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| **Laboratory Education Reimbursement and Travel Policy** |
| **Purpose** | It is the policy of Children’s Minnesota Laboratory to encourage and assist employees to increase their skills and knowledge through education that will contribute to maintenance of competency and improvement of job performance and/or potential advancement. This policy provides a standard process for approving conference attendance and funding guidelines. Any workshop, seminar, conference requested by laboratory staff for funding must be applicable to Children’s Minnesota and/or Laboratory Department goals, objective or practice of laboratory before it is approved as company business time and/or for company travel. Approval is contingent upon staffing levels and available funds for reimbursement. |
| **Policy** | 1. General Policies
	1. All employees are strongly encouraged to participate in the CHC Grand Round conferences, webinars and other free or cost-effective methods of continuing education.
	2. Decisions to approve a request for education reimbursement are based on available education funds and reside with the manager and the Senior Director Radiology/Lab.
	3. Managers, supervisors, leads, education coordinator and technical specialists should be supportive of staff attendance at educational programs. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, circulating education programs brochures and announcements, identifying and recommending education programs and opportunities and support bench coverage when appropriate.
	4. Laboratory staff approved for funding may be asked to provide an update to peers and/or laboratory leadership on a topic from the meeting.
	5. This policy covers educational programs that occur within the continental United States. Attendance at international meetings requires approval from the Senior Director Radiology/Lab.
2. Eligibility
	1. All laboratory employees are eligible to receive education reimbursement each year. Temporary and casual staff are not eligible for education reimbursement.
	2. Eligibility for the education reimbursement may be based on the following criteria:
		1. Employee shall have demonstrated outstanding and consistent meritorious services as determined by laboratory leadership (examples: precepting students/new employees, support new test development, validation of new instrumentation, conducting in-services, presenting at scientific events)
		2. Laboratory leadership, as needed to perform their job duties
		3. Available funds
		4. Number of eligible applications
		5. Course quality and content
		6. Relevance of educational program to employee’s work assignment
		7. Impact of the employee’s absence on staffing
		8. Availability of less expensive education alternatives, such as participation by telephone or video conferencing and the availability of local substitutes.
		9. Timing:
* Time worked as a laboratory employee
* Time worked since last attending a conference paid for by the department or hospital
	1. Education programs that are eligible for education reimbursement must be directly related to the employee’s immediate work, or to work that the employee may reasonably be expected to advance within the laboratory. Examples of educational programs include, but are not limited to, seminars, workshops, lectures and professional meetings.
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|  | 1. Approval and reimbursement process
	1. Reimbursement processes will follow Children’s Employee Reimbursement Policy 1404.09. The laboratory policy may place added restrictions or guidance above and beyond the Children’s policy.
	2. The Education Reimbursement Request Form must be completed with estimated funds and submitted to the manager for approval by the laboratory leadership team in advance of meeting registration/reservations for travel. Attach a copy of the brochure, announcement or descriptions and fee schedules of the session to be attended.
	3. Any professional leave time paid as company business time must be approved by laboratory leadership.
	4. Based on budgetary considerations, laboratory leadership may impose a reimbursement cap on meeting and travel funding.
	5. Only the member-rate fee and/or the early registration rate for conference attendance will be considered for reimbursement. The employee will not be required to pay the difference between the member and non-member registration fee and/or early registration rate if the meeting is considered a priority for the department and attendance is requested by leadership in a time frame that would not allow capture of early registration rate.
	6. Airfare will be reimbursed for meetings that are more than 250 miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.
	7. Hotel expenses will be reimbursed:
		1. at the double occupancy rate (when applicable depending on the gender and number in travel group)
		2. for reasonable travel before and after the dates of the meeting; and
		3. For meetings that exceed 120 miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.
	8. Travel vendors, personal automobile reimbursement, personal expenses, meals and ground transportation: refer to Children’s Employee Reimbursement Policy 1404.09.
2. Company business time determination
	1. The decision to approve meeting attendance on company business time vs. laboratory staff using their own PTO, will be balanced based on the clinical and operational priorities of the laboratory department and of the organization. This will be approved on a case by case basis by the leadership team.
	2. If approved for company business time, if the meeting is during a time when the laboratory employee is normally schedule to work, those days will be compensated through company business time. Laboratory staff cannot be paid above 1.0 FTE for company business time.
	3. General guidelines for approving company business time:
		1. Laboratory meetings required by laboratory leadership or Children’s Executive team.
		2. Training (e.g. new instrumentation)
		3. Approved continuing education/meetings
	4. Up to five (5) meeting days can be approved for company business time pay. Additional days requested will require review and approval by the Senior Director Radiology/Lab in conjunction with the laboratory leadership team.
	5. Types of activities that would NOT be approved for company business time included:
		1. Honorarium paid/consultative paid activities (see Children’s Minnesota Conflicts of Interest Policy #1048.0)
		2. Business/committee/advisory or consultative involvement in organizations/companies/agencies not directly related to Children’s or laboratory department activities.
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| **Responsibility** | This policy applies to all laboratory staff. |
| **Supporting Documents** | [Education Reimbursement Request Form](https://starnet.childrenshc.org/References/labsop/gen/gen/gl-2.2f1v1-laboratory-education-reimbursement-request-form.pdf)  |
| **Historical Record** | **Version** | **Written/Revised by:** | **Effective Date:** | **Summary of Revisions** |
| 1 | Jennifer Heimkes | 5/09/2019 | Initial Version |
| 2 | Jennifer Heimkes | 5/12/2019 | Updated title. Updated general policy, eligibility and approval & reimbursement process. Added company business time section. Removed fund allocation, request procedure and submission of evidence sections. |