ARTICLE 23
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

23.1 EMPLOYEE TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

A. Employee Training/Development

1. The University will maintain a record of all employee training.

2. University supervisors may release employees from normal work duties to attend training programs which promote professional development or improve job skills. Subject to supervisory approval, the University:
   a. will grant up to ninety-six (96) hours of paid release time for full-time employees per fiscal year for in-service programs offered through the University, e.g., Human Resource Services, Environmental Health and Safety, and Information Technology Services. Online and Instructor-Led learning and professional development courses and certifications will be available to employees covered by this Agreement on the same basis as all other University employees.
   b. will allow employees covered by this Agreement to participate in University career counseling and assistance programs on work time and on the same basis as all other University employees.
   c. may grant release time for programs offered through a reputable non-WSU organization if the training promotes professional or job skill development.

3. Any time spent attending training during regular work hours for which paid release time is granted will be considered time worked.

4. Employees will submit written requests for release time to supervisors ten (10) days in advance of the first date of training requested. The University will approve or deny requests in writing. If a training request is denied, the University will provide the business reason for denying the request in writing to the employee.

5. Reasons for denial include:
   a. Organizational and work-related needs
   b. Personnel coverage
c. Seasonal work commitments
d. Work-related emergencies
e. Employee has used up all eligible release time hours for the fiscal year

B. Licenses/Certifications

1. Pre-employment licenses and certifications will be at the employee’s expense and on their own time. Any licenses and certifications necessary to meet the minimum qualifications of the position will be obtained at the employee’s expense and on their own time. Employees who are required by the University to have licenses and certifications to accomplish the minimum qualifications for their position, will acquire and maintain all such licenses and certifications at the University’s expense.

2. An Appointing Authority may authorize the payment of costs associated with obtaining and/or maintaining licenses or certifications beyond the minimum requirements of their position.

3. Any loss of license(s) or certification(s) required to perform the employee’s duties will be reported to the employee’s supervisor not later than the first work day following the loss or as soon as is practicable.

C. Educational Benefits

1. The University will provide a Tuition Fee Waiver Program for all employees covered by this Agreement on the same basis as the program is provided for all other University employees.

2. The University will review requests for schedule changes in accordance with Article 6.1.E in support of employee’s utilizing the Tuition Fee Waiver Program. If a schedule request is denied, the University will provide the business reason for denying the schedule change in writing to the employee.

3. The University will provide a Summer Educational Benefits Program for all employees covered by this Agreement on the same basis as the program is provided for all other University employees.

4. Leave and/or Leave Without Pay for educational purposes may be granted in accordance with the applicable provisions of this Agreement.