



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources Policy & Procedures

Effective: November 1, 2014

FSU-HRPP 2015:01

Release Time for Training and Professional Development

COVERED EMPLOYEES

- All employees.

Note: Bargaining unit employees are covered by the terms and agreements of the [collective bargaining agreement](#) (CBA). Please refer to the CBA for details.

HR POLICY

This policy is intended to cover an employee's voluntary attendance to training and professional development programs, as distinguished from attendance that is required by the University.

An employee may voluntarily request to attend training that promotes the improvement of his/her job skills or professional development. Supervisors are encouraged to support job skills training, and when possible support professional development training.

An employee shall be released from normal work duties and without loss of pay to attend approved voluntary training. An employee will not be compensated for attending voluntary training that is outside the employee's regular work hours. Compensation will be in accordance with exempt and non-exempt wage and hour regulations.

PROCEDURES/DESCRIPTION/DEFINITIONS

I. Request Process

- A. An employee is required to obtain his/her supervisor's approval prior to registering for training or professional development.
- B. Each request will be reviewed by the supervisor based on the needs of the department and merits of the employee's attendance to the training or professional development.

RESPONSIBILITY

Employee: Must obtain his/her supervisor's approval prior to registration.

Supervisor: Review and approve/deny employee's request.

Refer Questions To: *Human Resources*

U.S. Department of Labor: Training and Seminars

Attendance at lectures, meetings, training programs and similar activities are viewed as working time *unless all of the following criteria are met:*

- Attendance is outside of the employee's regular working hours;
- Attendance is in fact voluntary;
- The course, lecture, or meeting is not directly related to the employee's job; and
- The employee does not perform any productive work during such attendance

Following are some examples applicable to non-exempt employees:

#1 Employee requests and is approved by his/her supervisor to attend a training program from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on web design. The employee is a skilled laborer and will not be performing web design work for his/her position, however, he/she has an interest in learning a new skill. The employee's regular work schedule is from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. If approved, the employee is compensated for his/her regular shift hours but the last hour of the training is not compensable, or it is considered voluntary training. If the supervisor has directed the employee to attend the training session, all of the time is compensable.

#2 Employee regularly works from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. On Sunday, the employee travels as a passenger on an airplane, train, bus, boat or automobile for a Monday meeting. The University is required to pay for any travel time that occurs between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. (their regular work hours), even though the employee is traveling on Sunday. Travel on Sunday before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. is not compensable, except for the act of driving a car which is considered manual labor.

#3 The employee is a dishwasher and decides to attend a Web Design training session after his/her shift. Must the administrator pay for the dishwasher's time spent at the training session? No, because all four criteria above are met.

#4 Employee requests and is approved to attend job related training or a conference. The employee travels and/or attends on days that correspond to his/her regular work schedule. The employee uses a company vehicle and drives through his/her normal lunch hour to attend the training. The act of driving is manual labor and all time is compensable even if they are driving during the lunch period. The passenger must also be paid if the time is during his/her regular work schedule. The University must also pay for the time spent in the training session during regular work hours and for any time in the training beyond the regular work hours. In this example, the University has approved the training, allowed a company vehicle to be used all in support of the training or conference.