



**Office of
Employee Relations**



Education and Training Program for NYSCOPBA-represented Employees

Program Guidelines for

April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Program Overview.....	1
B. Program Highlights.....	1
C. Employee Eligibility	2
D. Course Eligibility.....	2
E. Application Time Period.....	3
F. Release Time	3
G. Expenses Covered.....	3
H. Alternative Sources of Financial Assistance	3
I. Taxation of Employee Benefits (Reimbursements).....	3
J. Application Sources.....	3
K. Application Submission and Review Process	3

Education and Training Program Guidelines for NYSCOPBA-represented Employees

A. Program Overview

The Education and Training Program (ETP) is administered by the Security Services Unit Joint Labor-Management Committee (JLMC) through funding provided by Article 13 of the 2016-2023 agreement between the State of New York and the New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc. (NYSCOPBA).

The ETP enables NYSCOPBA-represented employees to maintain or improve job-related skills in their profession and gain the knowledge and skills necessary for promotional opportunities and career mobility within NYS service.

B. Program Highlights

The Education and Training Program:

- Provides reimbursement to employees actively employed a minimum of half-time, in a NYSCOPBA-represented title, for the duration of the qualifying training and/or educational courses that begin on or after April 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022.
- Provides a pre-approval process. It is recommended that applicants seek pre-approval to ensure reimbursement eligibility.
- Is designed to reimburse applicants, up to a maximum State fiscal year allowance of \$2,250, for actual out-of-pocket expenses, including registration, tuition, course-related textbooks, lab fees, and digital fees.
- Reimbursement is based on the satisfactory completion of the course; one must attain a grade of at least C. If the only option for the grading of a course is Pass/Fail, a grade of Pass will be accepted as evidence of satisfactory completion. ETP will not cover incomplete or failed courses.
- Applications for courses beginning on or after April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 must be submitted no later than ninety (90) calendar days from the end date of the course unless an extension has been granted pursuant to Section E of these guidelines. Applications for courses or events that began on or after April 1, 2022, and ended prior to June 15, 2022, must be submitted by September 13, 2022. The postmark or email date will be used to determine the timeliness of the application.
- Provides a Pilot Program to reimburse the cost of a CDL course and exam fee up to the State fiscal year maximum allowance.
- *Will not* cover courses that are available through the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervisions (DOCCS) Training Academy should an applicant decide to use an outside source or Armorer School and any outside weapons training programs.

C. Employee Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the ETP, NYSCOPBA-represented employees must be actively employed a minimum of half-time in a NYSCOPBA-represented title for the duration of the qualifying training and/or educational courses.

Employees working less than half-time or on unpaid leave of absence are not eligible.

D. Course Eligibility

ETP is available for credit or non-credit, job or career-related courses at an accredited college, university, or approved educational organization.

Job-Related Coursework

The course directly supports or improves skills required for current job assignments, duties, or responsibilities.

Career-Related Coursework

The course will prepare the employee for advancement within their current title series or occupation.

The course develops the operational, administrative or management capacity of the employee.

The coursework is necessary to obtain a degree or certification to qualify for job opportunities within State service.

The 2022-2023 CDL Pilot Program reimburses eligible employees for the cost of a CDL course and exam fee up to the State fiscal year maximum allowance.

Approved Educational Organizations

The educational organization offering the course must meet the academic standards of the NYS Education Department or the U.S. Office of Education.

Reimbursement for the following is limited:

- Recreation, physical education, hobby or personal interest courses will only be considered for reimbursement as electives under an approved matriculated degree program

Reimbursement for the following is not covered:

- Courses designed for interests outside State service, whether credit or non-credit
- Armorer School and outside weapons training programs
- Courses that are available through the NYS DOCCS Training Academy

E. Application Time Period

Course start date determines fiscal year. For fiscal year 2022-2023, a course must start on or after April 1, 2022, and no later than March 31, 2023.

Applications must be submitted no later than ninety (90) calendar days from the end date of the course. Applications for courses or events that began on or after April 1, 2022, and ended prior to June 15, 2022, must be submitted by September 13, 2022. The postmark or email date will be used to determine the timeliness of the application.

Please note: If you are unable to obtain the required documentation within the 90-day period, you must submit your application form and contact the JLMC prior to the deadline.

F. Release Time

ETP does not entitle an employee to receive release time.

G. Expenses Covered

Reimbursable expenses are those costs that relate to the pursuit of an educational activity. Expenses must be itemized on the original receipt.

Eligible individuals are reimbursed up to a maximum State fiscal year allowance of \$2,250, for actual out-of-pocket expenses. Covered expenses include registration, tuition, course-related textbooks, lab fees, and digital fees which the employee is required, by the syllabus or course outline, to use for the course.

Expenses and fees other than those noted above are not covered.

H. Alternative Sources of Financial Assistance

Alternate sources of financial aid from agency/facility tuition support programs, Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), Pell Grants, Aid for Part-time Study (APTS) Program, NYS Vietnam Veterans Tuition Assistance, Veterans Administration Educational Benefits (GI Bill), and college stipends *must* be reported on the application. This amount will be deducted before computing the allowable reimbursement.

I. Taxation of Employee Benefits (Reimbursements)

At the end of each calendar year, the Office of the State Comptroller will withhold estimated taxes from employees whose reimbursements from this program and any additional educational benefits (reimbursements) from their agency exceed \$5,250. This may result in substantial withholding from paychecks at the end of the year and applicants should plan accordingly. Students are encouraged to seek competent tax advice to determine if the "working condition fringe benefit" is applicable when filing their taxes.

J. Application Sources

The ETP Application Form and the optional Pre-Approval Application Form are available at: [oer.ny.gov](https://www.oer.ny.gov) (Training and Development/ NYSCOPBA) or <https://www.nyscopba.org/members/nys-programs-grants/>.

K. Application Submission and Review Process

Applicants have the option of receiving pre-approval for reimbursement, however, it is not required.

The application process involves the following steps:

Step 1: Pre-approval (Applicant)

Prior to registering for coursework, it is recommended that the *applicant*:

- Complete a separate Pre-Approval Application Form for each course for which reimbursement is requested. Attach a course description or brochure from the institution/organization that includes the itemized cost separate from any fees.
- Submit completed form to the Security Services Unit JLMC for review and approval.

Step 2: Pre-approval Review (JLMC)

Upon receipt of the Pre-Approval Application Form, Security Services Unit JLMC will:

- Determine if the application meets the criteria for reimbursement under the ETP Guidelines with respect to employee eligibility, qualification of coursework (job-related/career-related), and educational institution/organization.
- Review the application to confirm required and complete information was provided by the applicant; contact applicant, by email, if there are questions or issues that were identified.
- Notify applicant, by email, of the Security Services Unit JLMC determination.

Step 3: Apply for Reimbursement (Applicant)

To obtain reimbursement, the *applicant* must:

- Complete the coursework with a grade of at least C. If the only option for the grading of a course is Pass/Fail, a grade of Pass will be accepted as evidence of satisfactory completion.
- Complete a separate ETP Application Form for each course within the timeframes prescribed in Section E, Application Time Period. Submit the ETP Application Form and the following supporting documentation to the Security Services Unit JLMC for review and approval:
 - A course description or brochure from the educational provider
 - An original grade report, transcript, or letter on letterhead from the educational provider, stating that the applicant satisfactorily completed the coursework
 - An original, itemized, paid tuition receipt from the educational provider
 - A course syllabus listing required materials and original paid textbook receipt(s)
 - Documentation showing the start and end dates of the course or event (month, day, year)
- Applicants should retain a copy of all documentation for their records.

Step 4: Final Review and Approval Process (JLMC)

Once the ETP Application Form is received, Security Services Unit JLMC will:

- Determine if the application meets the criteria for reimbursement under the ETP Guidelines with respect to employee eligibility, qualification of coursework (job-related/career-related), and educational provider.
- Review the application to confirm required and complete information was provided by the applicant and contact applicant, by email, if there are questions or issues that were identified.
- Notify applicant, by email, of the decision for approval.

Submit all documents to:

Email: SSUPrograms@lmc.ny.gov

or US Mail:

NYS Security Services Unit JLMC
ETP/M. Bombard
2 Empire State Plaza, 7th Floor
Albany, NY 12223

Education and Training Program Contact

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Guidelines Effective Date: April 1, 2022

It is the policy of the State of New York to provide for and promote equal opportunity in employment and equal access to all programs and services without discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, creed, national origin, military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including pregnancy-related disability or condition), predisposing genetic characteristics, marital/familial status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or prior arrest/criminal conviction record.