TUITION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

Attorney Unit

The County has established a Tuition Loan Repayment Program to assist employees with student loan obligations and encourage continued County employment.

1. Eligibility requirements- all requirements must be met before the employee is deemed eligible for loan repayment assistance:

   a. The employee is employed in a regular full time Attorney Unit classification.
   
   b. The employee fully completes the County's Student Loan Repayment Application.
   
   c. The employee submits proof of the following:
      i. A qualifying Juris Doctor degree.
      ii. A valid, unrestricted license to practice law in the state of California.
      iii. Current statements from an unpaid loan.
   
   d. The employee is in paid status in the pay period the repayment is made.
   
   e. The employee is not participating in another tuition loan repayment program. This does not include participation in any loan forgiveness program.
   
   f. Employee's last Work Performance Evaluation rating is a "meets standards" or above.
   
   g. Employee is not on a current leave restriction plan.
   
   h. Employee is not on a current work performance improvement plan.

2. Terms of Loan Repayment Assistance:

Employees with 2 or more years of continuous service with the County as of July 1, 2019 will be eligible to apply for tuition loan repayment. Continuous service is defined as the total length of service from an employee's most recent beginning (hire) date in a regular position with no separation from County employment. Employees must complete a new application and submit supporting documentation for each disbursement for loan repayment. Any additional annual incentive will require completion of new one-year continuous periods of Qualifying Service on and after the date of the implementation of this provision. Eligible employees with 2 or more years of service as of July 1, 2019 will be immediately eligible to submit the required documentation to receive tuition loan repayment. Employees will receive the initial payment of $1,000 and receive additional payment after subsequent years of service. In no event will the payments be combined. If the application meets County requirements, the payment shall be as follows:

   a. After completion of 2 continuous years with the County: A single payment of up to $1,000.
   
   b. After completion of 3 continuous years with the County: A single payment of up to $1,500.
   
   c. After completion of 4 continuous years with the County: A single payment of up to $2,000.
   
   d. After completion of 5 continuous years with the County: A single payment of up to $2,500.
   
   e. After completion of 6 continuous years with the County: A single payment of up to $3,000.

Payment shall not exceed the total amount of $10,000 per employee. Eligible employees will receive the payment within thirty (30) days after approval of the required documentation.
3. Restrictions

a. Employee must have one or more qualifying student loans (including private loans provided they qualify pursuant to all applicable State and Federal laws, rules, and regulations).

b. Degree must have been completed and employee must be in active repayment of the loan.

c. Loans must not be in default status. Employees must provide a written statement from their lender(s) substantiating that the loan(s) are not in default, dated within ten (10) business days of the application for payment.

d. Payments made on loans in the year prior to the repayment request that are less than the maximum yearly repayment amount will be eligible for the lesser amount paid only.

e. Employees who separate from County employment are not entitled to prorated payments.

f. The lender information must be verified annually, and must not be older than ten (10) days prior to the application for payment.

g. If loans have been consolidated, proof of consolidation must be provided.

h. If the Eligible Attorney ceases to be an Eligible Attorney for any reason before completion of one year of continuous service, no part of this repayment shall be paid.

i. Employees must show proof of loan payments for each of the prior twelve (12) consecutive months.

4. Program Details

a. Payment will be made directly to the employee through EMACS. Payment will be subject to all required payroll deductions, and participants will be responsible for any and all applicable taxes resulting from the payments they receive.

b. Qualifying Student Loan shall mean a loan (or the portion of a loan, if consolidated) taken and used to cover the cost of an eligible attorney’s law school education. The determination of whether or to what extent a loan is a Qualifying Student Loan shall be made based on guidelines established by the Human Resources Department.

c. Notwithstanding the foregoing, reimbursement under this Section shall be made subject to any additional conditions approved by the appointing authority subject to any meet and confer obligations pursuant to the Meyers Milius Brown Act.

Date: Sept 20, 2018

County of San Bernardino

San Bernardino County Public Attorneys Association