

Evanston Public Library

Masters in Library and Information Science Tuition Reimbursement Program

Adopted 5/21/2014

The Evanston Public Library supports the educational and skills development of our staff in a number of ways including attendance at seminars and webinars, participation in conferences and through annual All Staff Development days.

Recognizing that library service depends upon the employment and retention of staff at all levels including degreed Librarians, and to support the goal of a diverse workforce, the tuition reimbursement program for staff pursuing a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science (MLIS) has been created.

Eligibility

Staff employed with the Evanston Public Library who have successfully completed their probationary period, have occupied permanent positions (both part- and full-time) for a minimum of one year and whose current performance evaluation does NOT include any areas in need of improvement are eligible to apply. Only actively employed staff will be considered for tuition reimbursement for MLIS coursework.

Recognized MLIS programs and coursework

Only American Library Association accredited graduate programs will be eligible for reimbursement. In addition to ALA accreditation, the courses selected by the employee must be relevant to library service at a public library.

Application

Application for MLIS tuition reimbursement will be made using the form provided. The written application form which includes: name of Graduate school, course title and description and explanation of relevance to work at the Evanston Public Library must be submitted in writing at least 30 days before the first day of class. The written application must be approved in writing by the following: immediate supervisor; unit or department head if applicable, and Library Director. Employees will be notified of approval or denial of application in writing. A copy of the fully approved request must accompany the request for reimbursement upon completion of the course work.

Reimbursement

Funding for tuition reimbursement will be reviewed and approved in conjunction with the annual budget. Reimbursement will be dispersed on a first-come, first served basis until the annual funds are exhausted for the fiscal year.

A maximum reimbursement per course and per employee will be approved each year as part of the budgeting process. The maximum reimbursement by the Evanston Public Library per calendar year will never exceed the threshold set by the Internal Revenue Service for non-taxable reimbursement. The current threshold is \$5,250. Depending upon funding for the program, the annual reimbursement may be significantly less.

No reimbursement will be provided for tuition supported by federal, state or private sources including scholarships, financial aid or grants. As part of the application process, employees must attest that the reimbursement requested is not funded through any other sources. Failure to report other sources will result in immediate exclusion of the employee from the tuition reimbursement program.

Only costs associated with the *tuition* of MLIS degree related courses will be considered for reimbursement. Books, fees, travel expenses or other associated costs will not be eligible.

Within 30 days of the completion of the coursework previously approved for reimbursement, the employee will submit copies of the tuition reimbursement application which include a copy of the final grade and proof that the tuition has been fully paid.

Reimbursement levels are indexed to the final grade received for the course, but will not exceed the maximum reimbursement per course approved for the year.

A grade of **A** will be eligible for 100% reimbursement up to the maximum approved for the year

A grade of **B** will be eligible for 75% reimbursement up to the maximum approved for the year

A grade of **C** will be eligible for 50% reimbursement up to the maximum approved for the year

A final grade below C or classes which are not completed will not be eligible for any tuition reimbursement.

Commitment to continuing employment with the Evanston Public Library

The employee must remain employed by the Evanston Public Library for a full two years following the completion of the MLIS program. If the employee leaves the employment of the Evanston Public Library before the completion of two years of employment either voluntarily or as a result of termination due to cause, the employee will reimburse the Evanston Public Library for all tuition reimbursements received for the two year period prior to leaving employment. This full reimbursement will be received prior to the release of the final paycheck.