



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY
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BUMEDINST 12410.7A
BUMED-N1
15 Aug 2025

BUMED INSTRUCTION 12410.7A

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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

Ref: (a) 5 U.S.C.
(b) SECNAVINST 12410.25B
(c) U.S. Department of Education Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and
Programs
(d) 29 U.S.C. §701
(e) 42 U.S.C. §12101
(f) 10 U.S.C. §983
(g) 32 CFR
(h) DoD Instruction 1400.25 of 25 September 2013
(i) SECNAVINST 12273.1B
(j) DoD Instruction 5000.66 of 27 July 2017

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 in the payment of expenses for academic courses, professional licenses, and other professional credentials for Navy Medicine (NAVMED) civilian employees consistent with reference (a), sections 4107, 5379, and 5946; references (b) through (f); reference (g), part 216; reference (h), volume 410; and references (i) and (j). This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. BUMEDINST 12410.7.

3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction applies to all NAVMED commands and activities with civilian personnel assigned. It covers the discretionary payment of costs associated with attending courses that are directly related to the position of the employee and contributes to the NAVMED mission as well as payment of costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional licenses and other professional credentials that further organizational objectives.

a. This instruction applies to all NAVMED civilian employees who:

(1) Are paid from appropriated and non-appropriated funds to the extent permitted by law and applicable regulations.

(2) Have not been the subject of formal discipline within the past 24 months.

(3) Are not currently on a performance improvement plan.

(4) Have received an acceptable rating of record on their last performance appraisal. In the event an employee does not have a current rating of record, their rating official will provide and attach to the employee's Standard Form (SF) 182 Authorization, Agreement, and Certification of Training, a signed statement certifying the employee is currently performing at an acceptable level.

b. This instruction does not apply to:

(1) Non-Budget Submitting Office 18 funded academic training (i.e., training centrally funded by Department of Navy (DON), Department of Defense (DoD), etc.).

(2) DoD financial management related expenses authorized by the DON for financial management professionals and comptrollers. For additional information on financial management related expenses and reimbursement, employees should review <https://donfmworkforce.dc3n.navy.mil/>.

c. 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.

4. Background. Reference (a), section 4107, delegates the approval authority to the heads of major commands and budget submitting offices, authorizes the payment of costs for civilian employees for job-related academic courses, licenses, and other professional credentials that benefit the organization, and authorizes commands to further delegate this authority to the lowest possible level.

5. Policy

a. NAVMED is committed to building the skills and competencies of its workforce to meet immediate and long-term mission requirements. NAVMED 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 based on 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) Do not enhance employee performance.

(3) Do not contribute to the effective, efficient, and economical achievement of NAVMED 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.

f. Per reference (a), approval of training, educational, and professional development activities for civilian employees will be based on the employees' approved Individual Development Plan (IDP).

6. Responsibilities and procedures. Agency and employee responsibilities and procedures for the payment of expenses related to academic courses or professional credentials are outlined in enclosures (1) and (2) of this instruction.

7. Collective Bargaining Requirements. All collective bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this instruction.

8. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the DON Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the OPNAV Records Management Program (DNS-16).

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Director, Manpower and Personnel (BUMED-N1) will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, DoD, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.

10. Forms

a. NAVMED 12410/1 Continued Service Agreement, is available at:
<https://www.med.navy.mil/directives/testnewdesign/Pages/NAVMEDForms.aspx>.

b. SF 182 Agreement, and Certification of Training:
https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/sf182.pdf.

c. SF 1034 Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other than Personal:
<https://www.gsa.gov/reference/forms/public-voucher-for-purchases-and-services-other-than-personal>.



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Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Navy Medicine Web site, <https://www.med.navy.mil/Directives/>

PAYMENT OF ACADEMIC COURSES PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Requirements and responsibilities

a. Activities funding a tuition reimbursement program must establish the listed procedures:

(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 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).

(11) Ensure that the SF 182 is properly utilized and approved.

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

(1) The institution is accredited and provided by an institution or program per reference (c). Reference (c) is available at: <https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>.

(2) The institution or program facility and curriculum are accessible to employees with disabilities, per reference (d) and reference (e).

(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 reference (f) and reference (g), part 216, DoD components will not provide funds by contract or by grant to an institution or program, per the General Services Administration's Excluded Parties List System on the General Services Administration's System for Awards Management (SAM) Web site. More information on how to find an excluded entity on the SAM is available at:

https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/FINAL_Exclusions_Search_docx_c6a02093b5.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.

c. Tuition payment or reimbursement will only be authorized for courses that meet all the listed criteria:

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

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

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

Please note: Payment for courses that do not satisfy enclosure (1), subparagraphs 5c(1) through 5c(3) of this instruction, 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), subparagraph 1i of this instruction.

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

(1) \$4,000 per year for undergraduate academic courses and \$6,000 per year for graduate academic courses.

(2) A maximum cumulative benefit of \$24,000 per employee during their employment with NAVMED.

(3) Commands may set a lower limit but will not set a higher limit.

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 contacting the individual's local Accounting or Resource Management Department and completing the miscellaneous payment process.

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 IDP. An IDP is mandated for all employees, per reference (a).

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 reference (a), a Continued Service Agreement (CSA), will be completed prior to approval of coursework. The CSA 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 instruction, semesters will be considered to occur over a 15-week period and a quarter over a 12-week period.

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

(a) A three-credit hour course taken over a semester will obligate the employee to 225 hours (or 5.6 weeks) of service, calculated as (3 credit hours times 15 weeks times 5 service obligation multiplier). A one-credit hour course taken over a quarter will obligate the employee to 60 hours of service (calculated as 1 credit hour times 12 weeks times 5 service obligation multiplier).

(b) 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 will 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 CSA will obligate the employee to the costs associated with any unmet CSA.

k. Commands are encouraged to delegate the authority to approve tuition reimbursement expenses for physicians and dentists to the Command's Activity Compensation Panel.

l. Activities will 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 will be documented by the activity to be included as a part of the review of organization health in the annual report required by reference (i).

m. This authority does not apply to the Navy Student Loan Repayment Plan under reference (b), section 5379.

2. Procedures

a. Employees will submit a completed SF 182, a NAVMED 12410/1, and a copy of their IDP documenting the requested coursework. Employees must document on their SF 182 how the courses will improve their performance and how the course is job-related.

b. All expenses must be authorized in advance and before the start of the course. Applications will 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 in advance, except for 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 will 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) The amount of tuition assistance already received by the employee.

(4) The history of successfully completing courses through this program.

d. An employee must attain a grade of "C" or better, or "Satisfactory", when letter grades are unavailable for the specific course to be eligible for assistance. Within 30 calendar days of course completion, employees must present an official transcript that shows the final grade obtained. Failure on the part of the employee to present evidence of satisfactory completion will result in the employee being responsible to the activity for all associated expenses paid by the command.

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 to the activity for the expenses incurred.

f. When repayment cannot be obtained directly from the employee, the activity will take appropriate action to recover funds in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

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 reimbursement (if given prior approval).
- k. Ensure 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 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:

- a. Certification. Certification is the recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession.

b. Licensing. Licensing is the process by which an agency of (Federal, State, or local) government grants permission to an individual to engage in each 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. Per reference (b), section 5946, appropriated funds will not be used for payment of individual membership fees in societies or associations.

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.
- f. 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 employee attendance 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 improve 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 must be based on organizational need, talent availability, and other mission-related criteria and standards established by the activity. Employees must obtain prior approval before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement from the activity.

7. Commands will 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 will 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 reference (j).
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 will not be used to obtain licenses or certifications from organizations that discriminate based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, status as a parent, sexual orientation, or disability.
11. Payment will be made on a reimbursable basis upon successful receipt of the credential. Reimbursement will be through the completion of the SF 1034.
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.
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.