



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

SUBJECT	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
NUMBER	21-01	SIGNED DATE	May 20, 2021
ISSUED BY	Mark Washington, City Manager <i>MW</i>		
PREPARED BY	Holly Young, Organizational Development Manager		
REVISED	NA		
ASSOCIATED POLICIES	City Commission Policy 600-04 Administrative Policy 20-02		
CITY VALUES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equity	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability	

SUMMARY

This policy provides a framework and expectations for providing training and professional development opportunities for City of Grand Rapids employees.

PURPOSE

In order to achieve our strategic goals for Governmental Excellence, the City recognizes that a high-performance workplace is one that invests in its employees. We are committed to providing a supportive and rewarding environment that encourages the continuous growth and development of our workforce. We recognize this is essential to developing and maintaining high-quality, responsive and professional services.

POLICY

It is the policy of the City of Grand Rapids to invest in training and professional development opportunities for employees to the fullest extent possible based on budgetary and other conditions.

1. Definitions

Professional development may include both free and paid activities that contribute to the furtherance of professional, technical, and leadership skills for employees. In general, this policy assumes that some activities may take place while on paid time with the City, or during the employee's regularly scheduled workday.

There are other activities, such as higher education, that must be done on the employee's personal time. Policies and processes related to higher education and other tuition-based programs are addressed separately by City Commission Policy 600-04.

2. Responsibilities

- a. The employee's immediate supervisor will have a discussion of professional development opportunities with employees at minimum annually as part of the employee's performance review.
- b. Discussion of opportunities should be aligned with observations included in the review, as well as with the career/development interests of the employee. This does not preclude the supervisor or employee from raising development opportunities for discussion that may arise throughout the year.
- c. As budget and needs of service allow, supervisors are expected to support an employee's request to participate in professional development activities or teams that are aligned with the employee's development plan, that contribute toward the employee's current or future job-related technical/professional skills and/or advance the City's values. Examples of such activities are included in Section IV of this policy.
- d. Opportunities to attend and participate in professional development activities must be available in an equitable fashion for all employees regardless of job classification.
- e. Employees will be notified periodically of opportunities for training, professional development opportunities and employee resource groups by the City of Grand Rapids.
- f. Employees must follow all applicable City rules and regulations for requesting travel and educational payment and/or reimbursement for professional development activities.

3. Eligibility

- a. In general, full-time and permanent part-time employees are eligible to participate in professional development and training opportunities upon the approval of their supervisor.
- b. Temporary employees and contract employees may be eligible based on the need and individual circumstances. These should be considered on a case-by-

case basis and approved by a Department Director or equivalent designee.

4. Examples of Professional Development

City sponsored professional development opportunities include but are not limited to:

- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) as identified by the Employee Resource Group Policy – see Administrative Policy 20-02
- Membership and participation in external professional groups or associations
- Internal or external training and development opportunities (webinars, certification programs, seminars, conferences, etc.)
- Mentorship connections
- Job shadow opportunities
- Higher education degrees – see City Commission Policy 600-04
- Wellness activities

5. Supervisory Approval

- a. Employees shall obtain approval from their immediate supervisor to participate in professional development activities prior to participation/registration in any activity or conference.
- b. The employee's immediate supervisor shall provide a clear line of communication regarding any denial of professional development for an employee and provide a plan going forward if "needs of service" and/or budgetary constraints are the issue.
- c. If requests are consistently denied by a supervisor without explanation, an employee may contact the Labor Relations Office for further investigation and resolution.

6. Reporting

Employees shall use the TRN payroll code for hours dedicated toward professional development. The City, through its annual strategic plan update, will report these indicators at the departmental level to track professional development.