



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM-FOA-DRU/FM
SAF/AG
USTRANSCOME/J8
USSTRATCOME/PR14
USNORTHCOME/J8 Comptroller
USCENTCOME/J8-FM
USSOCOM/SORR-C
CPD/FM

FROM: SAF/FM
1130 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1130

SUBJECT: Policy on Reimbursement of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials

The Air force has reimbursed over 600 SAF/FM and Air Force Audit Agency Employees since the SAF/FM Policy on Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials was issued in May 2003. Based on lessons learned over the past two years, revisions to the policy are needed to ensure the flow of payments to employees is more efficient and limited funding is used more economically. Therefore, the following changes to the original policy will be effective on 1 November 2006:

- a. The requirement to secure advance approval of reimbursements by SAF/FMPW is eliminated for expenses totaling \$400 or less. The policy was originally designed to assure employees were eligible for reimbursement and that sufficient funds were available. However, experience with the program has shown current policy results in delays in employees beginning the certification process and multiple interactions (preliminary approval and final submission) between employees seeking reimbursement and SAF/FMPW staff. Perhaps even more significantly, it has forced SAF/FMPW to request sufficient funds to meet all advance approval requests and then return funds when a substantial number of employees fail to obtain certification within the fiscal year.
- b. Claims will be paid on a first-come, first-served basis. Employees are encouraged, however, to direct any questions about their eligibility for reimbursement or the availability of funds to SAF/FMPW, DSN 224-5391.
- c. Future reimbursement for a given certification will be limited to the maximum allowed for members of the certifying organization. Some certifying organizations charge higher fees for non-members to become certified. Reimbursing employees at the higher non-member rate is an inefficient use of Air Force funds and discourages membership in professional organizations.

The revised policy is attached in its entirety. The changes noted above are found in subparagraphs 4.b., c. and d. Our point of contact on this matter is Ms. Kim Vu, SAF/FMPW, DSN 224-5391 (email: kimnui.vu@pentagon.af.mil)

//SIGNED//

JOHN G. VONGLIS
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(Financial Management and Comptroller)

Attachment:
SAF/FM Policy on Reimbursement of Expenses to
Obtain Professional Credentials (November 2006)

**SAF/FM POLICY ON REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES TO OBTAIN
PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS
(REVISED NOVEMBER 2006)**

1. REFERENCES:

- a. Title 5, United States Code, section 5757, enacted by section 1112 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002
- b. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) Memorandum, dated 17 June 2002, Subject: "Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials"
- c. Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Memorandum, dated 12 August 2002, Subject: "Financial Management Related Professional Certifications, Licenses and Related Expenses."
- d. HQ USAF/DP Policy Memorandum, dated 28 March 2003, Subject: "Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials."

2. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY: This policy implements the authority of SAF/FM and prescribes the criteria and limitations for SAF/FMPW reimbursement of certification/licensing expenses. It supersedes the prior policy of 14 May 2003. This policy is effective 1 November 2005 and remains in effect until rescinded or superseded.

3. BACKGROUND: Reference "1.a." above now permits agencies to pay for employees to obtain professional accreditation, state-imposed and professional licenses, professional certification, and examination to obtain such credentials. This authority is discretionary and not an entitlement or benefit of employment.

4. PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY:

- a. It is a SAF/FM's intent to encourage both the systematic development and enhanced job performance of employees; support management objectives; and further contribute to recognition of the professionalism of the financial management workforce. To that end, SAF/FMPW will to the extent set forth in this policy, reimburse expenses related to obtaining or maintaining professional licenses or certifications for civilian employees who meet the designated eligibility requirements.
- b. Reimbursement of certification/licensing expenses will be:
 - (1). Subject to the availability of funds.

- (2). Made on a first-come, first-served basis
 - (3). Limited, where a certifying/licensing authority charges a higher amount to non-members, to the amount charged to members.
- c. For requests totaling over \$400 for a single certification/license, the commitment to reimburse costs must be approved in advance by SAF/FMPW.
- d. Payment shall be made on a reimbursable basis upon successful receipt of the credential as awarded by the certifying/licensing authority. Reimbursement shall be accomplished by submission to SAF/FMPW of:
- (1). A completed SF 1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business.
 - (2). A receipt for each item claimed.
 - (3). Proof of issuance of certification/license.
- e. Reimbursement will be considered for the following expenses related to obtaining approved licenses or certificates:
- (1). Examination fees (limited to those exams in which a passing score is achieved).
 - (2). License/certification fees (initial, renewal, registration).
- f. Reimbursement to any one individual for multiple certifications (as authorized in Appendix A) will be considered by SAF/FMPW upon the written recommendation from the organizational comptroller or equivalent.
- g. Reimbursement of costs of licenses or certifications will be made from centralized funds. Training funds cannot be used for reimbursement, IAW HQ USAF/DP policy.
- h. SAF/FMPW will not pay or reimburse the following expenses:
- (1). Employee's membership fees in societies or professional associations.
 - (2). Tuition/fees for formal (instructor-let or self-study) examination preparatory/review courses and related travel costs. These expenses will be budgeted for and covered by the field unit.
 - (3). Travel and per diem to sit for an examination.

- i. SAF/FMPW reimbursement for covered costs of licensure or certification may be made only for those costs incurred on or after 28 March 2003. Retroactive payment for costs incurred prior to this date is not authorized.

5. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY:

- a. To receive licensure/certification sponsorship under this policy, an employee must meet the following provisions:
 - (1). Civilian employee of the Department of the Air Force.
 - (2). Personnel must occupy a financial management coded position, a career broadening position, and/or hold a Financial Management (or shared) Occupational Series. Other will be considered on an exception basis, with endorsement of the organizational comptroller or equivalent.
 - (3). The employee must be performing at the “acceptable” level.
- b. Appendix A identifies SAF/FMPW-approved certifications and licenses. Sponsored credentials must be related to the employee’s career field.

6. POLICY REVIEW AND MODIFICATION:

- a. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually and amended as required.
- b. Requests to modify this policy or to add or delete licenses or certifications must be forwarded through MAJCOM/FM channels and submitted to SAF/FMPW.

APPENDIX A
Professional Certifications Covered by This Policy

1. Accredited Financial Examiner (AFE)
2. Certified Cash Manager (CCM)
3. Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM)
To include optional Acquisition Module
4. Certified Financial Planner (CFP)
5. Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)
6. Certified Government Audit Professional (CGAP)
7. Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)
8. Certified Financial Manager (CFM)
9. Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
10. Certified Internal Auditor (CIA)
11. Certified Management Accountant (CMA)
12. Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
13. Certified Public Finance Office (CPFO)
14. Certified Cost Estimator/Analyst (CCE/A)
15. Certified Cost Consultant (CCC)
16. NACHA accredited ACH professionals (AAP)