



Policy Title: Educational Leave

Policy Purpose: Educational Leave is an employer-approved leave of absence to undertake educational studies for employee training and development.

Scope of Policy

This policy is designed to cover all United Church Halfway Homes (UCHH) employees, including unionized and non-unionized. In the case of variance between this policy and the terms of the Collective Agreement governing unionized employees, this policy will be harmonized with the Collective Agreement.

Educational Leave falls into these categories

1. UCHH Mandated Training: Unionized and non-unionized employees

- 1.1.** Mandatory training is that which is required of an employee because of UCHH policy, for example 1st Aid. Generally the training consists of non-credit courses of a short duration. The list of Mandatory Training will be established by the Executive Director and reported to the Board periodically.
- 1.2.** UCHH is committed to all employees having up to date certification for all mandatory training, and every employee must have certification by the end of their first year of employment. Failure to achieve certification could result in termination. Supervisors will make a determination regarding the appropriateness of providing employees on probation (6 months) with mandatory training, giving consideration to factors such as the availability of the training and the staff role.
- 1.3.** UCHH covers the cost of tuition and any extra ordinary costs of the training which would not normally be incurred in a regular work day. Mandatory training may be prepaid by UCHH or the employee, who will be reimbursed. All employees are entitled to a fully paid leave of absence to attend mandatory training. All benefits normally due the employee, such as sick leave, continue to accrue during this type of leave.
- 1.4.** Employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend mandatory training, particularly when the training is prepaid. Employees are responsible for being aware of the training provider's policies regarding cancellation and refund and withdraw from the training before fees are non-refundable *whenever possible*. When withdrawing from training, the employee should notify their supervisor immediately. If an employee does not attend training as scheduled, it could be an issue for disciplinary action.
- 1.5.** The requirement to attend mandatory training during the year will not prejudice the decision to allow an employee to attend other types of Educational Leave in that same year.

2. Staff Initiated Training: Unionized and non-unionized employees

- 2.1.** It benefits UCHH to equip employees with skills and knowledge to perform well, so education and training beyond that which is mandatory is encouraged.

UCHH is committed to supporting employees to attend non-credit and certification courses of short term duration which are assessed to be directly related to the employee's work or the overall needs of the organization, for example, workshops on mental health issues or seminars on effective workplace. UCHH may also consider providing support for a College or University credit course which is attended on a semester basis (a few hours a week for a term) or taken on line, but only if the course meets the qualifying criteria detailed here.

Assessing the appropriateness of a course is the responsibility of the Supervisor, in consultation with the Executive Director (or in the case of the Executive Director, the Board Chair), taking into consideration the learning needs of the employee, the quality of the course and the timeliness of course. Normally, areas for knowledge and skill enhancement for the employee will be identified during the Annual Review process which will assist in this assessment. Assessment will also consider UCHH needs and program delivery, present or anticipated human resource needs, and the over all objectives and priorities of the organization.

2.2. Unionized Employees and Casual Employees

- 2.2.1. After the successful conclusion of the probationary period, employees may make an application for financial support for training courses.
- 2.2.2. Normally, UCHH support would be a percentage of the tuition, but in some cases, for example where the course is paid for through another agency, a paid leave of absence may be provided instead.
- 2.2.3. Written application for the course must be made in advance and approved by the Supervisor in advance. On the form provided, the employee will describe the course, explain how the course will enhance skills and knowledge for the work and propose a cost sharing arrangement.
- 2.2.4. UCHH may contribute up to a maximum of \$300 per employee per year. Each application will be judged on its own merit and is subject to the availability of funds. When funds are limited, preference will be given to unionized employees.
- 2.2.5. Employees are expected to pay for the course and will be reimbursed in a timely manner after the employee has provided proof of having successfully completed the course.

- 2.2.6. Unless deemed otherwise by the Supervisor, this type of leave is considered unpaid leave. An employee will not be compensated for overtime in a staff initiated Educational Leave.

2.3 House Managers and Executive Director

- 2.3.1 After the successful conclusion of the probationary period, employees may make an application for financial support for training courses.
- 2.3.2 UCHH may support a percentage or all of the tuition and/or a paid leave of absence. Full assistance may be granted when the training is considered essential to improving a core work function and the absence will not cause undue hardship on staffing needs.
- 2.3.3 Written application for the course must be made in advance and approved by the Supervisor in advance. On the form provided, the employee will describe the course, explain how the course will enhance skills and knowledge for the work and propose a cost sharing and paid/unpaid leave arrangement.
- 2.3.4 UCHH may contribute up to a maximum of \$600 per employee per year. Each application will be judged on its own merit and is subject to the availability of funds.
- 2.3.5 Employees are expected to pay for the course and will be reimbursed in a timely manner after the employee has provided proof of having successfully completed the course.

3. Staff Initiated Long Term Educational Leave: House Managers and Executive Director

- 3.1 A Long Term Educational Leave is an unpaid leave of absence, normally of a period from 3 months up to a maximum of 12 months. Proposals for a part time leave will be considered.
- 3.2 The employee must indicate in writing their intention to return to their position at the conclusion of the leave and UCHH commits to holding the job for the employee's return. During the leave, the employee remains subject to any layoff legitimately required by the organization and the consequences of the layoff would take precedence. Normally, the employee would be expected to return to work for a period at least as long as the leave.
- 3.3 Application for this type of leave must be made at least 3 months prior to the beginning of the leave. In the written application, the employee must demonstrate how the course of study will directly benefit the organization and the work that the employee does. The employee must provide details on the costs of the program and propose a cost sharing arrangement. The course of study must have a structured accountability and be of a significant enough magnitude to warrant the leave. If the employee discontinues the program of study, the remainder of the Leave will be forfeited and any unused financial support must be returned.
- 3.4 UCHH may contribute to the tuition and associated ancillary costs of the program of study at the discretion of the Board within the available budget.

- 3.5** During the period of a *full time* Long Term Educational Leave, the employee will not accrue sick leave or annual leave credits, and is not eligible for sick leave. The employer will not make any contributions to EI and CPP. The employee will not be compensated for stat holidays nor be credited with any overtime. Access to the Health Spending Account will be suspended. In the case of a part time Long Term Educational Leave, the exclusion of benefits would be adapted appropriately. Other allowed leave (such as annual leave or maternity leave) may be taken in conjunction with the leave, but the combination of unpaid Long Term Educational Leave and other leave may not exceed 12 months.
- 3.6** Approval for the Leave and the financial commitment will be made by the Board of Directors.

Approved June 7, 2017, amended September 21, 2017.