

**Nurses' Enhanced
Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement (WSR)
Program
For PEF-Represented Employees**

Program Guidelines
For the Period
April 1, 2013, through March 31, 2014



Governor's Office of Employee Relations



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Nurses' Enhanced Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement Program (WSR)

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NURSES ENHANCED WORKSHOP & SEMINAR REIMBURSEMENT (WSR) PROGRAM

A. Purpose of Guidelines

These Guidelines describe the Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement (WSR) program that provides enhanced training opportunities to PEF-represented nurses for the period of April 1, 2013, through March 31, 2014. This enhanced program supplements benefits already available to PEF-represented nurses through the regular Workshop & Seminar Reimbursement (WSR) Program.

B. Funding and Oversight of the Nurses' Enhanced WSR Pilot Program

Funding for this enhanced program is provided through Article 15 of the 2011-2015 Agreement between the State of New York and PEF. Article 15 of the Agreement also establishes the Professional Development Committee (PDC) consisting to two designees from GOER and two designees from PEF. The PDC has adopted these guidelines and monitors the administration of this program.

C. Nurses' Enhanced WSR Program Highlights

- Provides additional reimbursement of up to \$1000 to PEF-represented Nurses for workshops or seminars that enhance their performance of current jobs or further their nursing career.
- All Nurses' Enhanced WSR applications for courses or events must be submitted within 60 days after the end date of the course.
- To be eligible for reimbursement, events must meet the same eligibility criteria required by the regular WSR Program.
- The enhanced benefits are available **after** benefits available under the regular WSR program have been exhausted. For information regarding the regular WSR benefits, please refer to the Program Guidelines on the GOER website at: http://www.goer.ny.gov/Training_Development/PEF/WSR/index.cfm.
- Note: Nurses must also review the Program Guidelines for the regular WSR Program to fully understand the complete package of benefits available when the regular and enhanced programs are combined.
- WSR can only be used for **non-credit-bearing** courses, workshops and seminars, as detailed in the WSR Guidelines.

D. Overview

For PEF-represented nurses who exhaust their regular WSR benefits for the time period of April 1, 2013, through March 31, 2014 an additional reimbursement of up to \$1000 will be available under the Nurses' Enhanced WSR program for qualifying non-credit courses, workshops or seminars.

E. Eligibility

To be eligible for the Nurses' Enhanced WSR, the following two requirements must be met:

1. *Applicant Eligibility:* The employee must be a PEF-represented nurse currently working in a nursing position and meet all eligibility criteria of regular WSR Program.
2. *Qualifying Events:* To qualify for reimbursement the non-credit course, workshop or seminar must meet all eligibility criteria of regular WSR Programs, and enhance the performance of current job responsibilities, or further the applicant's nursing career with the State of New York.

This benefit is not for PEF-represented nurses who want to change their career (for example, a nurse who wishes to become an attorney).

F. Application Process

Applications for the Nurses' Enhanced WSR program are now submitted online directly through GOER's PSTP Online Application (PSTP OA) System. This system results in faster application processing. Complete a separate application for each course or event. Applications with course or event dates that differ from the date shown on the documentation will not be accepted. **For employees who do not have access to the Internet, contact GOER at 518-474-6612 for a paper application.**

If you are eligible for the Nurses' Enhanced benefit and have applied for a course or event that exceeds the maximum under the WSR program, the PSTP OA system should automatically provide a pop-up box that asks if you wish to use your Nurses' Enhanced benefit.

If you are applying the Nurses' Enhanced benefit to a new course or event, please follow the application process listed below.

Step 1: Log on to Public Service Training Program Online Application (PSTP OA)

Register for a GOER account at http://www.goer.ny.gov/Training_Development/pstp_online.cfm. Once an account has been established, sign-in each time you wish to access your account.

Step 2: Complete an online application

- Sign on to your dashboard and select the applications tab
- Click on the WSR tab to bring up that specific application
- Follow the instructions. All required fields must be completed to successfully submit an application. Information circle links have been provided if assistance is needed when completing individual fields of the application. Applications must be submitted within 60 days after the end date of the course or event.
- Attach supporting documentation to your application. The documentation can be attached by clicking the 'Add Supporting Documentation' link and selecting a Word or PDF version of a scanned or downloaded document. The documentation must include all of the following:
 - a. An unaltered invoice, receipt, or online itemized account summary from the provider or school, showing the registration (attendance) cost of the event, (separate from any additional fees), for a non-credit bearing course and the alternative sources of funding.
 - b. List of any alternative sources of funding not shown on the invoice that has been or will be received.
 - c. Documentation showing the start date and end date of the event or course (month, day and year).
 - d. Documentation from the event or school showing you attended (certificate of completion), or successfully passed a **non-credit-bearing** course. *WSR will not cover incomplete or failed non-credit courses or events.*
 - e. If your course was self-study, please provide proof of interaction with an instructor, or proof of completion of a graded examination.

All supporting documentation must be submitted within 30 days from the submission of your application.

- If you are unable to attach your documentation to your online application, you may send the documentation separately via certified U.S. mail within 30 days from submission of your application to:

NYS Governor's Office of Employee Relations
PSTP Reimbursement Unit
2 Empire State Plaza, 7th Floor
Albany, NY 12223

Please be sure to retain a copy of all documentation for your records.

- Submit the completed application. **A successfully completed application will yield a confirmation number in a pop up box.** The confirmation number must accompany all documentation and/or correspondence relating to this application.

Applications can be submitted but cannot be approved for reimbursement without the supporting documentation.

Step 3: Check application status

It is important that you check your email and the 'Notifications & Alerts' area of your Online Application (OA) dashboard.

- Notification of Receipt – Notification will automatically be sent to the applicant that their application has been received and is being reviewed.
- Notification of Hold – Applicants will receive notification when additional information is needed, when supporting documentation has not been received.
- Notification of Rejected or Denied – Applicants will receive notification when an application has been denied and the reason.
- Notification of Approval – Applicants will receive notification that the application is being processed for payment.

Applicants can review current status of their applications at any time on their dashboard. Details regarding each status can be found on the resources tab on your Online Application (OA) dashboard.

Step 4: Receive Reimbursement

Once an application has been approved, reimbursement checks will be mailed from the Office of the State Comptroller to the employee's home approximately four to six weeks **after** applicants receive notification that payment is being processed. This check will look very similar to a paycheck or travel expense check and is **not** automatically deposited.

Your regular WSR benefits must be used before the enhanced program benefits.

The Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) and the State of New York provide equal access to its programs for all persons and is an equal opportunity employer. It is our policy to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination and harassment against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic characteristics or information, political beliefs, status as a victim of domestic violence, and veteran, marital or family status or any other discrimination prohibited by law. Harassment of any individual will not be tolerated.

Reasonable accommodations are available, upon request, in all aspects of state training, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the New York State Human Rights Law, to ensure that every individual is able to gain maximum benefit from the training experience.