**Section 141.400 Reimbursement**

a) Prerequisites

1) *All local governmental agencies and individuals may elect to participate in the* *training* *programs*. All local governmental agencies and fire service personnel may elect to participate in the Division’s certification programs. Local governmental agencies and fire service personnel may elect to participate *for certification only or for certification and reimbursement for training expenses* as described in the Illinois Fire Protection Training Act [50 ILCS 740]. (Section 9 of the Act)

2) Local governmental agencies and fire service personnel may participate in all aspects of the Division’s certification programs without passage of a local governmental ordinance. Proof of passage of a local governmental ordinance shall be required, however, to qualify local governmental agencies and fire service personnel to receive reimbursement.

3) *To be eligible to receive reimbursement for training* under the Act, the local governmental agency shall comply with the following requirements:

A) The local governmental agency *shall require by ordinance* completion of a *basic level course approved by the Office, and* the passage of *the State test for certification at the basic level within the probationary period as established by the local governmental agency*. A local governmental agency will not receive reimbursement for training if the ordinance does not state the length of the probationary period or if the length of the probationary period does not comply with Section 10-1-7.1(c) of the Illinois Municipal Code [65 ILCS 5/10-1-7.1(c)] or Section 16.06(b) of the Fire Protection District Act [70 ILCS 705/1606(b)], as applicable. *A certified copy of the Ordinance must be on file with the Office.* (Section 9 of the Act). A local governmental agency will not receive reimbursement for training that occurs prior to the completion of this requirement.

i) Volunteer or paid-on-call fire service personnel may receive reimbursement for basic level training completed *beyond their probationary period*, if the basic level training is completed within *3 years from the date of initial* engagement as fire service personnel.

ii) Local governmental agencies that request reimbursement and file a certified copy of the required ordinance with the Division shall be eligible for reimbursement starting on the date a copy of the ordinance is received by the Division. Reimbursement may only be made for courses that commence on or after the date the Division receives a certified copy of the ordinance.

iii) Failure *to complete the basic training and certification within the required period will render that individual and local governmental agency ineligible for reimbursement funding for basic training for that individual in the calendar year in which his probationary period ends. The individual may later become certified without reimbursement.* (Section 9 of the Act)

B) The local governmental agency shall agree to abide by the requirements of this Part governing the training of fire service personnel.

C) The fire department must submit National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) reports to the Office for each month of the calendar year in which reimbursement is claimed. The fire department must be NFIRS-reporting compliant no later than April 15th of the calendar year in which claims for reimbursement are submitted. No reimbursement shall be provided if the fire department is not NFIRS-compliant.

D) Course completions must be submitted on the DPSE WebAccess Portal by the training facility by deadline for the submission for claims for reimbursement under this Section.

E) The Division shall reimburse only one time for a course completion but shall not reimburse for the same course repeated later by fire service personnel.

F) The fire service personnel for which reimbursement is claimed must have prerequisite certifications which are required under level specific certification prerequisites referenced in Subpart D prior to the beginning date of the course to be eligible for submission of claims for reimbursement.

4) Failure to satisfy the requirements of subsection (a)(3) will result in denial of the claims for reimbursement.

b) Claims

1) Annually, the Office shall electronically send eligible local governmental agencies the current Funding Document specifying details to submit for reimbursement. The Funding Document shall include the courses eligible for reimbursement. A claim for reimbursement is permitted only once per course per fire service personnel.

2) The Office shall reimburse up to 50% of the following costs incurred by eligible local governmental agencies or fire service personnel:

A) Salary. Salary is the sum actually paid by the local governmental agency for fire service personnel while attending courses. Salary does not include a local governmental agency’s contributions to insurance and pension programs but does include contributions deducted from the fire service personnel’s salary for insurance and retirement.

i) The formula for computing fire service personnel’s hourly salary is: yearly salary at the time of the training divided by the number of hours for which the fire service personnel is paid. It is acknowledged that hourly shifts may vary from 40 to 56 or more hours per week. In such instances, the formula should be adjusted to most accurately reflect the above definition.

ii) Variation in fire service personnel salary or between fire service personnel of equal grade must be explained.

B) Tuition and registration fees. A paid receipt from a training facility shall be attached to the reimbursement claim signature form.

C) Meals. Cost reimbursement for meals shall not exceed the reimbursement schedule allowed by 80 Ill. Adm. Code 3000, Appendix A.

D) Transportation costs. Cost reimbursement for transportation shall not exceed the calculated amount in accordance with requirements of this Section. Computations for such costs shall be provided on or attached to the reimbursement claim signature form.

i) Cost reimbursement claims for transportation shall be calculated using the auto mileage rate allowed by 80 Ill. Adm. Code 3000, Appendix A.

ii) A round trip shall be calculated as twice the distance from the address of the employing department to the training location.

iii) If the course is offered on consecutive days (e.g., Monday through Thursday, or Saturday and Sunday) and overnight lodging is used, the Office shall reimburse for only one round trip per consecutive day period (e.g., 6 round trips for a course offered on 6 weekends or one round trip for a 5-day course).

iv) If a course is offered on consecutive days (e.g., Monday through Thursday, or Saturday and Sunday), and overnight lodging is not used, the Office shall reimburse for round trip costs for each day.

v) If the course is offered on non-consecutive days (e.g., Monday and Wednesday evenings), the Office shall reimburse round trip transportation costs for each day.

vi) Reimbursement for mileage shall only be provided for one person when 2 or more persons travel together. No duplicative claims for reimbursement of mileage shall be made for persons traveling together.

E) Lodging. Lodging cost reimbursement shall be exclusively for the cost of the room and applicable taxes and shall not exceed the reimbursement schedule allowed by 80 Ill. Adm. Code 3000 Appendix A. A paid receipt shall be attached to the reimbursement claim signature form.

3) Fire service personnel who elect to participate for reimbursement may submit claims for reimbursement directly to the Division for expenses incurred for the calendar year in which reimbursement is claimed. Reimbursement for fire service personnel shall be limited to tuition and registration fees, mileage, lodging and meals. Such reimbursement shall be limited to out-of-pocket expenses not paid or reimbursed, in whole or in part, by the local governmental agency. Reimbursable expenses shall be subject to the reimbursement schedule allowed by 80 Ill. Adm. Code 3000 Appendix A.

4) In the event that the appropriation for reimbursement for training is insufficient to meet all claims for reimbursement at the 50% level, all claims for reimbursement shall be reduced proportionately and paid in the same proportion.

5) *No more than 50% of the reimbursements distributed to local governmental agencies in any fiscal* *year shall be distributed to local governmental agencies of more than 500,000 persons.* (Section 10 of the Act)

6) Local governmental agencies shall submit claims for reimbursement using the DPSE WebAccess Portal. Once the submission is complete, the required claim signature form shall be printed. The claim signature form requires original signatures. Required receipts shall be attached to the claim signature form and mailed to the Division before the deadline in subsection (b)(7).

7) For a calendar year (January 1-December 31), the deadline for the submission of claims for reimbursement shall be February 28 of the following year.

A) In the event that February 28 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the deadline for the submission of the claims shall be the next business day.

B) The accompanying claim signature form and receipts shall be postmarked no later than the deadline.

C) Any claims for reimbursement, claim signature forms and receipts submitted after the deadline are considered invalid and will be denied.

8) Reimbursement that was awarded based upon erroneous documentation in fire service personnel training records or erroneous documentation submitted to the Division shall be repaid to the Office in the amount of reimbursement received for which the fire department or fire service personnel was ineligible.

9) Reimbursement for training costs is limited to the amounts authorized in this Section, or the amount requested, whichever is less.

(Source: Amended at 47 Ill. Reg. 424, effective January 1, 2023)