

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

548



**FROM:** Human Resources Dept.

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
April 10, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Educational Support Program for County Employees, Revised Board Policy C-7, and Amend Ordinance No. 440 pursuant to Resolution No. 440-8660 submitted herewith

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board take the following actions:

- 1) Authorize the Human Resources Director to establish an Educational Support Program, as described herein, for all regular employees;
- 2) Approve the revised Board Policy C-7, "Support for Employee Training and Education", attached as Exhibit I;
- 3) Direct the Auditor-Controller to establish a sub-fund to the Human Resources General Fund, 10000-11301-00000, for the express purpose of creating a designated use fund to control and manage the Educational Support Program activities as specified in Exhibit II; and
- 4) Amend Ordinance No. 440 pursuant to Resolution No. 440-8660 submitted herewith.

**BACKGROUND:** Public and private employers throughout California are facing increasing challenges in attracting and retaining educated, qualified workers. There are fundamental labor market changes taking place which deserve our concentrated attention. The changing nature of the nation's workforce, and more particularly the workforce in Riverside County, poses significant issues, concerns and problems for employers.

Ronald W. Komers  
Asst. County Executive Officer/Human Resources Dir.

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 300,000	In Current Year Budget:	No
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 300,000	Budget Adjustment:	Yes
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 1,000,000	For Fiscal Year:	2005-06

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> HR Unreserved Fund Balance (Fund 46120)	<b>Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Requires 4/5 Vote</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** **APPROVE**

**County Executive Office Signature**

FISCAL PROCEDURES APPROVED  
 ROBERT E. BYRD, Auditor-Controller  
 BY *Ava May* 4/18/06  
 Deputy

Policy  
 Policy  
 Consent  
 Consent

Dep't Recomm.:  
 Per Exec. Ofc.:

**Prev. Agn. Ref.:** | **District:** | **Agenda Number:**

3.18

## **BACKGROUND (continued)**

The situation is particularly acute in this County because of the significant population growth, cost of higher education, and the current demographics related to education. The County of Riverside itself, as one of the largest employers in the area, is particularly affected. As County population grows, County government must also grow to keep pace with citizen demand for County services.

In recognition of this growth and demand for government services, over 400 new positions were added in the FY 2005-06 budget process. In the mid-year budget review this January, even more positions were added to meet increasing demands for law enforcement, welfare, engineering, and health care services. As the County just recently passed the two million resident mark, the growth in demand for County services is expected to accelerate.

Riverside County provides services to citizens primarily through the employment of specialists and experts in professional and technical service areas such as engineering, mental health, law enforcement, accounting, public health, nursing, law or social services. Thus, over 60% of newly approved positions (i.e., growth positions) are professional or technical, most of which require advanced education and training. At the same time, California's high school dropout rate is the seventh highest in the nation, and Riverside County has a lower proportion of residents with baccalaureate degrees (19.3%) than does the state as a whole (23.4%). In addition, tuition and fees for higher education have risen 7.1% from just a year ago, twice the rate of inflation, with the cost at a public university now averaging \$5,491 annually (Wall Street Journal, October 19, 2005). The current annual cost for undergraduate fees and books at University of California – Riverside for a full-time student is estimated at \$8,900, while graduate education fees average \$10,416.

Unfortunately, our ability to attract and retain qualified professionals is rapidly declining. Compounding our unique problems here in Riverside County is a nationwide crisis based on the slowing growth of the workforce, the pending retirement of the Baby Boomers, and the continuing failure of society to properly educate young people for the jobs and work ahead. Experts nationwide are calling for fundamental changes in present policies and practices of both education and employers to meet this unprecedented challenge. In an article on the declining quality of federal workers, Paul Volcker, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, said, "Government, in general . . . is increasingly unable to attract retain and motivate the kinds of people to do essential work . . . in the years and decade ahead."

## **PROPOSED COUNTY RESPONSE**

The recommended action calls for a fundamental change in the way that the County supports the educational development of County employees. In recognition of the challenges in recruiting qualified individuals, your Board has previously approved a policy of identifying difficult-to-recruit positions for special handling in the recruiting process. You have also approved "20-20" programs for several departments, where the department pays an employee for their regular 40-hour workweek, but provides 20 hours of that time as release time for the employee to devote to study for a degree or license. In exchange, the employee agrees to commit to working for a specified number of years after attaining the degree or license. Each department is also encouraged to set aside funds in their budget for training and development of their own employees, including textbook and tuition reimbursement as established by Board Policy C-7, and provisions within the various Memoranda of Understanding with collective bargaining units.

However, there are several shortcomings in the current methods. Use of the departmental funds has been inconsistent across departments, with some departments spending under \$1000 annually, and others spending significantly more. In FY2004-05, \$5,118,900 was allocated for conferences, education and tuition, and only \$3,581,500 (or 0.38% of total payroll, or less than \$240 per regular employee) was utilized. Year-to-date figures for FY2005-06 follow the same pattern as the previous year, with \$5,385,600 allocated in the adjusted budget, and \$2,714,700 expended so far. No screening or determination is made regarding the employee's ability to successfully complete the proposed course of study, nor do the students receive ongoing counseling or support for their development plan. There is no check to insure the attended programs are accredited. The way in which funds are used is not targeted to the greatest need, and data is not collected for analysis on effectiveness or results of the expenditures. It also appears that the funds are currently being paid without any determination of their taxability to the employee, and the Internal Revenue Service does have regulations specifying that such funds are taxable compensation to the employee under certain conditions. Perhaps most importantly, employees are discouraged from seeking career growth in fields other than those appropriate for their current department. Centralization of the fund within Human Resources will allow for improvements in each of these areas.

We have a large pool of current employees who are eager to pursue new career directions, but are unable to make either the financial requirement or time commitment to complete the required education on their own. The mission of the proposed Educational Support Program is quite simple – to meet our manpower needs of the future as much as possible by the development of our existing employee workforce. Through the recommended program, County employees would be offered an opportunity to continue their education in areas identified as County needs, in exchange for a signed agreement to continue working for the County after successful completion of their education for a specified period of time. This approach was previously utilized successfully by the County in 2000-2001 in training current employees for information technology positions, and over 500 employees expressed an interest in our "Tech Academy" at that time.

The proposed Educational Support Program is designed to provide education reimbursement in exchange for additional County service, and also makes provisions for cooperative efforts between County management, employees and educational institutions to offer classes during work hours or to allow flextime hours which do not conflict with the normal course of business (see Exhibit I). Specific goals for the proposed Educational Support Program are:

Goal 1: To encourage employees to pursue careers and education relevant to Riverside County's needs now and in the future, and especially those related to difficult-to-recruit positions (See Exhibit III).

Goal 2: Ensure that employees pursue realistic career goals that match their aptitudes and values.

Goal 3: Ensure that neither lack of funds nor lack of direct relevance to a given department will discourage educational support or successful completion of education.

Goal 4: Develop necessary incentives to motivate and retain educated employees.

Goal 5: Focus special emphasis on difficult-to-recruit positions and occupations with targeted fast-track programs.

Goal 6: Maximize the use of available funding sources and partnerships for the educational needs of the County's workforce.

To achieve these goals, the program will take a multi-faceted approach, including (but not limited to) the following components:

- Counseling and testing related to aptitudes and personal values and interests, to increase likely success in the selected occupational program;
- Reasonable flexibility in work hours to attend classes;
- Educational reimbursement from a central fund, supplementing the existing Textbook & Tuition Reimbursement programs at the department level;
- Expansion of the 20/20 Work-School Program;
- Identification and development of specific fast-track education programs in partnership with nearby colleges that address growing needs;
- Educational Loan Repayment Program for employees in difficult-to-recruit positions;
- A Work-Study recruitment program for current college juniors and seniors, where they work for the County in an entry level position while completing their professional degree;
- On-the-job apprenticeships and experience, closely matched to the desired careers; and
- Retraining for laid-off or injured workers, enabling them to seek a different job assignment internally.

#### Program Entry

For those programs that provide support while the employee completes coursework, those who wish to participate in the program will complete applications and be tested to determine aptitudes and personal value orientations related to the chosen field. Each participant in the Educational Support Program will be interviewed and, in coordination with the sponsoring Department/Agency, will receive a Career Development Plan outlining the jobs to which they are most suited, availability of such jobs within the County organization, and requirements for job eligibility. A counselor will assess which jobs would be the best fit for the employee, make sure the educational program is properly accredited, and counsel him/her how to achieve education, training, or experiential requirements for specific jobs. The sponsoring department(s) and the Human Resources Department will review the applicants for suitability prior to admittance to the program. Only those judged likely to succeed will be admitted, and placement will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Participating employees will be responsible for attending periodic counseling sessions, approximately every ninety days, to monitor progress in meeting the goals of their personal Career Development Plan. This ongoing counseling will include acquainting employees with local educational, training and certification programs; County training programs, seminars and workshops; and Department/Agency apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and mentoring availability. Employees may utilize regular work time and County resources, such as Library Services, at the discretion of the Department Head, in order to achieve educational goals established in their Plan.

#### Reimbursement for Textbooks and Tuition

A key aspect of this program is creation of a central fund from which the textbook and tuition reimbursements that are not related to an employee's current job are made. This program is an investment in the future for the County, and it is important that funds be pooled centrally to allow cross-departmental opportunities. Individual departments would rightfully tend to allocate available educational funding toward those activities which are focused in their own field, but a central fund expands the candidate pool in critical areas such as health care and engineering to all employees. For example, there might be an employee in the Registrar of Voters office (ROV) who would like to pursue a nursing career. Since ROV would not receive the benefit of this education, it would be difficult to use the department's limited funds for this purpose, even though nursing is a high priority need for the County. A central fund ensures more equal access to the program for all County employees, the ability to focus efforts on high areas of need that are identified through our Workforce Plan, confirmation of taxability status of the funds, and monitoring of results. Some portion of fund utilization may be appropriately charged back to Departmental/Federal funds, as appropriate.

Departments would retain the ability to dedicate funds to training and development of their employees, but those funds would now be focused on immediate departmental needs, concentrating on conferences, individual courses, and seminars rather than degree programs. By limiting the expenditure of departmental funds to training required or desired for an employee to perform their current job, we ensure compliance with Internal Revenue Service criteria that make these departmental expenditures nontaxable to the employee under Code Section 132(d).

#### Alternative Support Programs

To ensure success in meeting this program's goals, it is important that it be flexible and responsive to today's ever-changing educational and work environments. In addition to a textbook and tuition reimbursement program, several alternative methods of support are proposed.

20-20 Work-School Program: One program which has been utilized by several of our larger departments, and previously authorized by your Board, is called the 20/20 Program. An employee is provided with a reduced work schedule (usually 20 hours per week), along with paid release time to attend college as a full-time student, in exchange for a commitment to work for one year after completion of the program for each year of support provided. This program would be limited only to specific job classifications that are difficult to recruit, but again will allow for cross-departmental participation and monitoring of success through centralizing the process. The cost of the employee's release time would be reimbursed from this fund to the participating employee's current department.

Fast-Track Programs: There are also a number of fast-track programs available through nearby colleges, including one program that awards a Master's Degree in Nursing, plus Registered Nurse (RN) licensure, to people who have their baccalaureate degree in a field other than nursing, and another that transitions Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) to RNs. In a recent meeting with us, Cal State University at San Bernardino expressed an interest in partnering in the development of nurses with a BSN degree to Master's level (MSN), and thereby increasing the pool of faculty candidates for the nursing college. Local colleges are open to developing other fast-track programs in partnership with employers, including focused programs held on-site at the employer's facilities, and we propose that these options be explored and developed within the Educational Support Program. Participation in one of these programs may involve a 20-20 schedule, payment of tuition and books, or another combination of monetary support and schedule accommodation, as determined by the Human Resources Director with the school and sponsoring departments.

Educational Loan Repayment Program: Many employers offer assistance for outstanding student loans as an incentive to attract and retain college graduates. For graduates with Nursing, Baccalaureate or Master's degrees with outstanding student loans, the offer of Educational Loan Repayment through this fund is a useful recruitment and retention tool. Many people are saddled with significant debt obligations that become payable after completing their education. The County can offer to pay an amount equal to the monthly payment on a student loan as an incentive to join or remain with the County workforce. The monthly nature of the payment would be a significant retention incentive. This type of program is nontaxable if limited to \$5,250 per year, and established under Section 127 of the IRS Code.

Work-Study Plan: Another way to utilize this program in recruiting is to use the offer of a part-time position, along with textbook and tuition reimbursement after graduation through the Educational Loan Repayment Program, as a Work-Study "early recruiting" tool. This program would be useful for engineering positions and various health care positions, among other difficult-to-fill positions. The concept would entail going to local colleges to entice upper class (junior and senior) students to join the County before their degree is completed, working in a part-time entry level or trainee position within the department that is recruiting them while they finish the last two years of their studies.

This provides the opportunity to demonstrate to the student that the County is a great place to work, and gain a commitment from the student to work here after completing their degree, while assessing the student's ability. If offered a full-time job, the County could include an agreement to repay a portion of the student's loan under the Educational Loan Repayment Program, as described above. A consistent presence on a college campus has been shown to be a key element of successful college recruitment, and offering these benefits would develop a positive image of the County on the local college campuses.

Floater Program: Another component that can either supplement an employee's development plan or provide the primary means of development is the use of the Floater Program which was previously approved by the Board on July 6, 1999 (Agenda No. 3.21) to provide apprenticeships or on-the-job experience in the employee's new chosen field. These opportunities would be developed in conjunction with the departments in need of a particular degree or skill, and would not be limited to positions that require a degree. One way that the County previously used the Floater Program was in the implementation of our Tech Academy, which resulted in the successful transition of a number of employees into technical Information Services positions throughout the County. As previously established, the Floater Program is limited to six months. This expansion of the program would provide that the employee could remain in the program for up to twelve months if a development plan has been created with Human Resources, and approved by the hiring department. In the past, the Floater Program was available upon request; with the Educational Support Program, it will be used more proactively as a development tool.

Retraining Program: From time to time the County also has employees who become disabled or whose jobs are phased out, and who require retraining in order to return to gainful employment. This program can also interface with our Return-to-Work Program to facilitate the retraining or re-educational process at no expense to the employee. The County's existing textbook and tuition policy covers only a portion of the cost of training and education, and is limited to training related to the employee's current job. As such, it does not provide the needed incentive for employees to retrain and return to the workforce. The proposed Educational Support Program eliminates this barrier, and can be utilized for this purpose.

#### Targeted Career Development

Finally, there is also an ongoing need to improve and update the skills of the current workforce. In a recent article, "Education and Productivity of the Workforce: Looking Ahead," the Brookings Institute notes that concern for education goes beyond a focus on a scientific elite, and extends to the entire workforce:

"Particularly important are the ability to understand directions (even when the manuals are poorly written), to ask questions, to assimilate and synthesize unfamiliar information, and to identify and solve problems that occur during the normal working day; in short, literacy and problem-solving skills in specific contexts."

Courses in business writing, systems thinking, computer skills, problem-solving and analysis, and Spanish language skills, among others, contribute to a more effective workforce, and should also be made available to enhance our current workers' skills. These topics, and other identified topics, will be available through the Career Development Division of the Human Resources Department, and payable through the departments' budgets.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION & STAFFING

To successfully roll out this program, a new central fund is proposed to be established. The Human Resources Department recommends that initial funding be provided for the remainder of this fiscal year in the amount of \$300,000. The program will be blended with the activities of Human Resources' Talent Optimization Ombudsperson that was established earlier this year, but three additional positions within the Human Resources Department (a Career Counselor, an Accountant I, and a Human Resources Technician II) will be required to operate the Educational Support Program. Additional funding for FY 2006-07 will then be presented as an Executive Office recommendation through the budget process. The staff will also actively seek additional funding sources such as grants that might be available. We have also gained the support of one of our largest unions, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which has agreed to partner with us through utilization of its training funds for employee education programs that apply to certain job classifications represented by SEIU.

For reimbursement of textbooks and tuition to be tax-free to the employee, it must be provided through an educational assistance program under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 127, as a fringe benefit under IRC Section 132(d), or as a scholarship or grant under IRC Section 117. A Section 127 program requires a formal plan document, and is limited to \$5,250 in tax-free benefits annually per employee. Further, this type of program cannot require a contract that obligates an employee to future service (Revenue Ruling 76-230), or benefit the employer in other ways (Kreis, 441F2d 257, 1971). Human Resources will return to the Board with such a formal plan document upon determination of which of the alternatives are best suited for this type of program. As mentioned earlier, fringe benefits under IRC Section 132(d) must be related to improving skills in the employee's existing job, so determination of tax-free reimbursement of textbook and tuition expenses will require a case-by-case review of the courses' relationship to the individual's current job. However, the majority of the benefits paid under this program are intended to prepare employees for a different position or career from their current one, so such benefits must be taxable income to the employee. Implementation of the centralized program will allow for evaluation of the tax status of each type of educational support.

## SUMMARY

Your Board is familiar with the contributing factors in attracting and retaining qualified workers: Baby boomers are aging, the number of high school dropouts is high and technological innovations require constant upgrading of skills. Success in maintaining a productive workforce will depend largely on our ability to sponsor educational programs that inspire employees to be high performers, and attract and reward those who have attained higher education goals.

We plan to gain the support of nearby colleges and universities who will accommodate our need to teach courses on site, on-line or at local satellite learning centers. Staff will also actively seek other strategic partners and funding sources for the program.

We need the support of your Board in establishing the Educational Support Program to coincide with the goals of our Workforce Plan to attract, educate, and retain employees. Most of the components of this program have previously been introduced either at the County of Riverside or at other forward-thinking employers as recruiting and retention tools. To maintain our goal of being a great place to work, we need to invest in the education of our employees in a strategic manner. As an example, if just twenty new nurses are obtained through this program, the County will save at least \$457,600 each year over the registry costs for twenty nurses.

The financial impact of these programs may exceed \$1 million annually but, anticipating participation from 7-20% of the available employee pool, this equates to an investment of only \$327 to \$933 annually per participating employee. Bearing in mind that departments are currently appropriating over \$5 million annually, but spending about 70% (\$3.5 million), a budget of this amount would not necessarily require new funding, but simply a reallocation of existing unspent funding. While it is impossible to predict exact numbers of employees entering the programs, we anticipate a strong response. Some portion of these expenditures may be assignable to Departmental funding sources, reducing County General Fund costs.

We believe that such expenditures and advanced planning are necessary if we are to maintain an adequate workforce to meet future needs. By developing the Educational Support Program, the County also provides incentives in a cost-effective way. Such incentives are not part of the roll-up costs of base salaries, resulting in significant savings to the County in contrast to salary increases. We will return to the Board with a report on the program's status by January of 2007.



**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

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**Policy:****A. Through the Departments**

It shall be the policy of the Board of Supervisors that an employee may be reimbursed the actual cost of tuition or registration fees upon successful completion of a course offered by an institution of higher learning, training facility, or following attendance of a workshop, seminar or institute, providing that such training is designed to improve the employee's effectiveness in performing his or her currently-assigned duties.

Subject to the availability of funds, reimbursement for such training may be authorized as follows:

Sec. 1.        By the Department Head

- A. When the tuition or registration fee is \$500.00 or less.
- B. When the cost of training, in any amount, is reimbursed from funds administered by State or Federal agencies.

Sec. 2.        By the Human Resources Department and Chief Executive Office

- A. When the tuition or registration fee is more than \$500.00 (for all training except training referred to in Sec. 1.(B) above).
- B. Such approval shall be obtained prior to the commencement of the training.

**B. Through the Educational Support Program**

In addition to reimbursement for training required in an employee's current position, support for education will be provided through the County's Educational Support Program, as described herein:

Sec. 1        PURPOSE: To encourage and facilitate career development through a program whereby employees of the County are:

- A. Reimbursed for the costs of textbooks, tuition, registration, and laboratory fees for courses required to obtain an undergraduate or graduate degree, or a license or certification in an approved career development plan;
- B. Provided with a reduced work schedule while continuing to be paid as a full-time employee, to allow time to complete training or educational requirements for a degree or certification within an approved career development plan; or

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- C. Provided with alternative support to achieve educational and training goals within an approved development plan.
- D. Provided with educational loan repayment assistance as a hiring or retention incentive under Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code.

Sec. 2      ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES: Regular full-time employees and part-time employees (on a pro rata basis) who have completed their initial probationary period, or have been hired for a position designated by the Human Resources Director as difficult to recruit and retain, are eligible to participate in this program.

Sec. 3      PROGRAM ENTRY & PARTICIPATION: For the Educational Loan Repayment Program, employees will complete an application along with documentation of their loan. For all programs that provide support while the employee completes coursework, the following procedures apply:

- A. Employees who wish to receive support or participate in the program will complete applications and may be evaluated to determine aptitudes and personal value orientations related to the chosen field.
- B. Where appropriate, participants in the Educational Support Program will be interviewed and receive a Career Development Guide outlining the jobs to which they are most suited, availability of such jobs within the County organization, and requirements for job eligibility.
- C. A counselor will assess which jobs would be the best fit for the employee and counsel him/her how to achieve education, training, or experiential requirements for specific jobs. This plan will then be formalized in a proposed personal Career Development Plan.
- D. The sponsoring department(s) and the Human Resources Department will review the applicants and their proposed plan for suitability prior to admittance to the program. Only those judged likely to succeed will be admitted, and placement will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
- E. Participating employees will be responsible for attending periodic counseling sessions, approximately every ninety days, to monitor progress in meeting the goals of their personal Career Development Plan.

Sec. 4      COURSES ELIGIBLE: The following criteria will be used in determining eligibility for reimbursement:

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- A. Undergraduate and graduate coursework is eligible for reimbursement only if courses are required to obtain a degree, license, certificate or other qualification approved through the Educational Support Program.
- B. Courses must be satisfactorily completed. A grade of "C" or its equivalent is required for reimbursement.
- C. Courses must be offered by an accredited educational institution that has been approved by the Human Resources Director.
- D. Review courses may be eligible if approved by the Human Resources Director.

Sec. 5      **COURSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT:**

- A. Those which are not required by an approved Career Development Plan.
- B. Those which duplicate training the employee has already received.
- C. Those which are not offered through an accredited educational institution that has been approved by the Human Resources Director.

Sec. 6      **TUITION & TEXTBOOK REIMBURSEMENT:**

- A. Tuition & Textbook Reimbursement – The County will provide for one hundred percent (100%) reimbursement of tuition for job-related, or approved career-related courses, up to an annual maximum equal to the annual fees published by the University of California - Riverside for their degree coursework for each academic year, in accordance with the provisions of this program. Required textbooks and laboratory fees will also be reimbursed at cost.
- B. Advanced Reimbursement – Reimbursement may be made to employees prior to the beginning of the coursework. New employees, however, will not be reimbursed in advance until they have completed their initial probationary period of employment with the County. If the course is not satisfactorily completed, the employee will reimburse the County immediately for all monies received. If an employee terminates prior to completion of the course, the monies must be reimbursed to the County immediately. Unpaid amounts will accrue interest at the legal rate as determined by the Human Resources Director until paid.

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Sec. 7      20-20 WORK-SCHOOL PROGRAM

- A. Basic Structure of 20-20 Program – This program consists of an agreement that the County will provide paid release time for up to three years while the employee attends school full-time and continues working at the County for 20 hours per week. In exchange, the employee signs an agreement to continue working at the County on a year-for-year basis after completion of their degree or certification. The rules regarding eligibility, program entry, and eligible coursework apply to this program as well.
- B. Department Commitment – The department where the employee is currently working will be reimbursed from the Educational Support Program Fund for the paid release time provided to the employee. The department will be able to use companion positions or temporary employees through TAP to fill behind those in the 20-20 program.

Sec. 8      OTHER FAST-TRACK EDUCATION OPTIONS

Other fast-track programs in partnership with accredited colleges, including focused programs held on-site at the County's facilities, will be developed within the Educational Support Program where possible. Participation in one of these programs may involve a 20-20 schedule, payment of tuition and books, or another combination of monetary support and schedule accommodation, as determined by the Human Resources Director with the school and sponsoring departments.

Sec. 9      COSTS NOT COVERED: In terms of both time and money, the following costs are not covered by this program:

- A. Courses are generally taken on the employee's own time, on compensatory time, vacation time, or annual leave approved in advance by the department/agency head. Department heads are encouraged to adjust schedules whenever possible to allow employees to attend classes during regular work hours when necessary, including flextime hours. The 20-20 program and certain fast-track programs are exceptions to this general rule.
- B. Neither transportation nor mileage reimbursement are provided for by this program.
- C. Parking fees, meals, and other costs not specifically covered in this program will not be paid by the County.

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- D. Costs for which reimbursement is received from other sources are not reimbursable from the County.
- E. Conventions, seminars, workshops and conferences, not qualifying as a required degree related course, are not covered by this reimbursement program.

Sec.10      EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION:      The Human Resources Director will implement and administer this program, and will have the authority to administratively interpret its provisions. Approval of the Human Resources Department and preparation of an approved Career Development Plan are required conditions for reimbursement. Applications for reimbursement should be received by the Human Resources Director prior to the first class session. An official record of grades and receipts must be received by the Human Resources Director within ninety (90) days after the last class session. New employees will not be reimbursed until they have completed thirteen (13) biweeks of County employment. The Human Resources Director may develop such forms and additional procedures which are deemed necessary to accomplish the intent of this Educational Support program. Any or all sections of this program may be amended or discontinued at any time.

Sec. 11      MANAGEMENT/EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS:      In an effort to reasonably accommodate management and the participating employees, the following conditions will apply:

- A. The employee is responsible for performing current job assignments in addition to participating in the program.
- B. The employee must select the most cost effective educational program which will be approved by County Human Resources prior to enrollment.
- C. The Department/Agency will determine reasonable flextime hours and course loads to meet both the Department/Agency and employee needs. Employees may be permitted to change their regular work hours if this practice does not negatively impact the Department/Agency's ability to accomplish work objectives.
- D. Employees are required to remain in County service for a minimum of one year, or prorated portion thereof, in exchange for each year of support provided to them while studying for the approved degree, licensing, or certification. A minimum of one year of County service is required subsequent to the completion of the class or program that generated the

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expenditure, with the exception of the Work-Study Program and the Educational Loan Repayment Program.

- E. If an employee leaves County employment for any reason, except as set forth in Section 11G herein, before satisfying the requirements of Section 11D herein, s/he will reimburse the County for that prorated portion of the program expenditures that the employee did not exonerate through continued County employment.

The entire amount owed by the employee will be due and payable at the time s/he leaves County service. Any amount not paid at that time will accrue interest at the legal rate until paid in full, and will be subject to collection activity, including small claims court if necessary.

- F. If the employee does not complete the entire degree, licensing or certificate program, s/he will not be required to reimburse the County for any program expenditures so long as s/he remains in County service for the same length of time as required under Section 11D to satisfy the program obligations.
- G. Participants are not exempt from normal disciplinary action should work performance become unsatisfactory. Participants terminated for cause are required to reimburse program expenses upon termination on a prorated basis.
- H. If a reduction in force or permanent disability which prevents the employee from gainful employment occurs, resulting in the loss of County employment, or if death occurs, the participant is not obligated to reimburse program expenses.
- I. Participants who voluntarily terminate County employment are required to reimburse program expenses using one of the following options: (1) lump sum payment of balance due; or (2) monthly payments of balance due which include interest at the prevailing rate as determined by the Human Resources Director. The County will pursue collections, including filing a claim in Small Claims Court, if necessary, to recoup amounts owed.
- J. Upon completion of the required degree, license or certification, the Department/Agency Head(s) will coordinate with the Human Resources Department to establish eligibility for placement in available positions for which the employee now qualifies.

Sec. 12

**EDUCATIONAL LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM:** In addition to the methods of educational support provided above, the County will provide assistance to repay

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA**  
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student loans on a monthly basis.

- A. Hiring Incentive - The County will pay an amount equal to the monthly payment on a student loan as an incentive to join the County workforce, and the monthly nature of the payment would become a retention incentive as well.
- B. Retention Incentive – For current County employees with outstanding student loans, this benefit will be available as a retention incentive.
- C. Eligibility – This program would be limited to Nursing, Baccalaureate, and Master's degree graduates employed in a position that has been designated as difficult to recruit or retain. Approval by the hiring department and Human Resources is required.
- D. Maximum Benefit – The benefit is limited to \$5,250 per year, and will be established under Section 127 of the IRS Code, to ensure its non-taxability.

Reimbursement for travel expenses associated with employee training shall be authorized in accordance with Division 3 of the County's Code of Administrative Regulations.

**Reference:**

- Minute Order 3.13 dated 11-1-83
- Minute Order 3.21 dated 3-8-83
- Minute Order 3.16 dated 9-24-85

**EXHIBIT III**  
**County of Riverside**  
**Hard-to-Fill and Most Frequently Advertised Positions**

Accountants	IT Professionals
Animal Care Technicians	Land Usage Technicians
Animal Control Officers	Licensed Psychiatric Technician
Appraisers	Licensed Vocational Nurses
Attorneys	Maintenance Workers
Behavior Health Specialists	Medical Social Workers
Certified Nursing Assistant	Mental Health Service Managers
Civil Engineers	Microbiologists
Clinical Laboratory Assistant	Nuclear Medicine Technician
Clinical Laboratory Scientists	Nurse Practitioner
Clinical Therapists	Nutritionists
Communicable Disease Specialist	Occupational Therapists
Community Health Nurse	PA Investigators
Consumer Advocates	Paralegals
Correctional Cooks	Pharmacists
Correctional Deputies	Pharmacy Technicians
DA Investigators	Physical Therapists
Deputy Probation Officer	Physicians
Deputy Sheriff Trainee	Planner
Dieticians	Planning and Engineering Technicians
Eligibility Technicians	Psychiatrists
Employee Relations Representative	Public Health Nurse
Engineering Aide	Public Safety Communications Officer
Environmental Health Technician	Public Safety Officers
Equipment Operators	Radiologic Specialist
Family Advocates	Radiologic Technologist
Fire Safety Specialists	Registered Nurses
Fiscal Managers	Risk Management Supervisor
Forensic Pathologist	Sheriff Corrections Assistant Trainee
Group Counselors	Social Workers
Hazardous Material Technician	Speech Therapists
Environmental Health Education Assistant	Staff Development Managers
Environmental Health Inspectors	Surgical Technician
Healthcare Social Workers	Training Officers
Historic Preservation Officer	Veterinarian Technicians
House Supervisor	Veterinarians
Investigative Technicians	Welfare Fraud Investigators

**EXHIBIT II**

	<b>Fund-Dept ID-Acct.</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Human Resources</b>			
<b>Increase in Appropriation</b>	10000-113XX-00000-527840	Training-Education/Tuition	300,000
<b>Total</b>			<u><u>\$300,000</u></u>
<b>Increase in Estimated Revenue</b>	10000-113XX-00000-778200	Interfund Misc.	300,000
<b>Total</b>			<u><u>\$300,000</u></u>