

Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, Inc.	Policy # 309
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Advancement Opportunities Training Program	Effective: February 27, 2003
	Revised: May 25, 2023
APPROVED BY: HACAP Board of Directors	

Policy Statement

The Advancement Opportunities Training Program (AOTP) is designed to support an employee as he/she voluntarily obtains the education and training necessary to qualify for a specific high demand position, for which advancement reasonably exists. This list will vary from time to time dependent on the job market. Human Resources will determine these positions.

HACAP will support approved employees working within the Advancement Opportunity Training Program in the following three ways:

1. Reimbursement for a portion of the cost of tuition, books, and fees associated with non-work time training necessary to qualify for placement into the next level or lateral level HACAP positions.
2. Provide enrolled employees an opportunity for job shadowing on non-work time, which will be counted toward the experience requirements for the targeted positions. (Minimum time of 15 hours).
3. Recruit in-house mentors to support enrolled employees in their preparation for the targeted positions.

Standard Operating Procedure

Target Audience

All Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP) Employees

Necessities

It is emphasized that you **MUST** apply to be in this program and **MUST** be accepted **BEFORE** you are eligible for any of the benefits of the program. Employees in the following employee classification(s) are eligible for AOTP assistance:

*Full Time/Full Status

*Part Time/Full Status (work at least 30 hours per week)

It must also be emphasized that just because you apply for the program you are not automatically approved for enrollment in the AOTP.

HACAP has the sole discretion to determine whether an employee has adequate baseline training and performance history to reasonably meet the minimum qualifications for placement in a high demand position within two years of acceptance into the training program.

Enrollment into the Advanced Opportunities Training Program does not guarantee that participation will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job or pay increases.

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Application process for the AOTP:

1. Complete the attached application form.
2. Attach copies of transcripts, certifications and/or other relevant papers.
3. Submit the application and relevant papers to your immediate supervisor for his/her signature and to request a letter of recommendation.
4. If the supervisor is in agreement that the employee meets the below stated qualifications, she/he will date and sign the application and write a letter of recommendation. Employee qualifications:
 - *full time/full status
 - *part time/full status (work at least 30 hours per week)
 - *satisfactory performance status

If the supervisor is not in agreement, he/she will meet with the employee and communicate the reasons why and develop a plan for reaching agreement.
5. The AOTP candidate will send the original, signed application, along with the supervisor recommendation to Staff Development.

Enrollment process for the AOTP:

1. HACAP Staff Development Supervisor, HACAP Program Manager and Human Resources Administrator will review the applicant's application, recommendation, file and the available funding. The employee's supervisor and the employee will be notified in writing of the team's decision.
2. With the team's recommendation to enroll an applicant, the employee and the team participants will create a contract plan for completion of the targeted qualifications.
3. The employee, HACAP Program Manager, Human Resources Administrator and HACAP Staff Development Supervisor will sign a contract that states the financial responsibilities, the time commitment for both parties and the requirements to reach the designated goals. Established benchmarks will assess satisfactory progress in reaching the designated goal. These shall be written within each individual's plan and will be based upon the needs of the approved employee. Each enrollee's plan will be individually determined based upon the education and experience of the enrollee and the target qualifications.

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HACAP will support approved employees in their AOTP in three ways:

1. Reimbursement of a portion of the tuition, books and fees associated with non-work time training upon satisfactory completion of needed trainings as indicated in the AOTP.

After approved class work is completed and benchmarks achieved, the AOTP candidate will be reimbursed 60% of books and class fees up to \$1000.00 per year.

Benchmarks:

- *a minimum of 1 course per semester/quarter
- *2.5 cum grade point minimum
- *Only course grades of 'C' and above will be reimbursed.
- *Proof of payment and grade with employee's name, letter grade, and course # description must be submitted to Staff Development for reimbursement.

2. Provide opportunities for job shadowing on non-work time.

Benchmarks:

- *Job shadowing hours to be determined by the difference between current experience and target experience. Hours will be scheduled at times when substitutes will not be needed. Enrollee job-shadow time will be documented on the mentor feedback sheet each time the enrollee job shadows. The job-shadow mentor will provide periodic feedback to the enrollee in verbal and written form.

3. Recruit in-house mentors/coaches to support enrolled employee in their preparation for a high demand HACAP position.

Benchmarks:

- *Mentor/coach time with enrollee will be determined based on the enrollee's current experience and the target position. Guidelines for coaching to be matched with the expectations and requirements of the targeted position. Time spent with a mentor will be documented on the formatted sheet for this purpose.

Each enrolled employee will have his/her own AOTP. Each plan will be written including the following areas:

- *The employee's current educational and experiential background.

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*Employee's educational plan to reach requirements for target position.

*Employee's experiential plan to gain necessary experience for target position.

A portfolio will be created for each approved employee which will include the individual plan, benchmarks, contract, periodic mentor and job-shadow mentor comments, supervisor comments, academic transcripts and other necessary documents listed in the individual AOTP.

To maintain eligibility employees must remain on the active payroll and be performing their job satisfactorily through the completion of each training activity. Employees essential duties and responsibilities shall not be adversely effected in any way by his/her own AOTP.

Enrollment into the AOTP does not guarantee that participation will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job or pay increases.

Process Manager

This policy was written by the Human Resource Department for use by all HACAP operations. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Department at 319-393-7811.