



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY NO: 204-P

- Applies To: All Department and Employees
- Effective Date: 07/01/2025
- References: Professional Development Request Form (Appendix A); Travel Expense Policy and Travel Expense Form

Purpose:

The City of Traverse City is committed to supporting the continuous professional growth of its employees. We recognize this is essential to developing and maintaining high-quality, responsive and professional services. This policy is designed to ensure that employees have access to educational and developmental opportunities that enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities in alignment with the evolving demands of their roles. Professional development opportunities may be made available to all employees, subject to scheduling, staffing, and budgetary considerations, and based on the anticipated benefit to the City.

Scope:

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time employees of the City of Traverse City, including those covered under collective bargaining agreements, unless otherwise specified in such agreements. Elected officials, appointed board or commission members, volunteers, and temporary or seasonal employees are not eligible for professional development opportunities under this policy.

All professional development activities must be planned in advance and included in the departmental budget. Approval for participation is contingent on the availability of budgeted funds.

Responsibility:

The City Manager, through the Human Resource Department, is responsible for the development and implementation of this policy. The HR Department shall regularly review and update this policy to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or organizational needs.

Departments are responsible for budgeting appropriate funds to cover professional development and mandatory certification-related expenses. 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.

Policy

It is the policy of the City of Traverse City to invest in training and professional development opportunities for employees to the fullest extent possible based on budgetary and other conditions. This includes support for continuing education necessary to obtain or maintain professional certifications relevant to an employee's position or career advancement within the organization.

Opportunities to attend and participate in professional development activities including courses, conferences, workshops, and certification programs must be available in an equitable fashion for all employees regardless of job classification.

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 the 224-P Tuition Reimbursement Policy.

Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Institutes, etc.:

- 1) When overnight lodging is required, only one employee from the organization may attend, unless otherwise approved in writing by the City Manager. Reimbursement will follow the City's Travel Expense Policy.
- 2) Employees are responsible for any expenses incurred by accompanying spouses or family members.
- 3) For events held locally, defined as within a two-hour drive (approximately 90 miles or less one way from City limits), multiple employees may attend. Overnight lodging may be approved in advance by the City Manager.
- 4) For national or out-of-state events, the City will cover registration fees. Travel, lodging, and incidental expenses will be reimbursed. Employees are permitted to attend only one such event per year, regardless of whether it is in-state or out-of-state. When submitting travel plans, please include both the lowest-cost and best-value options for transportation and lodging within the contiguous 48 states. Car travel is not authorized for one-way trips exceeding 8 hours.
- 5) Employees interested in serving on boards or committees of national or state organizations must first obtain approval from their Department Head, followed by review and approval by the City Manager. Considerations will include budget, time commitment, value to the City, and operational impact.
- 6) While written reports are not required following attendance at professional development events, employees are encouraged to share relevant materials, such as handouts or resources that may benefit others in the organization.
- 7) Any exceptions to the above must be requested in writing and approved in advance by the City Manager.

Payment Method and Responsibility

The preferred method of payment for approved professional development activities (such as registrations, training fees, and related expenses) is the use of a City-issued procurement card (P-Card).

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that sales tax is not charged on any purchases made using the City procurement card. Employees must notify vendors that the City of Traverse City is tax-exempt and provides the necessary tax-exemption documentation upon request.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in non-reimbursement of sales tax expenses.

<p>Approved By: Elizabeth Vogel on 06/12/2025</p> <p>Signature: <u> <i>E. Vogel</i> </u></p>	<p>HISTORY: Created : 09/09/2008 Updated: May 2011 Updated: 06/12/2025</p>
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APPENDIX A
CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THIS FORM:

Anyone who is attending a conference/workshop/seminar/or other training activity that is not conducted by the City of Traverse City.

HOW FAR IN ADVANCE:

As early as possible, no later than 3 weeks in advance to your department head.

Employee Name: _____ Department: _____

Nature of Meeting: _____

Is this A National Event? ___ Yes ___ No

If Yes, Did you attend a National Event Last Year? _____ Yes _____ No

Sponsored By: _____ Location: _____

Dates and Days of Week: _____

What benefit will you and the City receive from your attendance at this meeting?

What is the Total Estimated Cost of the Workshop:

Registration \$ _____ Food \$ _____

Transportation \$ _____ Lodging \$ _____

Mileage \$ _____ Other \$ _____

Total Estimated Cost: \$ _____

Was this event budgeted? ___ Yes ___ No

Signatures:

Employee

Department Head

*City Manager
(Required: Department Head requests)

Date

Date

Date

HR Department Tracking _____ (initial)

The completed form should be included when seeking reimbursement or to be included with procurement card purchases.