

Chapter 05: Reimbursement of Training Costs

adopted - 07/1993; rev - 05/2006, 07/2007, 10/2007, 10/2008 and 10/2013

Purpose

- 100 This section establishes the policy and procedures governing the reimbursement of training costs to the emergency telecommunicators' agencies governed by the Emergency Telecommunications Training Program.

Policy

- 101 The Emergency Telecommunications Training Program created the Board for the primary purpose of developing and implementing guidelines for the selection and training of emergency telecommunicators. Accordingly, the legislature mandated that the Board authorize, but only from such funds appropriated by the legislature, the reimbursement of all expenses associated with successful completion of such training. These include salary, allowable tuition, lodging, meals and travel expenses (if applicable). Reimbursement is authorized only for those agencies and subdivisions of the state who are in compliance with all provisions of the Act to include those policies and procedures established by the Board pursuant to the Act. (Mississippi Code 19-5-355 (1) and 19-5-357 (5) and (6))

- 101.01 While all expenses incurred for the completion of certification and re-certification training shall be fully reimbursed, if at any time a shortage of appropriated funds may become an issue, the priority for reimbursement funding shall be in the following order:

1. basic and EMD training;
2. mandated re-certification training;
3. elective re-certification training; and
4. advanced instructor training.

- 101.02 Reimbursement shall be allowable for telecommunicators in attendance at Board-approved training programs established at such agencies or institutions as the board may deem appropriate.

- 101.03 A host agency/instructor must submit a "Course Certification Request" form to the Board for pre-approval of a course, course location and estimated costs. This information must be sent thirty (30) days prior to the date of the course. If a course must be cancelled or rescheduled the host agency/instructor must notify in writing the Board and any pre-registered students five (5) working days prior to the set date of the course. All approved courses will be posted on the Board's Training Calendar.

Note: Course certification request forms may be submitted through Standards and

Training's internet based "Forms & Certification Management System" (<https://www.state.ms.gov/mspost/>). Instructors must submit a "MSPOST Client Agency Information form" by mail, facsimile or email to request a User ID and to be assigned a password. The form can be completed on-line from the Office of Standards and Training's portion of the MS Department of Public Safety's web-site (<http://www.dps.state.ms.us>). An "Application for Instructor Certification" must be submitted and approved on each instructor that is to use the web-based system prior to submitting any other forms.

101.04 The employing agencies of course students must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible to receive reimbursement:

1. agency must be an organization of the state or a political subdivision of the state;
2. telecommunicators attending training must work a minimum of eight (8) hours within a 30-day period;
3. agency must have adhered to the selection and training standards established by the board;
4. all administrative requirements must have been completed pursuant to this Policy and Procedures Manual to include all forms completed in full; these include the Application for Certification (Parts I, II and III), Eight-Hour Field Observation and the Reimbursement Worksheet; and
5. agency must have settled all accounts with the institution or location where training was conducted.

101.05 For the duration of training, the location of the institution shall be the assigned place of duty. Allowable costs of training as established by the Board are as follows:

1. Tuition costs shall be reimbursed at an amount set by the Board. The Board will review the costs for the training programs every six months and make any adjustments to the tuition allowance as needed. Tuition allowance includes all costs relating to instruction, such as, training materials, supplies, facility costs and instructor expenses.
2. Subsistence costs, which include lodging and meals, shall be eligible for complete reimbursement as long as they do not exceed the maximum daily allowance permitted under state law. If tuition costs includes meals, there will be no additional meal reimbursement unless a justifiable written explanation is provided to the Board. Receipts for lodging and meals must be provided with the "Request for Reimbursement" form.
3. The authorized base salaries of emergency telecommunicator students and instructors are eligible for reimbursement for the period of the training courses. The salaries shall be computed based on the gross weekly salary of the most

recent full month prior to course completion. Reimbursement includes compensation for a standard 40-hour week and will only be authorized for salaries paid for the performance of telecommunications duties. Courses completed after one-year from date of hire or after the three-year certification period will not be reimbursed salary costs.

4. Travel expenses shall be determined by multiplying the standard state mileage rate times the mileage for one round trip (and subsequent round trips if commuting). Agencies with more than one student enrolled in a course will be expected to car pool (up to four people per vehicle) and will receive travel for one vehicle.
5. The board shall provide training reimbursement for all required mandated training only if the training program satisfies the requirements. The board will designate the appropriate training program for certification purposes. If an applicant completes a course other than the designated course, the applicant will not be certified and the agency will not be reimbursed for training costs.

Note: All out of state travel must be approved in writing by the Board prior to attending requested course.

6. Only successfully completed Board-approved training programs are allowable. The following programs and their areas of specialty have been approved by the Board.
 - a. Either the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) 40-Hour Basic course or the National Emergency Communications Institute (NECI) 40-Hour Basic course, or the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) 40-Hour Basic course is required to be certified as a Law Enforcement or Fire Service telecommunicator.
 - b. Either the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) 24-hour, the APCO EMD 32-hour, the NECI EMD 24-hour or the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) 24-hour EMD program is required to be certified as an Emergency Medical telecommunicator.
 - c. The Mississippi Emergency Telecommunicator 16-hour Re-certification Course is required to be completed in the third year of initial certification.
 - d. Elective training is required to be completed any time within the three-year certification period. Those courses or training exercises not normally offered by approved vendors shall be requested for approval by the Board staff in advance.
7. The Board will not reimburse the training costs of partially completed training or failed training. Telecommunicators may return after additional preparation to attempt to complete the course requirements. Reimbursement of training costs of conferences or seminars offering multiple subject courses will be adjusted based on the telecommunicator's attendance record.

Procedure

- 102 The Board staff shall review all the information available on each telecommunications class and determine the eligibility and amount of reimbursement to each agency.
- 102.01 The staff shall maintain a running balance of available funds which come from a service charge of Five Cents (\$.05) which is placed on each subscriber phone line within the State of Mississippi as of July 1, 1993 (Mississippi Code 19-5-357 (1)). The proceeds generated shall be primarily used to fund the minimum standards training program for public safety telecommunicators within the State. (Mississippi Code 19-5-357 (5))
- 102.02 The course instructors shall provide the staff an official roster of students within five working days of the day the class ends. The roster shall include the name, last four (4) digits of social security number and agency of each student for each day of instruction.
- 102.03 The course instructors shall notify the staff of any withdrawals or dismissals from training during the course of the program. The notification shall include whether the telecommunicator withdrew or was dismissed and the reason (i.e. deficiency in academics). If the telecommunicator was dismissed for a violation of course rules and regulations, the course instructor must provide a written report of the investigation into the incident.
- 102.04 Once the class is completed, the course instructor shall prepare a course roster which shall positively indicate that all students have met the course requirements (i.e. hours attended, test score). Course instructors shall grade each student's test (passing score 70% for electives) and provide the staff with a copy of the test. Once the students complete the requirements, the course instructor shall issue a certificate of course completion to the student and notify the staff in writing. This notification must be received prior to any further certification processing or reimbursement.
- 102.05 The agencies in which the newly-trained emergency telecommunicators are employed shall submit a Reimbursement Worksheet to the Board completely filled out, signed and dated upon completion of the course. The agencies shall submit a Course Evaluation Form completed by the telecommunicator on each course completed.

Note: "Reimbursement Worksheet" forms may be submitted through Standards and Training's internet based "Forms & Certification Management System" (<https://www.state.ms.gov/mspost/>). Agencies must submit a "MSPOST Client Agency Information" form by mail, facsimile or email to request a User ID and to be assigned a password. The CJA information form can be completed on-line from the Office of Standards and Training's portion of the MS Department of Public Safety's web-site (<http://www.dps.state.ms.us>). In order to submit a reimbursement worksheet or any other forms on an individual in the web-based

system, an "Application for Certification" must first be submitted and approved for that individual.

- 102.06 The staff will determine the amount of the reimbursement based on the total of: Board-approved training costs, the applicant's documented base weekly salary, round trip mileage from the agency to the course location and lodging and meals(if applicable). Reimbursement, not to exceed the maximum daily allowance under state law, will be determined by the presence of all required forms, information and compliance with the Emergency Telecommunications Training Program.
- 102.07 After determining eligibility and amount of reimbursement, the board staff shall complete a Claim for Reimbursement form and submit the form to the agency head for review. The form shall contain the name and other personal data of the trainee, course attended, tuition, salary and travel costs (meals and food if applicable). The agency head shall review the form, sign and return the form within five working days of receipt. Any discrepancies, corrections or misinformation on the form should be annotated/corrected and the form returned unsigned. The staff shall correct the form and return it to the agency. It is imperative that this form be processed without delay as it is the basis for any funds the agency receives.
- 102.08 The staff will submit the Claim for Reimbursement to the Department of Finance and Administration for payment. The Board will maintain a copy of the claims and the warrants of payment in the board files.
- 102.09 Agencies should receive payment within forty-five (45) days of returning the Claim for Reimbursement form. If not, notify the Board staff.