Tuition Remission for Administrators, Staff and Qualifying Retirees

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**Scope**
Full-time administrators and staff members whose employment began prior to June 1, 2010 or who have an Adjusted Service Date prior to June 1, 2010 are eligible for this benefit. No courses or degree programs in the School of Law are covered by tuition remission benefits. For tuition remission benefits for spouse/children, see policy #608-B, Tuition Remission for Spouse/Children of Administrators and Staff.

**Definitions**
For the purpose of this policy, the following terms are defined:

**Employee**: Full-time administrator or staff member whose employment began prior to June 1, 2010 or who has an Adjusted Service Date prior to June 1, 2010.

**Qualifying Retiree**: A St. John’s University employee who, upon retirement from the University, met all of the following eligibility criteria: Employee was at least 55 years of age; and employee had at least 10 years of full-time service with St. John’s; and employee’s age and years of full-time service combined equaled 75 years or more.

**Policy**
The following benefits are provided in accordance with the guidelines and conditions of this policy:

**Benefits for employees**: Full-time administrators and staff may pursue one Associate’s and one Baccalaureate degree provided they do not already possess a degree at this level or higher financed by St. John’s University employee tuition remission benefits. Full-time administrators and staff may pursue one Master’s degree, one Professional Diploma/Advanced Professional Certificate/first professional degree, and one Doctoral degree provided they do not already possess a degree at this level financed by St. John’s University employee tuition remission benefits.

**Benefits for qualifying retirees**: Employees who meet the University’s criteria for retirement may pursue one undergraduate degree (Associate or Baccalaureate) and one graduate degree (Master’s, Professional Diploma/Advanced Professional Certificate/first professional degree, or Doctorate) according to the guidelines and conditions of this policy. A qualifying retiree who, during his/her period of active employment, had already received benefits at every degree level offered by the St. John’s tuition remission policy would be considered “maxed out” and not eligible for any additional tuition benefits during retirement.
Undergraduate Degree Conditions:
1. An employee/qualifying retiree may pursue an undergraduate degree provided he or she does not already possess a degree at this level or higher financed by St. John’s University employee tuition remission benefits. An employee/qualifying retiree with an undergraduate degree from another institution may pursue an undergraduate degree financed by St. John’s tuition remission benefits.

Graduate Degree Conditions:
1. An employee/qualifying retiree may pursue a graduate degree provided he or she has not already achieved a degree at this level financed by St. John’s University tuition remission benefits. An employee/qualifying retiree with a graduate degree from another institution may pursue a graduate degree financed by St. John’s tuition remission benefits.
2. Tuition remission benefits begin at the time the employee begins employment at St. John’s. If the employee begins employment during a semester in which he/she is already enrolled in class, the benefits will be pro-rated accordingly.
3. Current tax regulations allow for up to $5,250 of tax-free graduate level educational assistance. The University’s IRC section 127 plan, which is integrated with the tuition remission program, provides employees/qualifying retirees with tax-free tuition up to a $5,250 value. This benefit is offered to all full-time employees hired prior to June 1, 2010 and qualifying retirees. Some employees may be able to deduct the amount in excess of $5,250 on their tax return if the degree qualifies under Reg. 1.162-5. All graduate tuition greater than $5,250 is taxable and will be included in the employee’s income subject to Fica/Medicare withholding and applicable federal and state taxes.

Recipients of Tuition Remission Benefits Must Observe the Following Guidelines and Procedures:
A. An employee/qualifying retiree must submit all required test scores and official transcripts and be admitted to the program of study by the Dean of Admissions of the University for the applicable campus. Students admitted in the College Admissions Program (CAP) will receive benefits for this remedial program one-time only.
B. An employee/qualifying retiree must be matriculated in an undergraduate or graduate program to receive tuition benefits. Student taking courses without pursuing a degree will not receive benefits. See “I” for any exceptions to the above, including professional development coursework.
C. Each year, an employee accepted into a program must request tuition remission benefits online via the University’s website. An employee may receive tuition benefits for up to ten (10) undergraduate credits or six (6) graduate credits each fall and spring semester and six (6) undergraduate or graduate credits each summer session. An employee may receive tuition benefits for three (3) credits in the mini-session. The employee is responsible for all fees and books. All international locations of St. John’s University shall follow the semester credit limits as they apply to the Queens, NY campus. (For example, although the semester schedule in Rome includes two fall sessions and two spring sessions, employees shall not be permitted to exceed the credit maximums set in Queens for fall and spring.)
D. Tuition remission benefits will **not cover**: a) auditing courses; b) off-campus portion of a student’s degree (e.g.: engineering, medical, or non-St. John’s study abroad). Tuition remission for St. John’s study abroad courses offered through the Office of Global Studies are covered on the same basis as domestic programs. The University reserves the right to limit the number of tuition remission recipients who may participate in any given study abroad course or program.

E. **Academic standing/Program pursuit** – All recipients of tuition remission benefits must maintain satisfactory academic standing and make proper program pursuit toward their degrees. Continual withdrawals, failures, or poor grades will be monitored and can jeopardize tuition benefits. The Academic Progress Requirements brochure details the progress standards required of students. It is provided to all students and is also available from the Office of Financial Aid.

F. **Benefits in Retirement** – To request tuition remission benefits in retirement, the eligible retiree must submit a written request for benefits to the Office of Financial Aid. For the University’s definition of a qualifying retiree, refer to the Definitions section of this policy. (For more on retirement, see policy #620, Benefits for Retired Employees.)

G. **Termination** – Tuition benefits for employees cease when employment is terminated. The amount of tuition will be prorated for the semester.

H. An **employee** is entitled to tuition benefits for a post-baccalaureate program for which a Master’s degree is not offered at St. John’s (i.e. Certificate Program). He/she must request tuition remission benefits via the University’s website. There are no tuition benefits for Certificate Programs that do not require the possession of a Baccalaureate degree.

I. **Professional Development for Employees**: An employee may take up to three (3) credits per semester for professional development as a non-matriculated student. While there is no overall credit limit applied to professional development coursework, employees may not exceed the 12 credit prerequisite limit applicable to special/non-matriculated students. That is, an employee may not take any more than 12 credits toward a degree without matriculating in the degree program. The following restrictions also apply: the coursework must be approved by the employee’s supervisor; it must be related to the employee’s current position or career path at the University; and the employee must meet the pre-requisites and registration requirements of the school that the course is in.

J. An **employee** may take classes only before or after scheduled University office hours (generally, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or before or after the employee’s work hours, if different from the University’s office hours, as arranged with the supervisor.