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## Policy Information

**Effective Date:**

July 1, 2000

**Last Revised Date:**

January, 2020

**Policy Number:**

HR-409

**Reference:**

Classified Staff Human Resources Policy Manual 503.0

University Handbook for Appointed Personnel 10.08

University Staff Manual 2-100

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## Purpose and Summary

An institutional commitment to continuous learning and innovation enhances the University of Arizona's ability to fulfill its mission of teaching, research, and service. In support of that commitment, all full-benefits-eligible employees are provided at least 16 hours of paid release time annually to pursue professional development opportunities. Release time is prorated for those who work less than 40 hours per week.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees whose position is designated as full benefits eligible.

## Policy

The focus and means of an employee's professional development activity should be guided by departmental objectives, available resources, and the employee's career goals. Conferences, university-sponsored educational programs, academic coursework, internships, and time for research or intensive reading are a few of the ways members of the University of Arizona community may pursue professional development. Departments are encouraged to fund professional development activities that will enhance an employee's contribution to the University, but fees for professional development programming are not automatically reimbursed.

Employees must receive approval from their supervisors before using release time for professional development. If employees choose to participate in professional development activities on their own time, the time spent is not considered as time worked and is not eligible for overtime or compensatory time.

## **Frequently Asked Questions\***

### **Can I request time off to pursue professional development opportunities?**

Yes, all full-time benefits-eligible employees are eligible for at least 16 hours of paid release time annually to pursue professional development. Release time is prorated if you work less than full time. Supervisors may approve more than 16 hours of paid time at their discretion. You *must* request approval from your supervisor before using release time for professional development.

### **What can I do if my supervisor is unwilling to release me to attend professional development opportunities?**

Seek to understand your supervisor's concerns and offer solutions to address them. You may need to plan your professional development activities for a less disruptive time. Be prepared to show how the professional development would contribute to departmental objectives and enhance your value to the University.

### **I am an ancillary employee. Can I request paid time to pursue professional development opportunities?**

The Continuing Professional Development policy applies only to full-benefits-eligible employees. However, supervisors have the discretion to support non-benefits-eligible employees in their pursuit of professional development. Discuss the matter with your supervisor, and be prepared to show how the professional development would contribute to departmental objectives and enhance your value to the University.

### **My supervisor says the department cannot afford to pay conference or professional development fees. Can the department really ask me to pay my own way?**

Yes. Departments are encouraged to fund professional development activities that enhance employees' contributions to the University, but fees are not automatically reimbursed.

### **I am an appointed employee. Does the professional development policy apply to me?**

Yes. The University's commitment to continuous learning and innovation applies to all full-benefits-eligible employees.

## Revision History\*

January 22, 2020

Revised September 2002

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### Links

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