


POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

 TEXAS OFFICE OF CONSUMER CREDIT COMMISSIONER	Policy # 500		
	Last Review Date: September 2015		
Original Effective Date: 2000 Amendment Effective Date: November 2015			
Section:	Human Resources	Subject:	Training Policy

Background

Chapter 656, Subchapter C of the Texas Government Code authorizes each agency to develop programs for training and educating its employees, and to pay for such programs from available agency funds. This policy formally implements that legislation.

Overall Policy and Objectives

The OCCC's policy is to ensure that adequate training is available to all employees, consistent with their role and the agency's needs and resources. The objective of this policy statement is to clarify and formalize existing guidelines governing training activities, and provide a framework for consistency of training among employees.

The OCCC provides classroom and on-the-job training to assist all employees in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill their role in achieving the OCCC's mission. Each employee is responsible for taking the initiative to pursue and learn from the training opportunities provided. The agency will select employees for training without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

The agency will offer training opportunities on an equitable basis, consistent with OCCC resources, and the following priorities:

- Developing and maintaining adequate employee knowledge and skills to meet the needs of each division;
- Enabling employees to perform their current duties and responsibilities in the most effective and efficient manner possible;
- Providing career development opportunity; and
- Preparing for future technology and development.

Implementation of Training

Employees and their supervisors have joint responsibility for identifying training needs and suitable course providers. The employee's supervisor must approve individual training requests to certify agreement with the allocation of resources.

When an employee identifies a course for attendance, the employee or the employee's supervisor should complete a purchase request form. The supervisor should review, approve, and forward the completed request form according to purchasing procedures.

The director for consumer protection will guide training for examiners. Examiner training begins immediately upon employment with the agency, and is supplemented on at least an annual basis, preferably in conjunction with other examiners.

Cross-training

Cross-training is essential to maximize the OCCC's limited training resources, and to ensure continuity and depth of experience within the agency. Employees sponsored by the OCCC to attend specialized seminars on topical issues (i.e., emerging industry trends, new regulations, etc.) must commit to brief their colleagues on the subject promptly after class attendance, and to pass along any valuable aids or materials provided in the training. Managers are responsible for ensuring that cross-training occurs, generally through formal presentations at a staff meeting.

Examiner Conferences

Consistent with resource availability, the OCCC's policy is to provide training focusing on examination issues through conferences held off-premises. The purpose of the conference is to deliver training in an efficient and consistent manner, as well as to provide a venue for communication and interaction among employees assigned to offices throughout the state. The curriculum and presentations will vary depending on the OCCC's needs and the issues affecting its mission in any particular year.

Costs of Training, Continuing Education, and Higher Education Courses

Training and Continuing Education Costs. The OCCC may pay for the cost of training and continuing education courses if: (1) the course is related to the duties or prospective duties of the employee, (2) the employee has a current satisfactory performance evaluation, and (3) the employee's supervisor approves of the proposed course before the employee registers for it. After finishing the training or continuing education, the employee must submit proof of successful completion to his or her supervisor.

Higher Education Tuition Reimbursement. The OCCC may reimburse an employee for the cost of tuition for a course offered by an accredited institution of higher education if: (1) the course is related to the duties or prospective duties of the employee, (2) the employee has a current satisfactory performance evaluation, (3) the employee affirms that he or she will continue to work for the agency for at least one year following completion of the course, (4) the commissioner approves the proposed reimbursement in writing before the employee registers for the course, and (5) the employee submits proof of successful completion of the course.

Speaking Engagements and Course Instruction

Except for activities surrounding the agency's educational or regulatory programs, participation as a panelist, speaker or instructor for external training providers is strictly voluntary. Although an instructor's direct expenses are generally borne by the entity sponsoring the program, the time devoted to instruction represents a commitment of OCCC's resources and must be approved and monitored.

Employees will not receive compensatory time for excess work hours associated with speaking engagements or course instruction outside the scope of his or her agency responsibilities. Employees acting as instructors should be aware that other training opportunities may therefore be limited. Instructor time is generally limited to one week per year. The commissioner must approve in advance requests to participate as an instructor, panelist, or speaker.

Course Materials

The OCCC provides and purchases course materials for employees attending training sponsored by the agency. Employees and supervisors should share course material among staff. Employees must return the materials to the OCCC when they leave its employment.