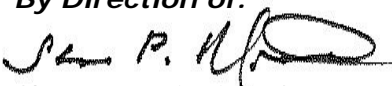


# MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

## Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor's Office

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| <b>Subject:</b><br>Out-Service Training  | <b>Number:</b><br>535.3 Amended  |
| <b>Date:</b><br><br>August 17, 2016  | <b>By Direction of:</b><br><br>Sharon P. Minnich, Secretary of<br>Administration |
| <b>Contact Agency:</b><br>Office of Administration, Office for Human Resources and Management, Bureau of<br>Workforce Planning, Development, and Equal Employment Opportunity,<br>Telephone 717.787.3813 |  |

**This directive establishes policy, responsibilities, and procedures for Out-Service Training (OST). This amendment addresses technology-based training options and the time spent by an employee outside of normal working hours taking technology-based training; OST payment process changes; and revisions to the Annual Agency Training Report requirements. Marginal dots are excluded due to major changes.**

- 1. PURPOSE.** To establish policy, responsibilities, and procedures for the approval of OST, including formal courses of study, workshops, conferences, and seminars.
- 2. SCOPE.** This directive applies to all departments, boards, commissions, and councils (hereinafter referred to as "agencies") under the Governor's jurisdiction.
- 3. OBJECTIVES.**
  - a.** To improve commonwealth operations and help achieve the goals of the organization through optimum training of its employees.
  - b.** To provide employees opportunities to update skills and obtain theoretical or technical knowledge in job-related subjects that will enhance job performance.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **Academic Credit Courses.** Courses for which academic credits are granted.
- b. **Educational Leave.** Educational leave is time away from the job with compensation for the purpose of attending out-service training, in accordance with Section 8.61 of *Management Directive 505.7, Personnel Rules*.
- c. **In-Service Training.**
  - (1) Regardless of the service provider, in-service training refers to instruction sponsored or coordinated by a commonwealth agency.
  - (2) In-service training normally takes place in a commonwealth facility with a group of commonwealth employees and is taught by an instructor who is sponsored or coordinated by the commonwealth.
  - (3) An employee's access and completion of commonwealth sponsored or coordinated technology-based training should be considered in-service training.
- d. **Non-Academic Credit Courses.** Courses for which no academic credits are granted.
- e. **Out-Service Training.** Courses, training sessions, conferences, conventions, workshops, and instances of technology-based training that are sponsored or coordinated by sources other than the commonwealth and may require an employee's absence from work.
- f. **Out-Service Training Costs.** Includes registration fees, tuition, laboratory fees, and other related fees.
- g. **Technology-Based Training.** Includes education/learning where the medium of instruction is based on computer and/or communications technology. Technology-based learning includes, but is not limited to, computer-based learning, web-based learning, instructional CD-ROM or DVD, and virtual classrooms. Technology-based learning may utilize one or several of these technologies throughout the delivery of the instruction in combination with telephone conferencing or Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). Technology-based training can be instructor-led, self-paced or offered in a blended learning environment.

#### 5. POLICY.

- a. OST will be granted only to permanent employees. Commonwealth training resources should be exhausted or found to be measurably less effective in providing the required skills or knowledge before granting approval for OST. Attendance at conferences and conventions is expected to benefit the commonwealth and is subject to the procedures in this directive.

- b. OST may be used when an employee's job assignments change or technology changes such that updated skills and knowledge are required to perform the job duties. When agencies anticipate a business need for employees to obtain additional skills, OST may be used to prepare employees for these assignments.
- c. Agencies may approve OST academic credit courses that provide theoretical and technical knowledge in job-related subject areas that cannot effectively be provided on the job or in seminars or conferences. OST shall not be used to acquire the requisite skills prescribed in the Minimum Experience and Training requirements of a class specification. Unless a contractual entitlement exists, tuition reimbursement for academic credit courses is not permitted under any of these circumstances:
  - (1) The course is **not** related to the employee's job function
  - (2) The course does not benefit the commonwealth
  - (3) The employee fails to achieve the minimum final grade for satisfactory completion
  - (4) The employee separates from commonwealth employment before completing the course
  - (5) The employee receives tuition reimbursement from a non-commonwealth source.
- d. Agencies may develop their own internal approval procedures for academic credit courses, subject to provisions of this directive. The commonwealth standard for satisfactory completion of undergraduate academic courses is a final grade of "C" or better. The commonwealth standard for satisfactory completion of graduate academic courses is a final grade of "B" or better. A copy of the official college grade notification form or transcript must be submitted for reimbursement. OST for academic credit should be recorded in the LSO (commonwealth's learning management system).
- e. Employees attending any OST paid by the employer will be subject to the same work rules, standards of conduct, and attendance as if they were present at the work site.
- f. OST may not exceed 20 days per calendar year. The 20 days are cumulative and are tracked in hours. For permanent part-time employees, the 20-day allowance is prorated. When OST is approved for payment by the agency, such training is considered a work assignment and no leave is charged. This type of OST is not limited to 20 days.
- g. Until employees receive final approval for OST requests, they shall assume full responsibility for any monetary commitments made. Agencies may develop criteria for approving OST copayments, or a percentage of OST costs, based on the extent of the OST's mutual benefit to both employer and employee.

- h.** For employee initiated OST that is not paid by the commonwealth, but is job-related, educational leave may be approved at the discretion of the agency head or designee, but may not exceed 20 days. For employee initiated OST, employees are expected to schedule OST, such as academic credit courses, during non-work hours.
- i.** Projected OST needs and methods for meeting these needs must be reviewed by agency training staff for inclusion in each agency's projected annual training plan and agency budget request.
- j.** If the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, memorandum of understanding, or arbitration award are inconsistent with any of the policies or procedures of this directive, those provisions shall take precedence insofar as they apply to the employees encompassed by the agreement, memorandum, or award.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**a. Office for Human Resources and Management, Bureau of Workforce Planning, Development, and Equal Employment Opportunity shall:**

- (1)** Provide guidance and direction to agencies regarding the appropriate use of OST.
- (2)** Post-audit agency OST records as necessary in accordance with commonwealth policy.
- (3)** Generate enterprise reports of agency OST activity for post-auditing purposes and trend analysis.

**b. Agency Heads shall ensure all agency OST requests are reviewed and approved in accordance with commonwealth policy.**

**c. Agency Training Officers shall:**

- (1)** Ensure the agency's workforce receives the necessary OST training to fulfill job duties.
- (2)** Become familiar with OST training policies and the resources available to trainers; including, but not limited to the LSO.
- (3)** Record all agency OST activity in the LSO.
- (4)** Review and analyze the use of OST in their respective agencies. Provide written reports of patterns of indiscriminate or inappropriate use of OST to the attention of the agency Deputy Secretary for Administration or equivalent official.
- (5)** Evaluate OST effectiveness based on feedback from participants and supervisors. Agencies are to use discretion in determining the evaluation method and metric for such evaluation.
- (6)** Route OST requests to agency head or designee(s) for internal review and approval.

- d. **Office of the Budget, Office of Comptroller Operations, Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations** shall process reimbursement requests for transportation, lodging, and subsistence expenses related to OST.
- e. **Office of the Budget, Office of Comptroller Operations, Bureau of Payable Services** shall:
  - (1) Process invoices for the payment of approved OST costs that exceed the small no-bid procurement threshold.
  - (2) Ensure that any request to reimburse an employee for OST that involves an academic credit course includes documentation of the employee's successful course completion in accordance with commonwealth criteria.

## 7. PROCEDURES.

### a. Authorization.

- (1) OST costs exceeding the small no bid procurement threshold (refer to *Manual 215.3, Procurement Handbook* for the current threshold) must be submitted to the agency training officer or other designated agency approver on Form STD-279, Out-Service Training Authorization or other internally approved agency document and include justification of relevance to the employee's training needs and the resulting benefit to the commonwealth.
- (2) When OST approval is granted by an agency for more than one employee for the same purpose, management shall complete only one approval document listing all participating commonwealth employees.
- (3) OST requests shall be submitted in accordance with agency procedures. Employees shall submit OST requests, in writing, to their supervisors for approval. Supervisors shall recommend approval according to the agency's approval process. OST should be planned in concert with the employee's EPR, the application of such training to key business goals, and evaluation of cost-effectiveness. Justification, OST costs, travel costs, and leave requested should be detailed in the written requests.
- (4) If the final approver is not the agency training officer, a copy of each approved request shall be sent to the training officer for post-audit purposes. The training officer will maintain an agency record.

### b. OST Costs and Payments.

- (1) OST costs exceeding the small no-bid procurement threshold must be submitted to the Office of the Budget, Office for Comptroller Operations, Bureau of Payable Services for payment via general invoice.
- (2) OST costs that do not exceed the small no-bid procurement threshold shall be paid using the commonwealth purchasing card, in accordance with *Management Directive 310.23, Commonwealth Purchasing Card Program*).

- (3) The costs of books, instruments, or other materials retained by the employee will not be reimbursed unless the cost for such materials is part of the registration or tuition fee. Fees that relate to the individual's relationship with an educational institution, such as enrollment fees, identification fees, student activity fees, late fees, course change fees, and parking fees will be the responsibility of the employee.
- (4) Transportation, lodging, and subsistence expenses related to OST will be reimbursed to the employee, in accordance with *Management Directive 230.10, Commonwealth Travel Policy*, upon submission of an SAP travel expense report to BCPO.
- (5) Payment for OST that does not involve academic credits, such as a conference, convention, training session, seminar, or other non-academic credit courses must be made to the training source. Criteria for satisfactory completion of nonacademic credit courses such as correspondence, certification, examination, and accreditation programs shall be determined by agencies.
- (6) Payment for OST that involves academic credit courses must be made by reimbursement to the employee, after the employee provides documentation of having met the commonwealth's criteria for successful course completion. Documentation of successful course completion must be included with the employee's reimbursement request. Reimbursement shall not be made to employees who fail to complete academic credit courses, who separate from commonwealth employment before completing the course, or who receive reimbursement from other sources.
- (7) Approved STD-279 forms are processed and posted to general ledger (GL) 6321010, Out-service Training, or GL 6321030, Conference Registration for Training Costs.

**c. Leave.**

- (1) The amount of educational leave (or other leave) that is approved shall be shown on Form STD-279 or the written request.
- (2) The employee should enter the educational leave request via Employee Self Service.

**d. Record-Keeping.** All OST opportunities reimbursed by the commonwealth, i.e. tuition, travel, or the granting of educational leave, etc. shall be included in an employee's OST record.

**e. Required Reports and Evaluation of Training.**

- (1) The agency must retain the following documentation for each approved OST request for three years including those that provide academic credits:

- (a) Completed Form STD-279, appropriate agency document, or the written OST request showing agency approval which indicates relevance to the employee's job or agency business needs and an explanation of why other training sources were inadequate.
  - (b) Justification for choosing training source that details cost and content comparison with other options.
  - (c) Description of performance or learning need and expected impact of training.
  - (d) Evaluation of the training.
  - (e) Feedback on application of training to the job and/or how it was shared with the work unit.
- (2) A summary of OST training impact will be provided when needed to reflect training performance in the commonwealth. Examples of these requests may include human resource management consultations, performance metrics, requests from other states, surveys from professional organizations, etc.

**This directive replaces, in its entirety, *Management Directive 535.3*, dated November 16, 1999.**