



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY  
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD  
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22042

IN REPLY REFER TO  
BUMEDINST 12410.7  
BUMED-M1  
9 Mar 2015

BUMED INSTRUCTION 12410.7

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Subj: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES FOR ACADEMIC COURSES AND PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS FOR CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

Ref: (a) DON Civilian Human Resources Manual, Subchapter 410  
(b) U.S. Department of Education Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs  
(c) 29 U.S.C. §701  
(d) 42 U.S.C. §126  
(e) 10 U.S.C. §983  
(f) 32 CFR 216  
(g) DoD Instruction 1400.25, volume 410  
(h) DoD Instruction 1400.25, volume 543  
(i) 5 U.S.C. §5946  
(j) SECNAVINST 12273.1A  
(k) DoD Directive 5000.52 of 12 January 2005  
(l) DoD Instruction 5000.66 of 21 December 2005  
(m) 10 U.S.C. §87

Encl: (1) Payment of Academic Courses Program Guidelines  
(2) Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials Guidelines

1. Purpose. To establish guidance, policy, procedures and assign responsibilities for Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) commands in the payment of expenses for academic courses, professional licenses, and other professional credentials consistent with references (a) through (m).

2. Cancellation. BUMEDINST 7042.1A.

3. Background. Reference (a), authorizes payment of costs for civilian employees for job-related academic courses, licenses, and other professional credentials that benefit the organization. Reference (a) delegates the approval authority to the heads of major commands.

4. Scope. This instruction applies to all BUMED activities. It covers the payment of costs associated with attending courses that are directly related to the position of the employee and contributes to the BUMED mission as well as payment of costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional licenses and other professional credentials that further organizational objectives.

5. Applicability. All full-time, career, and career conditional employees who have successfully completed their probationary period, have not received any discipline within the past 24 months, are not currently on a performance improvement plan (unless the taking of the course is specified in the performance improvement plan), and who have achieved a fully successful (acceptable) or a better performance rating are eligible to participate. This instruction covers all payments of post-secondary education at an accredited education institution and payment of professional credentials. All payments for post-secondary education at accredited academic institutions and payments for professional credentials must be made consistent with this instruction unless the courses are part of a formal training program and purchased at the initiative of the employing activity and mandated regardless of employee interest; or exception is granted by another authority. This instruction does not apply to non-Budget Submitting Office-18 funded academic training (i.e., training centrally funded by Department of Navy (DON), Department of Defense (DoD), etc.). The following are excluded from this instruction:

- a. Financial Management Certification since funding is identified from another source.
- b. Application and Administration of the Bachelor's Degree Completion Program for Federal civilian registered nurses.

6. Policy

a. BUMED is committed to building the skills and competencies of its workforce to meet immediate and long-term mission requirements. BUMED activities will determine what resources, if any, are necessary under this policy to build or enhance those skills and competencies.

b. Programs of professional development administered under this policy must be consistent with merit system principles. Identification and selection of employees for training and development opportunities must be done fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition.

c. Payment will not be authorized for any educational institution or organization that discriminates on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, status as a parent, sexual orientation, or disability.

d. Payment will not be authorized for academic courses, licenses, or professional credentials:

- (1) Not directly related to the position of the employee;
- (2) That do not enhance employee performance; and

(3) That do not contribute to the effective, efficient, and economical achievement of BUMED mission objectives.

e. Payment under these programs is discretionary and this policy does not create an entitlement or benefit of employment. Participation in these programs may be limited by availability of funding.

7. Responsibilities. Agency and employee responsibilities are outlined in enclosures (1) and (2).

8. Procedures. Agency and employee procedures are outlined in enclosure (2).

9. Records. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per SECNAV M-5210.1 of January 2012.

10. Forms

a. NAVMED 12410/1 (01-2015), Continued Service Agreement, is available at:  
<http://www.med.navy.mil/directives/Pages/NAVMEDForms.aspx>

b. The following Standard Forms are available electronically from the U.S. General Services Administration website at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/type/SF>.

j (1) Standard Form 182 (12-2006), Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training.

(2) Standard Form 1164 (11-1977), Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business.



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<http://www.med.navy.mil/directives/Pages/default.aspx>

## PAYMENT OF ACADEMIC COURSES PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### 1. Requirements and responsibilities

a. Activities funding a tuition reimbursement program must establish procedures that:

(1) Ensure fair and consistent application of the program per Merit System Principles and Equal Employment Opportunity regulations;

(2) set forth procedures on the review and prioritization of applications for tuition reimbursement;

(3) ensure that all payments are consistent with this policy;

(4) regularly assess the effectiveness of the program;

(5) do not delegate approval authority for this program to managers who do not have budget authority;

(6) ensure those who are delegated approval authority are familiar with this instruction;

(7) ensure an annual review for accountability and compliance through the command evaluation program or the managers internal control program;

(8) ensure adequate staffing for administration of the program;

(9) ensure the program will improve employee performance and contribute to a more effective, efficient, and economical achievement of mission objectives;

(10) provide for a process for tuition payment before coursework begins and on a reimbursable basis for expenses where the amounts are not known before coursework begins (e.g., course material); and

(11) ensure that the SF 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training (or the equivalent) is properly utilized and approved.

b. Payment or reimbursement will only be authorized for coursework taken at institutions meeting all of the following conditions:

(1) The institution is accredited and provided by an institution or program per reference (b). Reference (b) is available at: <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/GetDownloadFile.aspx>.

(2) The institution or program facility and curriculum are accessible to employees with disabilities per references (c) and (d), as applicable.

(3) The institution does not select or discriminate based on political preference, age, color, disability, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, or any other non-merit-based factor and with regard for their constitutional and privacy rights.

(4) The institution or program (including any sub-element of it) has not been determined by the Secretary of Defense to have a policy or practice that either prohibits or in effect prevents establishment, operation, or maintenance of a unit of the Senior Reserve Officer Training Corps on campus, or that prevents a student at that institution or program (or any sub-element of it) from enrolling in a unit of the Senior Reserve Officer Training Corps at another institution or program of higher education. Per references (e) and (f), DoD Components may not provide funds by contract or by grant to an institution or program per the General Services Administration's (GSA) Excluded Parties List System on the GSA's System for Awards Management (SAM) Web site. More information on how to find an excluded entity on the SAM is available at: [https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/Public-Identifying\\_Excluded\\_Entities.pdf](https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/Public-Identifying_Excluded_Entities.pdf).

(5) The institution or program (including any sub-element of it) has not been determined by the Secretary of Defense to have a policy or practice that either prohibits, or in effect prevents access to campuses, or access to students on campuses, for purposes of military recruiting, or that prevents access by military recruiters to authorized student information. Per references (e), and (f), DoD Components may not provide funds by contract or by grant to an institution or program per program per the GSA Excluded Parties List System. .

c. Tuition payment or reimbursement shall only be authorized for courses that meet all of the following criteria:

(1) The courses are directly related to the employee's position;

(2) The courses have been determined to improve employee performance; and

(3) The courses contribute to a more effective, efficient, and economical achievement of current or future mission objectives.

(Note: Payment for courses that do not satisfy enclosure (1), paragraphs 5c(1) through 5c(3), but are necessary for completion of a degree that is related to the position of the employee, such as general education requirements, are authorized at the discretion of the activity and consistent with enclosure (1), paragraph 1i.)

d. The amount of tuition assistance provided is contingent on available funding and limited to:

(1) Four-thousand dollars (\$4,000) for an academic course and \$6,000 for graduate courses.

(2) A maximum cumulative benefit of \$25,000.

e. Payment or reimbursement for academic courses may include expenses such as application fees, registration fees, tuition, books, equipment, supplies, and parking fees. Late fees will only be considered due to administrative error on the part of the activity. While the government purchase card is the generally accepted payment vehicle for tuition within purchase card limits, other authorized expenses may be paid via SF 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business.

f. Attendance of courses and completion of coursework must be accomplished during non-duty time. Commands may consider a change in work schedule, alternative work schedules, and appropriate charge to an employee's leave account to accommodate schedule conflicts.

g. Employees must take the course(s) for academic credit when available. Audited courses are not eligible for reimbursement.

h. The course(s) must be part of the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP). An IDP is mandated for all employees per reference (h), volume 410.

i. Activities must assure that the course(s) being paid for are not for the sole purpose of providing an employee the opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic degree is a basic requirement.

j. Per references (a) and (g) and consistent with reference (k), a NAVMED 12410/1, Continued Service Agreement, shall be completed prior to approval of coursework. The continued service agreement will obligate the employee to service with the DON in an amount equal to five times the number of contact hours for the course, which starts the day after course completion.

(1) For purposes of this policy, semesters will be considered to occur over 15 weeks and a quarter over 12 weeks.

(2) The service obligation will be calculated by multiplying the number of units times the number of weeks in the semester or quarter times the service obligation multiplier of 5.

(a) A three unit course taken over a semester will obligate the employee to 225 hours (or 5.6 weeks) of service (3 unit X 15 weeks X 5 service obligation multiplier). A one unit course taken over a quarter will obligate the employee to 60 hours of service (1 unit X 12 weeks X 5 service obligation multiplier).

(b) Each course must have a Continued Service Agreement. Obligated service for one course must be completed before beginning another period of obligated service. Obligated service cannot run concurrently.

(3) If an employee enters a non-pay status during the service obligation period, the time in non-pay status shall not count towards the completion of an employee's service obligation and will resume when the employee returns to a pay status.

(4) Failure to complete the obligated service under the Continued Service Agreement(s) will obligate the employee to the costs associated with any unmet Continued Service Agreement(s).

k. Commands are encouraged to delegate the authority to approve tuition reimbursement expenses for physicians and dentists to the Command's Activity Compensation Panel as described in reference (h), volume 543.

l. Any collective bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this instruction.

m. Activities shall ensure that the programs are implemented in a manner that will result in better organizational or individual performance. The effective use of programs of professional development will be considered as a part of the overall assessment of human resources management. The nature and extent of the use of programs of professional development shall be documented by the activity to be included as a part of the review of organization health in the annual report required by reference (j).

n. This authority does not apply to the Navy Student Loan Repayment Plan under 5 United States Code §5379 and 5 CFR 537.

## 2. Procedures

a. Employees shall submit a completed SF182 , or its equivalent, a NAVMED 12410/1, and a copy of their IDP documenting the coursework being applied for. Employees must document in block 18 on their SF-182 how the courses will improve their performance and how it is job-related.

b. All expenses must be authorized in advance and before the start of the course. Applications shall be submitted well in advance of the start of the course based on timelines established by the activity. Failure to submit a complete application within established timeframes will result in denial of the application. Expenses already incurred are not eligible for reimbursement unless approved of in advance with the exception of late fees that resulted from administrative error on the part of the activity. Employees are prohibited from applying for duplicate payment for any tuition assistance expense that has been or will be paid by another government source, such as Montgomery Government Issue Bill, Korean War Orphans, grants, scholarships, or other sources.

c. Activities shall consider and prioritize requests considering factors including, but not limited to:

- (1) How the coursework relates to the activities overall mission;
  - (2) how the coursework will improve the employee's skills and knowledge to enhance performance of his or her own duties and responsibilities in his or her current position;
  - (3) amount of tuition assistance already received by the employee; and
  - (4) history of successfully completing courses through this program.
- d. Within 30 days of course completion, employees must present an official transcript that shows the attainment of a "C" or better, or "Credit" or "Satisfactory" when letter grades are unavailable for the courses. Failure on the part of the employee to present evidence of satisfactory completion with 30 days of course completion may result in the employee being responsible to the activity for all associated expenses paid for.
- e. If an application is approved and an employee subsequently withdraws from a course, they are to notify the activity immediately with a reason for the withdrawal. If the activity is unable to receive a refund, the employee will be responsible for the expenses incurred.

## PAYMENT OF EXPENSES TO OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS GUIDELINES

1. Requirements and Responsibilities. Activities funding a professional credentials program at their activity must establish procedures that:
  - a. Ensure fair and consistent application of the program per the Merit System Principles and Equal Employment Opportunity regulations;
  - b. set forth procedures on the review and prioritization of applications for obtaining professional credentials;
  - c. ensure that all payments are consistent with this policy;
  - d. regularly assess the effectiveness of the program;
  - e. do not delegate approval authority for this program to managers who do not have budget authority;
  - f. ensure those who are delegated approval authority are familiar with this instruction;
  - g. ensure an annual review for accountability and compliance through the command evaluation program or the managers internal control program;
  - h. ensure adequate staffing for administration of the program;
  - i. ensure the program will improve employee performance and contribute to more effective, efficient, and economical achievement of mission objectives;
  - j. provide for a process for payment and/or reimbursement (if given prior approval); and
  - k. ensure that all expenses are approved in advance.
2. Payment of costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional credentials including professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certifications; and examinations to obtain such credentials is authorized per reference (a) to support the BUMED's human capital goals. Depending on the availability of funding, an activity may pay for professional credentials that are necessary or beneficial for the employee in the performance of official duties. Certifications and licenses are defined as follows:
  - a. Certification is recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession.
  - b. Licensing is the process by which an agency of (Federal, State, or local) government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding that the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency required to engage in that occupation.

3. Activities may pay or reimburse employees for all or part of the expenses of acquiring and maintaining professional credentials when such credentials contribute to enhancement of job performance and the systematic development of employees relating to their current position or the current or future mission, requirements, goals, or objectives of the activity. Such expenses may include direct and indirect costs of courses or other services or facilities necessary to prepare for a professional certification exam, travel to take the exam, registration fees for the exam, and fees for the initial award and required periodic renewals of the professional credential. Payment may not include individual membership fees in societies or associations as detailed in reference (i).
4. This authority may be implemented as described only when the license or certification:
  - a. Enhances productivity;
  - b. improves performance;
  - c. maximizes recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions;
  - d. increases retention, especially for “high turnover” career fields;
  - e. broadens and develops the skill base for a quality work force to accomplish the DON’s mission and ensure readiness; and
  - f. is directly related to the employee’s position.
5. Payment or reimbursement for expenses of voluntary memberships in professional organizations of already credentialed employees is prohibited. Payment or reimbursement may be made for expenses of attendance of employees at a meeting or convention which is concerned with the functions or activities for which appropriations available to DoD Components for travel expenses were made, or which will contribute to improved conduct, supervision, or management of those functions or activities
6. All payments or reimbursements for expenses are discretionary (i.e., not an employee entitlement) and should be based on organizational need, talent availability, and other mission-related criteria and standards established by the activity. Employees should obtain prior approval before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement from the activity.
7. Commands may not establish the holding of a license or certification as a minimum qualification requirement or condition of employment unless permitted by law or regulation.
8. If a professional credential is a condition of employment, that information must be included in the vacancy announcement.

- a. Expenses necessary to qualify an employee for a specific vacancy announcement are personal expenses and may not be charged to appropriated funds, unless permitted by law or regulations.
  - b. For DoD acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce personnel, any such conditions of employment and permitted expenses must be authorized per references (k), (l), and (m).
9. If an academic degree, certificate, or course is required to obtain a professional credential, the training must also be authorized and approved per enclosure (1) of this instruction, as appropriate.
  10. This authority may not be used to obtain licenses or certifications from organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, status as a parent, sexual orientation or disability.
  11. Payment shall be made on a reimbursable basis upon successful receipt of the credential. Reimbursement shall be through the completion of the SF 1164.
  12. Commands are encouraged to delegate the authority to approve expenses associated with obtaining professional credentials for physicians and dentists to the Activity Compensation Panel as described in reference (h), volume 543.
  13. Payment or reimbursement for initiation fees or periodic dues for membership in a professional organization or expenses for attendance of a member at meetings or conventions of the organization is prohibited unless:
    - a. Membership or attendance is a prerequisite to acquiring or maintaining a required professional credential (documented proof is required).
    - b. The command pays for an employee to acquire or maintain a professional credential and the employee maintains membership in the professional organization as an incidental by-product of acquiring or maintaining the credential and attends its meetings or conventions to maintain the credential and there is no expenditure beyond the cost of the professional credential.
  14. If a professional credential is a condition of employment, expenses necessary to qualify an employee for a vacant position is prohibited, unless permitted by law or regulation.
  15. Any collective bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this instruction.