

Title: EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Resolution: 2026-0183, July 13, 2026

Revised:

Special Notes/Cross Reference:

Next Review Date:

POLICY STATEMENT : The Town of Westlock values their employees and believes in the development of our workforce to enhance employee engagement, commitment to the Town, and to ensure continued excellence of our organization.

PURPOSE : To establish a procedure to provide equitable resources for employee training and development to ensure that skill levels are appropriate and well-suited to the Town of Westlock's requirements.

1. Definitions

1.1. Allowable Expenses – paid and unpaid time off, tuition fees, textbooks, travel, and expenditures such as meals, transportation and accommodations.

1.2. CAO – the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town

1.3. Career Development – the lifelong process of managing and advancing ones career over time by acquiring new skills, knowledge and experiences.

1.4. Course – includes mandatory training, formal education, and courses of study to update and enhance skills/ knowledge necessary to make a continuing contribution to the work for the Town in current and future roles.

1.5. Direct Supervisor – the employee's immediate supervisor within the organizational structure who is responsible for overseeing their work, approving day-to-day activities, and providing direction, support, and performance management.

1.6. Eligible Employee – an employee of the Town of Westlock who occupies a permanent full-time or permanent part-time position and has successfully completed their probationary period, unless otherwise approved by the CAO. For the purposes of mandatory training requirements, this definition also includes casual employees who are required by the Town to complete specific training related to their position or duties.

1.7. Formal Education – coursework or study toward a degree, certificate or diploma from a recognized post-secondary institution.

1.8. Professional Development – the continuous process of developing career related skills, abilities and knowledge through activities such as coaching, mentoring, conferences, job shadowing in formal or informal settings.

1.9. Professional Development Request Form – all training, development and conference requests must start with this form.

1.10.Regular Hours of Work and Earnings – as defined in the applicable Union

agreement, Non-Union Human Resource Policy, or other applicable employment agreements.

1.11.Training – How a person obtains specific knowledge or skills, which can include job-shadowing, cross-training, on the job learning, on-line learning, self-directed learning.

2. Overview

2.1. The Town of Westlock is committed to supporting initial, refresher, promotional and remedial training for all learning styles, and exposing employees to as many facets of our business as possible through cross-training and temporary opportunities in other roles or departments.

2.2. The CAO and Direct Supervisors will, through annual planning and consultation with staff, identify staff training and development needs as clearly and realistically as possible, based on agreed-upon objectives. Funding is subject to budget availability and will generally be limited to one Course and one conference per Eligible Employee annually.

2.3. Employees are personally responsible for initiating participation in training and development programs. Eligible Employees will be encouraged to attend a chosen course which has been approved by their Direct Supervisor and/or the CAO.

2.4. The Town's Career Development program may include, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Coaching
- b) Educational Assistance
- c) Job shadowing and cross-training
- d) Job sharing
- e) Mentoring
- f) Professional Development
- g) Refresher or remedial training
- h) Safety training
- i) Temporary opportunities
- j) Soft skills development training
- k) Team training
- l) Technical skills development training

2.5. The Town wishes to support Career Development by:

- a) Providing resources to employees.
- b) Providing infrastructure in terms of the human and financial resources, business processes and technology that support career management.
- c) Providing information about staffing needs and relevant skill gaps.
- d) Promoting an environment in which employees and managers are recognized for their efforts for development; and
- e) Facilitating cross-training opportunities across departments.

2.6. Direct Supervisors will be expected to act as a coach, creating and fostering an environment that facilitates and enhances the skills training and Career Development of employees by:

- a) Managing development and succession planning based on the goals and direction for the department.

- b) Providing employees with timely and objective performance feedback and assessing potential.
- c) Having regular Career Development discussions with employees.
- d) Actively supporting employees to set clear goals, personal objectives, and career strategies.
- e) Collaborating with employees to determine opportunities for training and development.
- f) Advising employees about potential job opportunities within the organization.
- g) Recognizing and rewarding achievements in training and development.
- h) Providing job-specific training as required; and
- i) Reviewing and approving requests for training and development.

2.7. Eligible Employees are encouraged to take individual responsibility for their Career Development by:

- a) Demonstrating the Town's values.
- b) Assessing interests, skills, values, career goals, and aspirations.
- c) Understanding their own strengths and capabilities.
- d) Identifying development needs and how to close the gaps.
- e) Seeking out career information resources and development opportunities; and
- f) Applying for and requesting training and development as needed.

3. Procedure

- 3.1.** All employee training and development activities must meet specific program standards, before being selected by management based on identified organizational and individual needs. Direct Supervisors will ask employees to submit a request to participate in training and development programs.
- 3.2.** Upon completion of an approved Course, program or external assignment, the employee must provide their Direct Supervisor with proof of completion, such as certificates, records of attendance or other relevant documentation.
- 3.3.** Eligible Employees may be required to complete a training or course evaluation following participation in an approved learning opportunity. Documentation and evaluations will be retained on the employee's personnel file for future reference.
- 3.4.** An employee who fails to complete and/or attain a passing grade in a course that has been funded by the Town will be granted 12 months to complete the course at their own expense. If the employee fails to successfully complete the course at that time, they will be required to refund the total cost of tuition via payroll deduction.

4. Criteria for Approval

- 4.1.** Approval for participation in any Professional Development or Course must first be obtained from the Eligible Employee's Direct Supervisor. Approval will be based on the employee's job description, performance, career planning activities, and budgetary availability.

5. Application

- 5.1.** All Eligible Employees who are applying for or are requested to participate in a Course, conference or Formal Education program will complete the Professional Development Request Form with their Direct Supervisor.

- a) Courses, conferences or Formal Education where funding is provided by the Town, or where time off from the workplace is required, will complete the Professional Development Request Form.
- b) A Professional Development Request Form is not required for an Eligible Employee to attend workshops or webinars, unless funding travel, or time away from regular duties is required.
- c) Approval for participation must be obtained prior registering for the Course, conference or Formal Education program.
- d) Request for tuition funding must be submitted and approved prior to commencement of the course.
- e) The Town shall pay the cost of tuition and materials of the Course(s), conferences or Formal Education approved by the Employer. In addition, where an Employee is required by the Town to attend a course, the Employee shall suffer no loss of regular earnings and shall be reimbursed for allowable expenses in accordance with Town Policy.
- f) Travel time to and from the Course, conference or Formal Education will not be considered regular earnings when it occurs outside of the employees regular work hours. This applies to both union and non-union personnel.
- g) When an Eligible Employees is required to travel to attend an approved Course, conference or Formal Education, the employee is entitled to reimbursement of eligible mileage, meal, accommodation and related expenses in accordance with the Town's Travel, Hospitality & Expense Reimbursement Policy. Additional reimbursement arrangements may be considered based on the duration of travel and associated costs incurred. Attendance at a Course, conference or Formal Education on a weekend, or regular scheduled day off will not be reimbursed as earnings for the Non-Union Personnel, unless the training is mandatory, directly related to the Employee's position, and approved by the Employer.
 - a. Where the employees' regular hours of work are within the Monday to Friday; then the weekend shall mean Saturday and Sunday. If the employee works a shift that is Monday through Sunday, then those scheduled days off from work will be considered the weekend.
 - b. When an Eligible Employee is required to attend training on a day that is a regularly scheduled day off, and the training is related to the position, then that employee shall be paid as per the working conditions listed in CUPE 3047 Collective Agreement and the Non-Union Human Resources Policy. Examples are equipment operations/maintenance; OH&S; procedures; software.
- h) The Eligible Employee shall not be entitled to earnings for attendance at a conference on a non-workday, or for attendance that is outside of regular work hours. (evenings)
- i) Eligible Employees shall not be entitled to earnings for Courses, conferences, workshops or training that are not mandatory or have not been approved by the Employer.

6. Return Service Agreement

- 6.1. Eligible Employees approved to receive financial assistance from the Town of Westlock for professional development activities shall be required to complete and sign a Return of Service Agreement annually when the total value of Town-funded tuition, course fees, materials, travel, accommodations, or other eligible expenses exceeds \$2,500.00 in a calendar year.
- 6.2. Approval for multi-year programs, certifications, diplomas, or degree programs is granted on a year-by-year basis and is subject to annual review, budget availability, and

operational requirements. Eligible Employees must obtain approval for each year of the program through the Professional Development Request process. A separate Return of Service Agreement shall be completed annually when the employee's approved professional development expenses exceed the annual threshold.

- 6.3.** If the Eligible Employee terminates their employment within three years of completing the training or education, the employee shall reimburse the Town the expenses relating to the training or education. The amount to be refunded shall be calculated over three years on a prorated basis. The employee authorizes the Town to deduct such expenses from any amount payable to the employee by the Town of Westlock
- a) If the Eligible Employee leaves employment before one (1) year from the date of course completion, the employee shall reimburse 100% of the eligible expenses paid by the Town of Westlock.
 - b) If the Eligible Employee leaves employment after one (1) year, and before two (2) years from the date of course completion, the employee shall reimburse two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the eligible expenses paid by the Town of Westlock.
 - c) If the Eligible Employee leaves employment after two (2) years, and before three (3) years from the date of course completion, The employee shall reimburse one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the eligible expenses paid by the Town of Westlock
 - d) No reimbursement is required if the Eligible Employee leaves employment after three (3) years.



Jon Kramer, Mayor

Simone Wiley, CAO

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUEST FORM

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Employee Name: _____

Position / Department: _____

Supervisor / Manager: _____

Date of Request: _____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

Course / Training / Conference Name:

Provider / Organization: _____

Delivery Method

☐	In-person	☐	Online	☐	Hybrid
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Dates: _____

Location (if applicable): _____

COST BREAKDOWN

Expense Type	Estimated Cost
Registration / Tuition	\$
Travel	\$
Accommodation	\$
Meals / Per Diems	\$
Materials	\$
Total Estimated Cost	\$

TIME COMMITMENT

Work Time Required:

- ☐ During regular work hours
- ☐ Outside regular work hours
- ☐ Combination

Number of Work Hours Requested: _____

BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION

Please describe how this professional development supports:

- Your current role and responsibilities
- Departmental or organizational goals
- Skill development, service delivery, or succession planning

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Please describe what knowledge, skills, or certifications will be gained and how they will be applied in the workplace.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

If approved, how will you share the learning with the organization?

- ☐ Summary report
- ☐ Team presentation
- ☐ Informal knowledge sharing
- ☐ Other: _____

RETURN OF SERVICE AGREEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that approval of this professional development request is subject to the following Return of Service (ROS) conditions:

- If the total Town-funded cost of professional development exceeds **\$2,500 in a calendar year**, the employee is required to complete a Return of Service Agreement and remain employed with the Town for **three (3) years** following completion of the training or education.
 - If the employee leaves employment before completing the three-year Return of Service period, the employee will be required to repay the Town as follows:
 - **Before one year from completion:** 100% of eligible expenses paid by the Town
 - **After one year but before two years:** two-thirds of eligible expenses paid by the Town
 - **After two years but before three years:** one-third of eligible expenses paid by the Town
 - **After three years:** no repayment is required
 - The employee authorizes the Town of Westlock to deduct any amount owing under this agreement from amounts payable to the employee, subject to applicable legislation.
 - Repayment terms and eligible expenses will be confirmed in writing at the time of approval.
- ☐ I understand and agree to the Return of Service terms outlined above.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

SUPERVISOR / MANAGER REVIEW

Recommendation:

☐	Approve	☐	Approve with Conditions	☐	Decline
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Comments:

APPROVAL

Approved Funding Amount: \$ _____

Approved Return of Service Period: _____ months

Approving Authority:

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

JK JW