



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS, LICENSES AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

HPW ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 3-23
EFFECTIVE DATE: UPON APPROVAL

1. PURPOSE

To establish a consistent pre-approval process for Employees to request payment of fees for professional Memberships, Licenses, Certifications, Subscriptions, Renewals, Examinations and Review Courses to ensure Employee development is administered fairly and equitable.

2. OBJECTIVE

Houston Public Works is committed to Employee development and growth by providing avenues for Employees to deepen their skills and expertise through department paid training, memberships, studies, and accreditations. Based on the Director's assessment of priorities and availability of budgeted funds, the Department may pay for development items listed in Appendix A that enable Employees to contribute to the professionalism of the workforce. This procedure does not provide for the payment or reimbursement of tuition for Employees seeking college level course credits or for college entrance exam review courses.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Affiliated Agency	An agency closely associated with the functions performed by HPW such as the American Public Works Association, the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), the International Association of Administrative Professionals, or other Affiliated Agencies approved by the Director.
Certification	An official written verification that the named person has attained or met a specified standard required by an authorizing organization, board, or agency.
Department or HPW	The Houston Public Works Department.
Department Director	HPW Director.
Director	Service Line Director.
Employee	Full-time Department employees who have successfully completed the prescribed probationary period of employment and whose performance evaluation has a minimum overall rating of "Meets Expectations" or higher.
Exam(s)	Examinations taken to determine if the test taker is qualified to receive the professional Certification or License being sought.
License	A license granted through a professional agency or a professional board.
Membership	Application and acceptance into a local, state, national or international

APPROVED:

DATE APPROVED:

3/1/2022

	professional, technical, and/or managerial organization(s).
Qualifying Expenses	Payment of fees by HPW allowable for professional Memberships, Licenses, Certifications, Subscriptions, Renewals, Exams, and Review Courses listed in Appendix A that meet the Department's eligibility requirements described in Section 5 for reimbursement or payment. This list of Qualifying Expense may be amended by the Director from time to time, to add or delete items, by replacing the list with a modified Appendix A.
Renewal	Extension of the period of validity granted by a license grantor or professional board to maintain an official Certification or Membership or the extension of the Subscription period of a publication.
Review Course(s)	Classes and materials designed to help Employees prepare for Exams needed to attain job related credentials such as professional Licenses or Certifications.
Subscription	A local, state national or international official publication, printed or electronically published by a professional, technical, or managerial organization.

4. SCOPE

This procedure applies to Employees of the Department and only applies to payment of Qualifying Expenses and supersedes any previous procedures and directives relating to such matters. This procedure will remain in effect until rescinded or superseded by the Director.

5. REQUIREMENTS

5.1. Employee Eligibility

5.1.1. Must be full-time Department Employee who:

- 5.1.1.1. has successfully completed the prescribed probationary period of employment and,
- 5.1.1.2. whose latest HEAR performance evaluation has a minimum overall rating of "Meets Expectations" or higher.

5.2. Funding for Qualifying Expenses Allowed If:

- 5.2.1. The Director deems Membership in an Affiliated Agency or other organization is mutually beneficial to the Employee and the Department. Employees are limited to one Membership in an Affiliated Agency; additional Memberships and non-Affiliated Agency Memberships may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director.
- 5.2.2. The Subscriptions are beneficial to the Employee and the Department and related to Employee's job functions.
- 5.2.3. The purpose of the Exam and/or Review Course is to attain the requirements needed for performance of the essential job duties assigned to Employee. Exams must be administered by an accredited agency or nationally recognized professional association or their state or local chapters to administer specific exams and award certification by the appropriate agency.
- 5.2.4. The License (regardless if the employee uses it daily or not), Certification, or other accreditation is a requirement for the performance essential job duties assigned to Employee or if the Director determines they are beneficial to the department or to the development of the Employee.

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6. APPROVALS AND PRE-APPROVALS

- 6.1. Employee must obtain written approval from their chain of command prior to joining, enrolling, subscribing, or committing the City to pay for any of the items listed under Qualified Expenditures
 - 6.1.1. Directors may approve requests of less than \$1,000
 - 6.1.2. Request of \$1,000 or more will require approval from the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, or the Chief of Staff
 - 6.1.3. Employees who do not obtain pre-approval may be required to personally pay for the expenditure

7. REPAYMENTS

- 7.1. Employees requesting funding for Review Courses must sign the Repayment Agreement authorizing the City to withhold from Employee's final paycheck or require payment of any monies the Employee may owe the City for the course in the event Employee voluntarily leaves employment with the City, is terminated, or is indefinitely suspended within the periods set forth below.
 - 7.1.1. Employee repayments to the City will be based on the following schedule:
 - 7.1.1.1. 100% of what the City contributed towards the Review Course if Employee leaves within one year of completing the course
 - 7.1.1.2. 50% of what the City contributed towards the Review Course if Employee leaves after more than one year but less than two years of Employee completing in the course
 - 7.1.1.3. No repayment is required if Employee remains employed for two or more years of completing the Review Course
 - 7.1.2. The Repayment Agreement is in Appendix "C"

8. LIMITATIONS

- 8.1. All funding of fees for Qualifying Expenses will be the responsibility of the Service Line requesting the reimbursement or payment.
 - 8.1.1. Manager is responsible for reviewing requests and ensuring they are relevant to Employee's essential job functions and certifying payments can be considered Qualifying Expenses
- 8.2. Documents Required for Submission of Pre-Approvals
 - 8.2.1. All requests for pre-approval must include the pertinent information and signatures for the request being made. At a minimum, the following is required:
 - 8.2.1.1. For Memberships, Subscriptions, Certifications, Licenses and Renewal Fees:
 - Appendix B - Pre-Authorization Request Form
 - Copy of Membership, Subscription, Certification, License application or Renewal notice
 - Other information as may be requested by the Director
 - 8.2.1.2. For Exam Fees and Review Courses:
 - Appendix B - Pre-Authorization Request Form
 - Other information as may be requested by the Director
 - 8.2.1.3. Requests shall be submitted by Employee with the understanding that a submittal is not a guarantee of approval

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9. FEES NOT COVERED BY HPW

- 9.1. Any late fees incurred by Employee for Qualified Expenses.
- 9.2. Federal, State or Local Taxes.
- 9.3. Fees for repeat Review Courses or Exams previously paid by the Department.

10. EXCEPTIONS

- 10.1. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of this procedure shall remain eligible for reimbursement consistent with previous policies with each Service Line.
- 10.2. Any exceptions to this procedure, including changes to amounts paid or reimbursed, must be approved by the Director.

11. APPENDICES – LOCATED IN THE EMPLOYEE PORTAL

- 11.1. Appendix A - Qualifying Expenses - Fees Eligible for Payment or Reimbursement. (This list may be amended by the Director from time to time)
- 11.2. Appendix B - Pre-Authorization Request Form – For Payment of Qualifying Expenses
- 11.3. Appendix C – Repayment Agreement
- 11.4. Appendix D - Revision History

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HPW ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 3-23 APPENDICES

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS, LICENSES, AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

- **Appendix A** - Qualifying Expenses - Fees Eligible for Payment or Reimbursement. (This list may be amended by the Director from time to time).
 - **Appendix B** - Pre-Authorization Request Form – For Payment of Qualifying Expenses
 - **Appendix C** – Repayment Agreement
 - **Appendix D** - Revision History
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QUALIFYING EXPENSES

Fees Eligible for Payment or Reimbursement

1. PROFESSIONAL LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS – INITIAL FEE AND RENEWAL FEES

- Professional Engineer (PE) License
- Engineer-in-Training (EIT) Certification
- Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) License
- Surveyor in Training (SIT)
- Certified GIS Professional (GISP)
- Certified Construction Manager (CCM)
- Construction Manager-in-Training (CMIT) Certification
- Certified Public Infrastructure Inspector (CPII)
- Information Technology Certifications
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA) License
- Certified Stormwater Inspector (CSI)
- Certified Administrative Professional (CAP)
- Certified Survey Technician (CST)
- Remote Pilot Certificate
- Procurement Licensing
- Certified Public Manager (CPM)
- PMP: Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification
- Society for Human Resources Management, Certified Professional (SHRM) (CP)
- AEM and CEM: Associate Emergency Manager (AEM) and Certified Emergency Manager (CEM)

2. OPERATOR LICENSES – INITIAL FEE AND RENEWAL FEES

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Licenses
- All Other Operator Licenses as deemed appropriate by the Service Line Director


3. AFFILIATED AGENCIES – AGENCY, MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION INITIAL FEES AND RENEWAL FEES

- Agency, Memberships and Subscriptions, as defined in Section 3 of HPW Administrative Procedure 3-23, that are mutually beneficial to the Department and the Employee

4. REVIEW COURSE FEES AND EXAM FEES

- Limited to review courses and/or Exams that serve to prepare the Employee in attaining a License or Certification that is a requirement of the essential job duties assigned to the Employee
- Department will not pay for course repetitions or for retaking Exams previously paid by the department

APPROVED:


DIRECTOR
DATE

PRE-AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

For Payment of Qualifying Expenses

I. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

By signing below, employee acknowledges reading and understanding the provisions set forth in HPW Administrative Procedure 3-23.

Employee (Print Name) Last, First	Employee ID	Job Title
Employee Signature	Date	Service Line
Supervisor Signature	Employee No.	Date

II. TYPE OF REQUEST
A. This request is for: ☐ Employee Only ☐ Department Wide:

B. Pre-approval for payment of:
☐ Exam Fee ☐ Review Course Fee ☐ Membership ☐ Subscription ☐ Professional /Occupational License
☐ Other _____

Name of Provider/Organization: _____

Cost: \$ _____ License/Member #: _____

Describe: _____ Duration: _____

III. JUSTIFICATION
A. Describe the benefits to the Department:

IV. DISCOUNTS
A. List the names of other Department employees with the same Membership or Subscription (For potential discount purposes). _____

V. FUNDING

Amount Funded: _____ Cost Center: _____ Fund No. _____
Funding Availability Verified by: _____ Funding Verification Date: _____
Acct. No. _____ Amount Paid: _____ Date Paid: _____

VI. APPROVALS - Note: Service Line Directors may pre-approve expenditures of less than \$1,000. Expenditures of \$1,000 or more must be pre-approved by either the Chief Operating Officer (COO), the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or the Chief of Staff (COS)

Service Line Director	Date
COO, CFO or COS – (If Required)	Date
Request Approved? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

REPAYMENT AGREEMENT

Review Course Expenses

(This form must be included with the request for pre-approval of Review Course expenses.)

Employee Name: _____ Service Line: _____

Employee No.: _____ Job Title: _____

Course Name: _____

Course Start Date: _____ Course End Date: _____

Amount Requested \$ _____

I understand that I must have this course approved prior to registering and attending the course and if I voluntarily leave the employment of the City of Houston (City) or if I am terminated or indefinitely suspended within 2 years of enrolling in the above course, I must repay all or a portion of the amount the City paid for the course.

I have read and understand the requirements set forth in HPW Administrative Procedure 3-23 concerning the repayment of costs for Review Courses and agree to either pay prior to my last day of employment or have the balance remaining to be repaid deducted from my final paycheck, as determined by the schedule set forth in of HPW Administrative Procedure 3-23 Section 5.3.

I further agree that the repayment plan is reasonable and if my final paycheck is not sufficient to repay the full amount due the City, I will make arrangements to repay the amount in full within 30 days of my termination.

I acknowledge that this course was not mandated by the City as part of my employment and was voluntarily undertaken by me with the knowledge of its repayment terms.

Employee's Signature_____
Date

REVISION	REVISED BY:	DATE ISSUED:	REASON FOR REVISION:
0	162240	03/27/2019	Original Issue - Titled "Professional Memberships, Licenses, Certifications, Subscriptions, Renewals and Exam Preparation Classes."
1	162240	02/28/2022	Renamed procedure "Professional Memberships, Licenses and Employee Development." Moved appendices from the procedure document to a separate section in the Employee Portal. Revised approval process to require approval by COO, CFO and COS for expenditures of \$1,000 or more.