

L.L. Bean

Policy Manual

Recognition/Development – 4.5 Tuition Reimbursement

Philosophy

L.L.Bean strongly encourages its employees to participate in educational programs as they pursue improved skills and individual growth. To this end, the company offers assistance through the Tuition Reimbursement (TR) program. This program provides reimbursement upon successful completion of qualified course work at approved institutions to all eligible employees.

Eligibility

Full-time, part-time A, and part-time B status employees (defined according to [Policy 2.2 - Employee Status Classifications](#)) are eligible following 30 days of employment in an eligible status classification.

L.L.Bean Company Retirees (defined according to [Policy 8.2 - Company Retirement Benefits and Privileges](#)) are also eligible to participate as part of our corporate retiree benefits program.

Coverage

Degree Programs — \$2,750 maximum benefit per fiscal year.

- Graduate degrees must be business related **only**.
- Undergraduate degrees can be broad-based academic programs and do not have to be business related.
- **Only** those degrees earned at **accredited** institutions are eligible.
- Proof of matriculation required.

College Credit Courses — \$1,000 maximum benefit per fiscal year.

- Individual college credit classes must be business related **only**.
- **Only** courses taken for college credit at accredited institutions are eligible.
- Proof of matriculation **not** required.

Certificate Programs — \$1,000 maximum benefit per fiscal year.

- Concentrated study to help employees become specialized in a field without having to meet the extended requirements of a standard degree program. Most certificates consists of multiple courses.
- Business related **only**.
- **Only** those certificates earned at **accredited** institutions are eligible.
- Proof of curriculum required.

\$2,750 maximum employee allowance per fiscal year. Employees can combine programs as long as limits are observed.

Tuition — Actual cost of instruction, not including associated fees and expenses. Does not include tutoring expenses.

Eligible Fees — include all mandatory fees associated with the university or course, such as application, books, comprehensive, energy, enrollment, lab use, graduation, material handling, matriculation, records, student activity, transportation and technology.

Ineligible Fees — include all non-mandatory fees, such as health fees, insufficient funds, insurance, late, mileage, parking, payment plan, reactivation, recreation, room & board, self study books and/or tapes, supplies, testing & assessment, tools, and tutoring.

Books — Books that are required for eligible course work are reimbursable under the Tuition Reimbursement program.

Computer-based or Distance Learning — These courses are eligible for Tuition Reimbursement when they are taken through an accredited institution for college credit.

Requirements

Accreditation — All courses must be taken at an accredited school, college, university, trade school or other institutions of learning. The institution must be accredited by one of the [eight regional accrediting organizations](#) recognized by CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

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Business Related — Visit the Tuition Reimbursement intranet site for a list of examples of [business related](#) graduate degree, certificate programs and college credit courses as determined by the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator, Learning & Communication.

Financial Support — Employees receiving tuition support from other sources (for example, the Veteran's Administration, a scholarship, Pell Grant, etc.) are required to notify the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator. The program will pay only that portion of eligible tuition and fees not covered by other aid. Failure to completely list other aid can disqualify you from taking part in the program.

Proof of Matriculation — Copy of advisory letter from school indicating acceptance into degree program must include the degree type and major title. (i.e., Associates - Accounting). Required with first time degree requests only, unless there is a change in degree or institution.

Proof of Curriculum — Copy of all the required courses to complete the certificate program. Required with first time certificate program requests only, unless there is a change in the certificate program or institution.

Proof of Registration — Itemized receipt from the institution listing the tuition and fees for each course. Copies of personal checks are not acceptable. Required with each reimbursement request.

Book Receipt — Itemized receipt listing each book and the associated value is required for reimbursement. Handwritten receipts for personal sales accepted.

Proof of Completion — Copy of a grade report, certificate of completion or documentation signed by instructor as "pass". Required with each reimbursement request.

Grades — A grade of "C-" or above, or "Pass" in a pass/fail system is required for any course in the Degree, Certificate Program or College Credit Course. **An employee receiving a grade of "D+" or below, or "Fail", will not be eligible for TR funds for the course.**

Tax — Tuition Reimbursement program funds are tax exempt. Tax-free status for up to \$5,250 of employer-provided educational assistance benefits was extended to 2010 and, beginning in 2002, also applies to graduate level courses. Further information may be found in IRS Publications 970 and 15-B.

Responsibilities and Procedures

Employee — It is the responsibility of the employee interested in the Tuition Reimbursement program to:

- Keep current and adhere to stated policies and procedures.
- Complete the [Tuition Reimbursement Pre-Approval form](#) prior to registering for the first course in a degree or certificate program and for each college credit course to determine if the course, program and/or institution meet the TR criteria.
- Talk with your leader about your educational goals and course intentions.
- Contact school/university to proceed with registration and coursework.
- Obtain copies of all required paperwork.
- Notify the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator of any financial support.
- Obtain leader's signature on the [Tuition Reimbursement Voucher form](#) [xls].
- Forward all required paperwork to the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator by the close of the fiscal year the course ended.

Leader — It is the responsibility of the leader to:

- Keep current with policies and procedures.
- Discuss educational goals and course intentions with their direct reports.
- Review and sign all Tuition Reimbursement Voucher forms.

Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator — It is the responsibility of the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator to:

- Interpret the policies and procedures of the Tuition Reimbursement program.
- Determine and approve school, course and/or program eligibility.
- Process vouchers and maintain accurate records on all employees participating in the program.

Reimbursement Process

The Tuition Reimbursement program reimburses employees after successful completion of eligible course work. Visit the Tuition Reimbursement intranet site for a detailed list of [process steps](#).

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Budget Approval — The Office of the President reviews all budgets annually and will notify Human Resources when and if the TR budget is approved. Budget approval is announced through normal communication channels.

The Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator reserves the right to approve courses, programs and/or institutions on a case-by-case basis.

Employee Maximum Benefit Amount — Cannot be exceeded. Employee maximum benefit amounts are based on L.L.Bean's fiscal year. If the maximum amount is not reached for the fiscal year, the unused funds will not be rolled over into another fiscal year nor will they be remanded to the employee.

Fiscal Year — Approximately the first of March to the end of February. See the [Finance Calendars and Schedules](#) for current dates.

Separation

In the event that an employee separates from L.L.Bean due to a job elimination, the employee may provide proof of registration for course work already in progress prior to their exit date. Upon successful completion, the separated employee must contact the Tuition Reimbursement Coordinator within 30 days of the course end date to receive reimbursement. Failure to submit the appropriate paperwork within 30 days requires the funds to be forfeited. Should the employee resign or be terminated for any other reason than job elimination, the unused portion of funds must be forfeited for courses not completed prior to the termination date.