(A) Procedures.

(1) All regular full-time non-bargaining unit employees with satisfactory work and attendance standards are eligible to participate. An employee must have completed one year of regular full-time continuous service with the college as of the first day of the term for which they are registered and employment must continue through the end of that term. Courses must be taken on the employee's own time and cannot interfere with the employee's regularly scheduled on-campus hours. All comparable transferable courses must be completed at Owens Community College.

(2) Employees on a leave of absence are not eligible for reimbursement under this policy. Employees separated from the college due to a Reduction in Force shall be eligible for reimbursement through the end of the current semester in which they are laid off, but shall be ineligible thereafter unless recalled to work from layoff status. If an employee’s program is terminated because the employee is not recalled within one year from the effective date of layoff, the employee will not be required to repay any monies awarded under this program.

(3) To receive reimbursement under this program, the employee must pursue a program which is either directly related to their current position or which is designed to improve their qualifications for transfer or promotion to other positions at the college. The program must be part of a degree curriculum or certification program offered through a regionally accredited institution of higher education or, in the case of a certification program, through a qualified vendor deemed acceptable to the college. Degrees and certifications that may be required as part of an employee’s minimum qualifications for the employee’s current position shall not be eligible for reimbursement under this program, unless otherwise determined by the college (i.e. Oserve transition requirements).

(4) The college will reimburse for tuition only. The employee must bear all other expenses which include, but are not limited to, books, insurance, supplies, penalties/late fees, parking, copy costs, transportation, social activities/clubs, transcripts, equipment, application fees, tests. Persons eligible for educational assistance under the G.I. Bill or through other federal grants must participate in those plans. Participation in the college's plan is only for that portion of the tuition those plans do not cover.

(5) The employee’s plan must be approved by their supervisor, president cabinet member and human resources prior to registering for courses in order to be eligible for reimbursement.
(6) Following approval, the application form will be submitted to the human resources office to determine if funds are available to cover the request as each year the college sets aside a fixed budgeted amount to be expended as reimbursement for educational assistance. Employees can enroll in the program by submitting the proper paperwork anytime during the fiscal year. The program is a first-come, first-served basis starting July 1st of each fiscal year. The rate of reimbursement is not to exceed $2,500 in a fiscal year. At the end of the fiscal year monies will not be reallocated.

If monies are available, employees will be reimbursed when the proper paperwork is completed. Monies will be reimbursed during the fiscal year in which the employee applied (start of classes between July 1 - June 30).

(7) In advance of each year the employee wishes to participate in the program, the employee must complete an updated/encumbrance form to set money aside for the next year. Forms are accepted starting June 1st of each year. The consideration of forms requesting educational assistance shall be based on a first-come/first-served basis.

(8) Following completion of the course work, a "Tuition Reimbursement Request" must be submitted to the human resources office. A grade report or transcript must be provided for each course. Coursework will be reimbursed based on the following guidelines:

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(a) Courses taken on a pass/fail basis must be "passed" and will be reimbursed at one hundred per cent. Non graded courses (graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory) must be completed with a "satisfactory" grade and will be reimbursed at one hundred per cent.

(9) An employee who is in the program must maintain at least a B average to remain eligible for reimbursement under this program. Should the employee fall below a B cumulative average the employee’s status in the program will be considered “probationary”. An employee whose cumulative average remains below a B for two consecutive semesters, or three consecutive academic quarters, shall be removed from the program.
(10) An employee who receives reimbursement from the college for tuition expenses as part of this program shall be required to work for Owens Community College as a full-time employee not less than two years after the employee’s completion of the most recent semester of coursework under the employee’s approved plan.

An employee who elects to leave employment voluntarily or who is involuntarily separated for just cause from employment at Owens Community College as a full-time employee, prior to completion of this commitment, shall be obligated to reimburse the college for all monies received within the prior twenty-four month period in conjunction with this program. Such reimbursement shall be accomplished through the forfeiture of any accumulated paid time off which may be to the employee’s credit at the time of separation from the college, and/or a repayment plan whose terms are deemed acceptable to the college. Employees whose contracts are non-renewed or positions are eliminated due to reduction in force, prior to the completion of their programs will not be required to reimburse the college for monies received under this policy.

These procedures were developed and implemented by the Vice President of Human Resources.

Any changes to this procedure must be submitted to the Board Secretary for President’s Cabinet review.

This procedure conforms to the policy as approved by the Board of Trustees on June 2, 2009, and as filed with the State of Ohio Electronic Rule Filing with the policy effective date of June 13, 2009.

- These procedures were clarified and received for public comments, December 4, 2009.
- These procedures were modified, Item (3) to accommodate the formation of OServe and Item (7), as noted by the underlining. Cabinet reviewed, 6-29-10.
- The procedures were modified as the cap was changed to $2,500, effective FY 2014.

7-30-14 pj