



**Office of
Employee Relations**

Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement Pilot Program for PEF-Represented Employees

Program Guidelines
for April 1, 2020 through
March 31, 2022

Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement Pilot Program

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CERTIFICATION AND LICENSE RENEWAL FEE REIMBURSEMENT PILOT PROGRAM

A. Program Description

The Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement (CLRFR) Pilot Program reimburses the fees for certification and license renewals that are required for the PEF-represented employee's position. This will be based on the classification standard maintained by the Department of Civil Service for the applicant's current title or in other job descriptions or job announcements in the absence of an applicable Civil Service classification standard.

B. Funding and Oversight

Funding for the CLRFR Pilot Program is provided through Article 15 of the 2019-2023 Agreement between the State of New York and PEF. Article 15 also establishes the Professional Development Committee (PDC) that consists of two designees from the Office of Employee Relations (OER) and two from PEF. The PDC has adopted these program guidelines and monitors the administration of this program.

C. Program Highlights

- Provides one reimbursement per fiscal year for certification and license renewals that are required for the PEF-represented employee's position.
- Maximum reimbursement is \$100 per fiscal year (April 1 – March 31).
- The date of renewal payment determines program year eligibility.
- All CLRFR applications and supporting documentation must be submitted within 90 days after the date of payment. Applications for renewals that were paid for on or after April 1, 2020 through December 1, 2021, must be submitted by March 1, 2022. The postmark or email date will be used to determine the timeliness of the application.
- **All reimbursements issued during the calendar year are reported to the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) during the month of October. Once these reimbursements are reported, no further payments will be issued until after January 1 of the following calendar year.**
- **The IRS considers reimbursements under the Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement Program taxable income. The Office of the State Comptroller will withhold estimated taxes at the end of the calendar year. This may result in substantial withholding from paychecks at the end of the year and applicants should plan accordingly.**

D. Employee Eligibility

Applicants are eligible to participate in the CLRFR Program under the following conditions:

1. Current PEF-Represented Employees

At the time of payment for the certificate or license renewal, the applicant must be:

- Actively employed in a PEF-represented position
- A New York State or Roswell Park Cancer Institute employee with attendance rules coverage who is either full- or part-time (working 50 percent or more)

2. Laid Off Employees

A New York State or Roswell Park Cancer Institute employee is eligible for reimbursement if the applicant:

- Has been laid off
- Has not been rehired by New York State or Roswell Park in a PEF-represented position
- Is on the appropriate Civil Service or Roswell Park Preferred List

To be eligible for reimbursement, the renewal payment must be within 12 months of the layoff date. The applicant must provide documentation showing the layoff date and preferred list standing. The documentation must be signed by a personnel officer and sent as an attachment with other supporting documentation.

3. Less than Half-Time Employees

A New York State or Roswell Park Cancer Institute employee, represented by PEF, who works less than 50 percent, shall receive 50 percent of the benefit with proper documentation. Eligibility will be based on work status at the time of renewal payment.

E. Renewal Reimbursement Eligibility

Certificate and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement (CLRFR) Pilot Program is available for certification and license renewals that are required for the PEF-represented employee's position. This will be based on the classification standard maintained by the Department of Civil Service for the applicant's current title or in other job descriptions or job announcements in the absence of an applicable Civil Service classification standard.

The PDC maintains sole discretion for making the final determination on whether a renewal fee is eligible for reimbursement. Documentation may be requested from the applicant's supervisor to assist in determining eligibility.

F. Application Time Period and Deadline

The CLRFR Program covers eligible expenses incurred for certificate or license renewals, based on the date of renewal payment, during eligible fiscal years from April 1, 2020 through

March 31, 2022. All CLRFR applications and supporting documentation must be submitted within 90 days after the date of payment. The postmark or email date will be used to determine the timeliness of the application. Applications for renewals that were paid for on or after April 1, 2020 through December 1, 2021, must be submitted by March 1, 2022.

G. Release Time

The CLRFR Program does not entitle an employee to receive release time.

H. Expenses Covered

Eligible employees will be reimbursed for the cost of one certification or license renewal that is required for the PEF-represented employee's position, up to a maximum of \$100 per fiscal year.

I. Expenses Not Covered

Costs and fees not reimbursed by this program include, but are not limited to:

- Fees for initial certifications, licenses, and designations whether by application or examination
- Any fees that are not part of the renewal fee
- Study material (books, CDs, DVDs) and supplies
- Renewal fees for a certification or license that is not required for the employees New York State position
- Real estate licenses and certifications that are not required for the employee's position.

J. Maximum Reimbursement

An applicant can receive one reimbursement per fiscal year, up to a maximum of \$100. The date of renewal payment determines program year eligibility.

K. Alternative Sources of Financial Assistance

The CLRFR Program reimbursement will be secondary to any other financial assistance received. If the applicant receives assistance from any source, such as the agency, or a professional organization, the source and amount must be reported on the CLRFR application and on the paid invoice. This amount must be subtracted from the total reimbursement amount requested. An employee who fails to report the amount of assistance must repay the overpayment. These participants may be excluded from participating in future programs.

L. Taxation of Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursements

The IRS considers reimbursements under the Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement Program to be taxable income.

All reimbursements issued during the calendar year are reported to the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) during the month of October. The tax reports are based on the

reimbursement check date. Once these reimbursements are reported, no further payments will be issued until after January 1 of the following calendar year.

At the end of each calendar year, OSC will withhold estimated taxes at the end of the calendar year. Employees should consult a tax expert with questions regarding taxation of these benefits (reimbursements). This may result in substantial withholding from paychecks at the end of the year and applicants should plan accordingly. The Office of Employee Relations (OER) cannot provide any tax clarification or advice.

M. Application and Reimbursement Process

For complete guidelines and printable application forms, go to <https://oer.ny.gov/public-employees-federation-afl-cio-pef> or contact OER at (518) 474-6612.

Step 1: Complete the Application Form

- Applications can only be submitted after certification or license renewal payment is made. Applications submitted prior to renewal payment will not be accepted.
- Read the application and guidelines carefully and provide all the information required.
- All applications must be submitted within 90 days after the renewal payment is made. Failure to submit your application within the 90-day period may result in a denial. Applications for renewals that were paid for on or after April 1, 2020 through December 1, 2021, must be submitted by March 1, 2022. The postmark or email date will be used to determine the timeliness of the application.
- The date of renewal payment determines program year eligibility.
- Complete a separate CLRFR application for each certification or license renewal.

Step 2: Attach the Required Documentation

All supporting documentation must have the applicant's name printed on it by the issuing entity. Documentation must be in PDF format. All other formats (JPGs or other photo formats, Word Documents, links to documentation or websites, etc.) will not be accepted. Applicants should retain a copy of all documentation for their records.

Each of the following documents is required. They must be converted to PDF format and attached to the completed, signed, and dated reimbursement application:

- An unaltered invoice, receipt, or itemized account summary from the provider showing the certification or license renewal cost
- Proof of payment such as a bank statement, credit card statement, cancelled check, or receipt from the issuing New York State agency indicating the source of payment.
- Documentation showing the date of the renewal payment (month, day, and year)
- Proof of renewal, such as a copy of a license or certificate or receipt from the issuing New York State agency that includes the applicant's name
- Documentation showing any financial assistance that has been received or will be received toward the cost of the renewal, if applicable

Applicants should retain a copy of all documentation for their records. If all required documentation is not received within 90 days after the date of the renewal payment, your reimbursement request will be denied.

Please note: If you are unable to obtain the required documentation within the 90-day period, you must submit your application form and contact the PSTP Reimbursement Unit prior to the deadline.

Step 3: Submit the Application

Submit signed, dated application, and PDF version of supporting documentation in one of the following ways:

- *Email:* Email the application and supporting documentation by the application deadline to psttraining@oer.ny.gov. All documentation must be in PDF format. All other formats (JPGs or other photo formats, Word documents, links to documentation or websites, etc.) will not be accepted.
- *U.S. Mail:* Mail the application and supporting documentation, postmarked by the application deadline, to:

NYS Office of Employee Relations
PSTP Reimbursement Unit, 7th Floor
2 Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223-1250

Step 4: Application Status

The following notifications will be sent via email. Accordingly, please be sure all applications include a valid email address.

- *Notification of Receipt:* Notification will be sent 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. Failure to provide the required documentation may result in denial of your reimbursement request.
- *Notification of Denial:* Applicants will be notified when their application has been denied and why. If the request is denied for reasons such as ineligible or incomplete application, the applicant may resubmit the claim for reimbursement with additional documentation, as long as the applicant is still within 90 days after the date of renewal payment. Applicants will have 30 days from the date of the denial to appeal the decision for any other reason(s). The denial appeal may contain additional supporting documentation and a letter from the supervisor.
- *Notification of Approval:* Applicants will be notified that their application is being processed for payment.

Step 5: 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 address. This check will resemble a paycheck or travel expense check, where you tear away three sides in order to open the check. This is a live check and is not automatically deposited. Please allow up to four weeks for check processing and delivery.

Please make sure the address on the application is current.

It is the policy of the State of New York to provide for and promote equal opportunity in employment and equal access to all programs and services without discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, creed, national origin, military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including pregnancy-related disability or condition), predisposing genetic characteristics, marital/familial status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or prior arrest/criminal conviction record.