

**VII-3.10 – POLICY ON EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT FOR NONEXEMPT
AND EXEMPT STAFF EMPLOYEES**

(Approved by the USM Board of Regents October 9, 2015; Technical amendments by the Board on June 19, 2020.)

I. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

A. Purpose

This Policy establishes a framework for employee development programs at institutions of the University System of Maryland (USM). Such programs are designed to support improvements in an employee’s knowledge and skills to contribute both to the employee’s professional growth and the institution’s welfare, subject to the availability of funds.

B. Applicability

This policy applies to Regular status Nonexempt and Exempt Staff employees and other staff employees designated by the institution.

II. TUITION REMISSION AND REIMBURSEMENT

Institutions may foster professional development by making financial support for employees’ continuing education as follows:

- A. Tuition Remission – See BOR VII – 4.10 Policy on Tuition Remission and Tuition Reimbursement for Faculty and Staff; and
- B. Tuition Reimbursement – See BOR VII – 4.10 Policy on Tuition Remission and Tuition Reimbursement for Faculty and Staff, Section IV.

III. TIME AWAY FROM WORK FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. General Terms. Professional development opportunities involving paid time may be available to eligible employees as follows:

- 1. Such programs are intended for employees who are expected to continue employment at the institution for a period that will justify the cost to the institution.
- 2. Participation in employee development programs will not be denied to eligible persons because they are employed in programs supported by funds derived from contracts or grants.
- 3. The availability of time to participate in a professional development opportunity is within the discretion of the institution.

USM Bylaws, Policies and Procedures of the Board of Regents

4. While actively participating in such a program, employees are entitled to full salary, continued participation in the appropriate retirement system, and receipt of all other employee benefits for which they are eligible. Holidays will be observed consistent with institution policy.
 5. If the appropriate employee development program is available within the USM, the employee shall pursue the program at the USM institution. If it is not available within the USM, prior approval is needed from the institution CHRO before the employee may be permitted to utilize paid work release under this policy at a non- USM institution.
 6. Whenever a mid-term or semester break in the employee's professional development program exceeds 10 work days, the employee may be required to report for duty at their department or unit.
- B. Leave of Absence for Professional Development for Exempt Staff Employees**
1. The President or designee may approve a leave of absence with pay for an exempt employee to pursue advanced instruction or other approved plan of development for a period of up to six (6) months.
 - a) An approved leave will assure the employee of return to the position.
 - b) Tuition, travel and all other costs for the professional development plan will be paid by the participant.
 2. An employee who requests leave with pay for professional development must sign a written agreement in which the employee agrees to return to the institution immediately upon completion of the leave and serve as a full-time employee for twelve (12) months thereafter.
 3. To be eligible for a professional leave of absence, the employee must have been employed at the institution in a full-time, Regular status position for no less than six years.
- C. Work Release for Nonexempt Staff Employees**
- Work release may be available to nonexempt staff employees to develop added skills and job proficiency in their present positions or acquire minimum qualifications for a higher classification as part of an approved career development plan, as follows:
1. Short Term, Full-Time Work Release
 - a) These programs are for the purpose of assisting employees to acquire skills

