

May 10, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: USHE – Adoption of Policy R613, Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement

Issue

The Board is asked to review and approve Regent Policy R613, *Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement* to meet the statutory requirements outlined in Senate Bill 165, *Reimbursements for Public Safety Officers* passed by the 2017 Legislature.

Background

SB165 establishes the Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program which is intended to financially assist eligible peace officers seeking a post-secondary degree in the area of criminal justice. Eligible participants may receive up to \$5,000 annually for course work in a criminal justice program for a maximum of eight academic years.

To qualify, applicants must have been employed as a certified peace officer, currently employed by a Utah law enforcement agency, be employed by a Utah law enforcement agency as a certified peace officer for three consecutive years prior to the completion of the academic year for which he or she is seeking reimbursement, and employed by a Utah law enforcement agency as a certified peace officer for one additional year after the completion of that academic year.

The legislation requires the Board to adopt and enact administrative rules establishing application deadlines, application procedures, and an appeals process. The Commissioner's staff has developed policy R613, *Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement* to meet this statutory requirement.

The proposed policy designates November 1 as the application deadline and describes the application process. Applicants will be required to submit applications to the directors of their criminal justice programs for consideration. Applications will be available at higheredutah.org.

Under the policy, applicants may submit a written appeal to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Commissioner will address an appeal in accordance with the Utah Administrative Procedures Act as an informal adjudicatory process.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Regents adopts R613, *Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program* effective immediately.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/KLH/GTL
Attachment

R613, Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement (POSCAR) ¹

R613-1. Purpose: The POSCAR is a state funded tuition reimbursement for peace officers enrolled in criminal justice related programs at a Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institution, available for up to eight academic years.

R613-2. References

- 2.1. Utah Code §53B-8-112-13.
- 2.2. Utah Code §63G-4-202.

R613-3. Application Process

- 3.1. Qualified applicants may be reimbursed up to half of tuition and fees with a maximum of \$5,000 per year, subject to funding. If the total applicant awards exceed available funding in any given year, the Board will reduce reimbursement amounts evenly across all qualified applicants, maintaining that the minimum designated amounts for particular rural counties are met.
- 3.2. To qualify, applicants must be:
 - 3.2.1. a certified peace officer, currently employed by a Utah law enforcement agency,
 - 3.2.2. employed by a Utah law enforcement agency as a certified peace officer for three consecutive years prior to the completion of the academic year for which he or she is seeking reimbursement, **and**
 - 3.2.3. employed by a Utah law enforcement agency as a certified peace officer for one additional year after the completion of that academic year.
- 3.3. The application will be available at the Board of Regents website, higheredutah.org. Applicants must complete the entire application and include all required documentation and certifications including,
 - 3.3.1. Employer certification from an authorized representative of each employer for the four year period.
 - 3.3.2. A copy of the tuition payment receipt(s) and transcript(s) with final grades for the enrollment period.

R613-4. Application Deadlines

- 4.1. The 2017 application will allow for reimbursement to criminal justice students who were enrolled during the 2015-2016 academic year, defined as July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, who meet program

¹ Revised by the UHEAA Board of Directors July 14, 1995 and amended October 1, 2001 and August 31, 2004.

requirements. Application deadlines for subsequent years will retain these time frames, adjusted for the next year.

4.2. For the first year of the program, qualified applicants may submit applications beginning July 1, 2017, after the post-enrollment work component is complete. Applicants for subsequent years may begin submitting applications July 1 of the year in which they are applying.

4.3. 2017 applications are due by November 1, 2017 to be considered for funding. Applications must be postmarked or received by the criminal justice department at the institution by the application deadline in order to be considered. The deadline for subsequent years applications will be July 1st. The postmark or received by requirements remain the same.

4.4 The Commissioner of Higher Education or designee may adjust deadlines in order to consider extenuating circumstances of applicants and to maximize application opportunities for potential awardees.

R613-5. Appeals Process

5.1 Applicants who wish to appeal a reimbursement decision may do so, in writing to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The applicant's appeal shall be postmarked within 30 days from the date on which the reimbursement decision was made.

5.2 Applicants shall include all relevant arguments and documentation in their written appeals.

5.3 The Commissioner of Higher Education or designee shall review the appeal and issue a written decision in accordance with the Utah Administrative Procedures Act.

5.4 Appeals proceedings under this section are designated as informal pursuant to Utah Code Utah Code §63G-4-202.