

3.6 Professional Development Policy

Intent

This policy provides guidelines pertaining to professional and program development opportunities for staff through participation in professional conferences and educational activities.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees always and without exception.

Unionized employees shall adhere to their current Collective Agreement for policies governing professional development. Where the Collective Agreement is silent, bargaining members shall refer to the contents of this policy. In situations where the directions of this policy cover issues also in the Collective Agreement, the Collective Agreement will be the final authority.

Guidelines

The employer is committed to supporting its employees through professional development opportunities that will enhance the performance of the individual and the organization. The following guidelines dictate the policy pertaining to professional development:

1. The employer shall create and maintain a budget for professional development per department and where deemed necessary, per employee (i.e.: succession planning) to provide staff with career advancement and professional development opportunities.
2. The employer will work to ensure that professional development objectives align with the company's strategic plans for succession planning and career planning.

The employer offers a variety of options in the pursuit of professional development to provide staff with flexible training solutions. Staff may choose from the following training options:

- Classroom training
- Mentoring and coaching
- Job shadowing
- Cross-training
- Web based/CBT (e-learning)
- Offsite seminar attendance
- Conference attendance

Where the employer requires a staff member to enrol in professional development activities, the staff member and management will work together in selecting the appropriate format of training that best suits the schedule and educational needs of the staff member. The training shall be scheduled during regular working hours on an agreed time-table that causes minimal disturbance to the completion of the employee's regular duties.

Where training is employee motivated, staff members will be required to submit a written request for training to their manager stating the desired form of training, dates available, cost and the reason for requesting the training.

Where the request is approved, and fits within departmental training budgets, the employee will be notified in writing.



For all personal requests for professional development activities, the requesting staff member shall be required to agree to and sign a training agreement. The employer will assess each request for training and if in agreement, will contribute to the cost of approved training, if the requesting staff member remains with the organization for a minimum of one year following the successful completion of training. If the employee fails to successfully complete the requested training, or elects to leave the employer within one year of the completion of training, the employee will be required to remunerate the company for the cost of the training provided.

NOTE: The amount covered by the employer for personal requests for training will be determined on a case by case basis.