such as violence prevention, emergency preparedness, injury prevention and new equipment.
- 1.6 Employees will require approval of their manager to access any training and professional development opportunities under this policy.
- 1.7 Employees who remain at Three Links for 3,900 hours (equivalent to 2 years as a regular full-time employee) after the completion of their training will not be required to repay any funds received under this policy.
- 1.8 Three Links employees attending courses on their own initiative will not receive a day(s) off with pay if the course(s) fall on a regular scheduled work day(s). Unless approved in advance by their manager, employees will be required to either use vacation time or an unpaid leave of absence in these circumstances. Three Links will only pay for the employee's

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professional development time as an education leave if the program is a required condition of employment.

- 1.7 Three Links employees writing examinations for courses approved by their manager will be granted time off from work with pay provided the examination is written during the employee's regularly scheduled work hours.
- 1.8 For reimbursement of training and development to be approved, both of the following criteria must be met:
- Support Three Links in meeting its strategic objectives
  - Assist employee in carrying out their duties and achieving their professional and personal development objectives
- 1.9 All education materials paid for by Three Links Care Society shall become the property of Three Links Care Society.
- 1.10 Employees may not receive training funds under this policy in consecutive years.
- 1.11 Employees are responsible to declare any taxable benefits on their personal income tax as a result of receiving financial assistance from Three Links for professional development.

## 2.0 PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

- 2.1 Three Links Care Society will consider training and development programs for funding in three categories:

Program	Description	Number of funding grants offered
<b>CATEGORY ONE: Higher-level education</b>	A group of courses leading to a post-secondary/graduate degree or diploma upon completion. If approved, Three Links will provide a partial funding of tuition and other	1 per year

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Program	Description	Number of funding grants offered
	related costs with the Three Links employee. Amount covered and payback terms will be discussed with the employee on a case-by-case basis <b>but not exceed \$8,000.</b>	
<b>CATEGORY TWO: Accredited program</b>	A course or group of courses leading to a designation or certification. Not to be confused with Bachelor's or Master's degree (eg. higher-level education). If approved, Three Links will provide a partial funding of tuition and other related costs with the employee. Amount covered and payback terms will be discussed with the employee on a case-by-case basis <b>but not exceed \$5,000.</b>	5 per year
<b>CATEGORY THREE: Skill/Knowledge improvement courses</b>	These are short-term individual courses, usually lasting anywhere from half a day to a few days, meant to enhance and improve upon a employee's current skill and knowledge. Includes workshops, conferences and seminars with a <b>maximum contribution of \$1,000.</b> Eligible expenses may include local conferences fees, textbooks and transportation costs associated with attending an accredited program.	20 per year

### 3.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- 3.1 The implementation of this policy and all funding approvals will be guided by a Three Links Professional Development Committee that will consist of:
- Chief Executive Officer

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- Director of Care
- Director of Support Services

3.2 In reviewing requests, the Committee shall consider the following criteria:

- Section 1.0 of this policy
- Relevance to the Three Links employee's current work and organizational priorities
- Fund availability
- Funds allocated to the Three Links employee to date for professional development

3.3 Decisions of the Committee are not subject to appeal.

#### **4.0 EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS**

4.1 As with all expenses, employees must submit an expense claim form to their manager and provide receipts/proof of payment for reimbursement by Three Links.

4.2 In situations where Three Links is providing financial support for staff to access opportunities under this policy, employees are required to:

- Provide course receipts and evidence of successful completion of the course prior to being reimbursed.
- Notify the manager of any delays in participating or program completion
- Sign an agreement with their manager (Appendix A)
- Submit a brief report to their manager about their experience and how it will benefit the employer and employee.

4.3 Once approved for funding for a CATEGORY ONE or CATEGORY TWO program, the employee cannot apply again for financial support for another higher-level education/accredited program for 2 years after successfully completing the last funded program.

4.4 For employees outside of 1.7, repayment of training funds will follow the criteria below:

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- If the employee does not successfully complete their approved training program while remaining with Three Links, they will be required to repay all funds. This will also apply if the employee leaves Three Links while enrolled in the program for any reason.
- If the employee does not remain employed with Three Links for a minimum of 3,900 hours after the completion of the program, the following repayment formula will apply:
  - Leaves 975 hours or less – repayment of 100% of employer paid cost
  - Leaves after 975 hours, but before 3,900 hours – repayment on a pro-rated daily formula.

The amount owing will be deducted directly from the employee's final salary. If the repayment amount exceeds the final salary payment to the employee, the employee will be required to pay the difference to the employer in a personal cheque.

## **5.0 PROCEDURE FOR CATEGORY ONE: HIGHER-LEVEL EDUCATION and CATEGORY TWO: ACCREDITED PROGRAM**

- 5.1 The Director of Human Resources will initiate, communicate and administer an annual request for applications each December for employees. The communication will include a link to this policy, opportunity overview, application deadline and contact information to answer any questions.
- 5.2 In accordance with development goals formulated in their performance review and development plan, an employee will complete a Professional Development Request Form for Higher-Level Education and Accredited Programs (Appendix B) for their department manager's consideration and signature.
- 5.3 A completed form, supported by the employee's Department Manager, is submitted to Director of Human Resources for review and decision by the Three Links Professional Development Committee.

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5.4 The employee is formally notified of the Committee's decision with respect to their request, and may proceed to register for the higher-level education or accredited program opportunity.

## **6.0 PROCEDURE for CATEGORY TWO: ACCREDITED PROGRAMS and CATEGORY THREE: SKILL/KNOWLEDGE IMPROVEMENT COURSES**

6.1 Managers will communicate the availability of training and education opportunities directly to employees and invite them to consider completing an application forms (Appendix B and C). Unlike Category One's defined timeline, the application process for Categories Two and Three will remain open on a standing basis until the maximum number of allocated awards is reached.

6.2 Department Managers will consider requests and submit approved applications to the Director of Human Resources for final decision by the Professional Development Committee.

6.3 If approved by the Committee, the manager will inform the successful employee who will make necessary registration and/or travel arrangements, which the employee will initially be responsible for payment. An Application for Leave form may also be need to be completed and signed off by the Manager if the course(s) occur during work hours.

6.4 Following the completion of the course(s), a Reimbursement of Expenses form with appropriate receipts must be remitted to the Department Manager for approval.

6.5 The Department Manager will review the Reimbursement of Expenses form, approve if in order, and forward to the Accounting Department for processing of payment to the employee.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

7.1 Admin Policy AF0900 – Reimbursement of Expenses

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## APPENDIX A

### THREE LINKS CARE SOCIETY LEARNING CONTRACT/AGREEMENT

(to be completed for all education programs leading to certification)

Candidate's Name in full:	
Job Title:	Manager's Name in full:
Name of Education Program and school (attach supporting documentation):	
Estimated total cost of program:	
Start Date of Program:	End Date of Program:

#### **Learning agreement criteria: (all the following criteria must be agreed)**

1. I have read the Three Links professional development policy and agree to comply with its terms and conditions.
2. I have reviewed and understand the repayment terms identified in section 4 of the policy.
3. I understand that I will only be reimbursed for the cost of each course in the program by providing the official receipt(s) and evidence of successful completion.
4. I will complete my program in the time as indicated (start date and end date). I understand that should I exceed the program completion time without prior approval from Three Links, this may result in my being charged for any costs beyond the end date of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**APPENDIX B**



Three Links Care Society

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUEST FORM FOR CATEGORY ONE:  
HIGHER-LEVEL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Requests for funding support for higher-level education programs are to be submitted in advance of registration and must be supported by the Three Links employee’s manager. Such requests must be submitted to Human Resources by no later than **xxxxxxxxxxxx** for consideration by the Three Links Professional Development Committee

Name of Employee (first and last name)	
Position Title:	Department:
<b>Type of tuition support:</b>	<b>Amount requested:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher-Level Education	\$
Start Date:	Proposed End Date:
Is this education identified in your Performance Evaluation/Development Plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Please provide a brief description of the <b>Higher-Level Education</b> program you wish to enroll in, including organization name, name of program, length of program and degree/diploma received at conclusion. Attach supporting documentation to this form.  (150 words)	



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Please provide a short overview of why accessing this professional development opportunity is important to you and how it will advance Three Links Care Society's Strategic goals.

(150 words)

I have read the HR Policy HRC2400 on Professional Development and understand the terms and conditions of making a request for financial support in Higher-Level Education Programs.

Employee's Signature	Date:
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Department Manager's Approval	Date:
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**Review/Approval**

Professional Development Committee       Approved       Not Approved

Review/Approval Date:

Date Received by Human Resources:

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**APPENDIX C**



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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUEST FORM FOR CATEGORY TWO: ACCREDITED PROGRAMS and CATEGORY THREE: SKILL/KNOWLEDGE IMPROVEMENT COURSES**

Requests for funding to access accredited programs and skill/knowledge improvement courses are to be submitted to the employee’s manager for review and approval.

Name of Employee (first and last name)	
Position Title:	Department:
<b>Type of tuition support: (check one)</b>	<b>Amount requested:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Accredited Program	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Skills/Knowledge Improvement Course	\$
Start Date:	Proposed End Date:
Is this education identified in your Performance Evaluation/Development Plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Please provide a brief description of the <b>Accredited Program</b> or <b>Skills/Knowledge Improvement Course</b> you wish to enroll in, including organization name, name of program and designation received at conclusion, if applicable. Attach supporting documentation to this form.  (150 words)	

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<p>Please provide a short overview of why accessing this professional development opportunity is important to you and how it will advance Three Links Care Society's Strategic goals.</p> <p>(150 words)</p>	
<p>I have read the HR Policy HRC2400 on Professional Development and understand the terms and conditions of making a request for financial support in Accredited Programs and/or Skills/Knowledge Improvement Courses.</p>	
Employee's Signature	Date:
Department Manager's Approval	Date:
<b>Review/Approval</b>	
Professional Development Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved
Review/Approval Date:	
Date Received by Human Resources:	