

**Nurses' Enhanced
Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement (WSR)
Program
for PEF-Represented Employees**

Program Guidelines
for the Period
April 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015



Governor's Office of Employee Relations



**Susan M. Kent, President
Public Employees Federation**

Nurses' Enhanced Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement Program (WSR)

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NURSES' ENHANCED WORKSHOP & SEMINAR REIMBURSEMENT (WSR) PROGRAM

A. Program Description

The Nurses' Enhanced Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement (WSR) Program provides enhanced training opportunities to PEF-represented nurses for the period of April 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015. This program supplements benefits already available through the regular Workshop & Seminar Reimbursement (WSR) Program.

B. Funding and Oversight of the Nurses' Enhanced WSR Program

Funding is provided through Article 15 of the 2011-2015 Agreement between the State of New York and PEF. Article 15 also establishes the Professional Development Committee (PDC) consisting of two designees from GOER and two from PEF. The PDC has adopted these guidelines and monitors the administration of this program.

C. Nurses' Enhanced WSR Program Highlights

- Provides additional reimbursement of up to \$1,000 to PEF-represented nurses for workshops or seminars that enhance their performance in current jobs or further their nursing career.
- All Nurses' Enhanced WSR applications for courses or events must be submitted within 60 days after the end date of the course.
- To be eligible for reimbursement, events must meet the same eligibility criteria required by the regular WSR Program.
- The enhanced benefits are available **after** benefits under the regular WSR program have been exhausted. For information regarding the regular WSR benefits, refer to the Program Guidelines on the GOER website at http://www.goer.ny.gov/Training_Development/PEF/WSR/index.cfm.
- Nurses' Enhanced WSR can only be used for **non-credit bearing** courses, workshops, and seminars as detailed in the WSR Guidelines.

D. Eligibility

To be eligible for the Nurses' Enhanced WSR, the following requirements must be met:

1. *Applicant Eligibility:* The employee must be a PEF-represented nurse currently working in a nursing position and meet all eligibility criteria of regular WSR Program.
2. *Qualifying Events:* To qualify for reimbursement, the non-credit course, workshop, or seminar must meet all eligibility criteria of regular WSR Program, enhance the performance of current job responsibilities or further the applicant's nursing career with the State of New York.

This benefit is not for PEF-represented nurses who want to change their career (for example, a nurse who wants to become an attorney).

E. Overview

For PEF-represented nurses who exhaust their regular WSR benefits for the period of April 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015, an additional reimbursement of up to \$1,000 will be available for qualifying non-credit courses, workshops, or seminars.

F. Application and Reimbursement Process

Applications for the Nurses' Enhanced WSR Program are submitted online through GOER's PSTP Online Application (PSTP OA) System. A separate application must be completed for each course or event. All information contained on the application must be true, accurate, and verifiable by supporting documentation. Failure to complete a course successfully or to comply with the guidelines may result in denial of benefits or a penalty imposed for future benefits. **Employees who do not have access to the Internet can contact GOER at 518-474-6612 for a paper application.**

If the applicant is eligible for the Nurses' Enhanced benefit and has applied for a course or event that exceeds the maximum under the WSR program, the PSTP OA system should automatically provide a pop up box that asks applicants if they wish to use their Nurses' Enhanced benefit.

Applicants applying for the Nurses' Enhanced benefit to a *new course or event* must follow the application process detailed below.

Step 1: Log on to Public Service Training Program Online Application (PSTP OA)

- Register for a GOER account at http://www.goer.ny.gov/Training_Development/pstp_online.cfm.
- Once an account has been established, applicants can sign-in whenever they want to access their account.

Step 2: Complete an online application

- **Turn off the pop up blocker to certify the application submission and receive a confirmation number.**
- Applications must be submitted within 60 days after the end date of the course or event.
- Sign on to the PSTP OA system and select the Applications tab.
- Click on the WSR tab to bring up that specific application.
- Follow the instructions. All required fields must be completed to successfully submit an application. Information circle links are beside each field to clarify what is needed.
- Attach supporting documentation by clicking the **Add Supporting Documentation** link. Select a Word or PDF version of a scanned or downloaded document. Documentation must include:
 - a. an unaltered invoice, receipt, or itemized summary from the provider showing the registration (attendance) cost of the event, separate from any additional fees
 - b. list of any financial assistance received toward the cost of the course or event indicating the name of the entity providing the assistance
 - c. documentation showing the start and end dates of the event or course (month, day, and year)
 - d. documentation from the provider confirming attendance or successful completion. *WSR will not cover incomplete or failed non-credit courses or events.*
- All supporting documentation must be submitted within 30 days from submitting the application.
- Applicants having difficulty attaching documentation may mail them via certified U.S. mail within 30 days of submitting their online application to:

NYS Governor's Office of Employee Relations
PSTP Reimbursement Unit
2 Empire State Plaza, 7th Floor
Albany, NY 12223

- Applicants should retain a copy of all documentation for their records.

- Submit the completed application. **A successfully completed application will yield a confirmation number in a pop up box.** That number must accompany all documentation and/or correspondence relating to this application.

Applications can be submitted but cannot be approved for reimbursement without the supporting documentation.

Step 3: Check application status

It is important that applicants check their email and the **Notifications & Alerts** area of their Online Application (OA) Dashboard.

- Notification of Receipt — Applicants will be notified that the application has been received and is being reviewed.
- Notification of Hold — Applicants will be notified when additional information is needed or supporting documentation has not been received.
- Notification of Rejected or Denied — Applicants will be notified when their application has been denied and why.
- Notification of Approval — Applicants will be notified that their application is being processed for payment.

Applicants can review the current status of their applications at any time by selecting the 'Current Fiscal Year Apps' section of the PSTP OA System.

Step 4: Receive reimbursement

Once an application has been approved, reimbursement checks will be mailed from the Office of the State Comptroller to the employee's home approximately four to six weeks **after** applicants are notified that payment is being processed. This check will resemble a paycheck or travel expense check and is **not** automatically deposited.

Applicants' regular WSR benefits must be used before the enhanced program benefits.

The Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) provides equal access to its programs for all persons and is an equal opportunity provider and employer. It is the policy of GOER to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination and harassment against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, and veteran, marital or family status, political beliefs, or reprisal. Harassment of GOER program participants, trainers, or staff will not be tolerated.

Reasonable accommodations are available in all aspects of state training consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure that every individual is able to gain maximum benefit from their training experience. To request a reasonable accommodation, requests should be submitted to an individual's agency training representative or HR office when signing up for training.