

## FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OFFICIALS, INC.

### COLLEGE EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT (CER) PROGRAM

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#### **Introduction:**

The Florida Association of Public Procurement Officials, Incorporated (FAPPO) values the contributions, efforts, and professionalism of its members. With the challenges that public entities face with constrained budgets, FAPPO recognizes that it has become increasingly difficult for public entities to provide funding for professional development and continuing education. Additionally, with the pending changes to professional certifications offered by the Universal Public Procurement Certification Council (UPPCC) beginning in 2014, it is extremely important that procurement professionals attain a college degree by a sanctioned higher education organization.

#### **Purpose and Intent:**

The purpose of the College Education Reimbursement (CER) Program is to encourage FAPPO members to improve their effectiveness through education and training; to increase their efficiency and ability to carry out their job duties; to promote the organization's effort; and to fulfill the educational purpose of furthering professionalism in the purchasing field.

The program shall provide members with reimbursement of educational costs for approved undergraduate and graduate course work, which will enable them to improve their performance in their current positions and/or prepare them for increased or other responsibilities within the purchasing field.

Qualification and Limitations – All members who take approved course work leading to a degree in business administration, public administration, or other degree directly related to purchasing, shall be entitled to a refund of their paid tuition cost, including books and materials up to the maximum amount approved by the Board each fiscal year. *This refund shall be based upon the satisfactory completion of approved course work.* Approved course work includes graduate certificate programs provided the graduate certificate is in business administration, public administration, public procurement, or city and county management. This includes all specialties that fall under any of these four (4) types of graduate certificates.

For graded undergraduate courses leading to an AS, AA, BS or BA degree, members achieving a grade of "C" or above shall receive a refund of 100% of their paid tuition, books and material costs. Members may request reimbursement for no more than \$750 per applicant per year.

For graded graduate courses, leading to an MBA, MS or PhD or graduate certificate, members achieving a grade of "B" or above shall receive a reimbursement of 100% of their paid tuition,

books and material costs. Members may request reimbursement for no more than one (1) course taken per semester or quarter, up to \$750.

Members seeking reimbursement must be full or part-time degree seeking students only and must be full-time employees in the purchasing profession. Correspondence courses, continuing education courses, courses taken on a pass/fail basis, or other non-graded courses are not eligible for reimbursement of any kind under this program. NOTE: correspondence courses do not include those courses taken in an online capacity through an accredited school.

FAPPO shall not provide reimbursement for: fees for tests to waive taking a class or fees for auditing a class. The total annual appropriation by FAPPO shall be determined by the Board of Directors during the budget appropriation process. Once appropriation has been approved, qualifying members may receive educational reimbursement on a “first-come, first served” basis until the annual appropriation has been exhausted or the twelve (12) month period from the date of the appropriation has ended, whichever occurs first. *The maximum amount reimbursed per individual shall be determined by the Board of Directors each fiscal year.* If a member is eligible to receive reimbursement or similar funds or benefits through their employment, the G.I. Bill, or other similar program, policy or agreement (hereinafter “other program”), the organization will refund only those tuition-related costs not refunded by said other program, provided the total amount paid to, or on behalf of, an employee (from such other program and from the organization) does not exceed the actual costs for tuition, books, and other materials. Relevant federal tax laws will be applied in determining whether or not reimbursements made under this section will be considered income and reported on an IRS 1099 Form.

**Note:** Race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age, or the employment status of the applicant (other than within public purchasing) will not be considered in awarding scholarships.

### **Eligibility:**

Any regular member who has fully paid their membership dues for the current year and the immediate past year to the date indicated on the CER Application shall be eligible under this program. If membership renewal is during the term of the class, continued membership will be verified and required through the end of the pre-approved course for reimbursement.

### **Application Process:**

Members electing to participate in the CER Program shall submit one (1) completed copy of the CER Application to the CER Coordinator no later than ten (10) working days prior to the course start date. The application will be forwarded to the Professional Development (Pro-D) Chairperson upon review and approval by the CER Coordinator. The CER Coordinator will hold the pending application until such time as the course work has been completed and final grade has been submitted.

Once the applicant has completed the course and received a grade, the applicant shall forward an official grade notification to the Pro-D Chairperson no later than thirty (30) days from the receipt of grades or from completion of the course. The Pro-D Chairperson will approve payments under

this program and forward the request for reimbursement to the President for final approval and payment.

**Selection Criteria:**

Chairperson shall review all CER Program requests and approve disbursement based on the applicant's submittal.

**Submittal Requirements:**

Submittal requirements are noted on the CER Application. Package must include the following:

- The name of the college or university
- Tuition cost per credit hour for the requested course
- Number of credit hours for the requested course
- A copy of the course description which includes the course number
- A copy of the description of the degree or certificate program

The CER Coordinator and Pro-D