



Learning and Wellness Allowance Policy

updated September 5, 2012

PHILOSOPHY

The Society supports and encourages a culture of continuous learning and organizational improvement. To that end, Management encourages employees to actively seek out and pursue learning opportunities throughout the year to increase knowledge, improve skills, and employ best practices to advance individual and team performance.

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for the use and reimbursement of the annual Learning and Wellness Allowance.

GENERAL TERMS

This policy applies to all indefinite term and continuing employees, participating in the group benefit plan.

Amount

Inside Education currently provides an allowance of **\$300** (before GST) per employee, to help maintain and advance their employment-related skills, in uses permitted as non-taxable benefits.

ELIGIBLE USES

Employees may access the allowance to pursue approved learning opportunities in the following categories.

1. SPECIFIC Employment-Related Training

To maintain or advance skills and best practices **directly related** and specifically required by your current role, or to support future responsibilities. (Hint: refer to your job description!)

Examples:

- **Program:** content knowledge in natural resources topics, particularly relevant to Alberta; standard/advanced first aid; Class 4 or defensive driving; safety training; teaching/group management skills; speaking/presentation skills (eg. Toastmasters)
- **Communications:** marketing; media/sponsor relations; website; social media
- **Operations:** payroll/benefits; accounting; legislation/insurance updates; human resources; administration; risk management; privacy
- **Management:** leadership; coaching; strategic planning; non-profit management

2. GENERAL Employment-Related Training

To improve fundamental business-related skills and knowledge that can be applied or shared broadly and usefully with ALL employees, to improve teamwork and organizational performance.

Examples:

- **Improving Productivity:** stress management; time management; teamwork; conflict resolution
- **Improving Communication:** writing skills; French language
- **Improving Computer Skills:** Microsoft Office programs; Mac operating system; database; content management systems



NON-ELIGIBLE USES

Personal interest courses not related to Inside Education business (*eg. carpentry, guitar, Italian language*).

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- **Registration Fees** - for lectures, seminars, webinars, workshops, courses, conferences
- **Professional Memberships** - for pursuit of best practices, professional networking, access to learning opportunities, discounted products and services
- **Books or Materials** - for self-directed learning, or if required by a learning program
- **Public Transportation, Parking** - as part of attending a learning event
- **Meals, Accommodation, Incidentals** - if multiple-day program only, and with pre-approval by Management.

RELEASE FROM WORK

Employees may be released for professional development on paid time off for learning events occurring during business hours of a regular workday, to an annual maximum of **14.50 hours** (2 days). Additional release required must be taken as personal time. No overtime will be accrued for employee participation in Learning and Wellness events. *As a professional courtesy, please let your supervisor and teammates know your intended absence, and record your event on both the online calendar and your timesheet.*

PART-YEAR OR PART-TIME

The annual allowance will be treated in the same manner as other allowances provided by the Society (*eg. medical leave*). The Learning and Wellness Allowance:

- will be pro-rated for part-time or part-year employees
- does not carry forward from year-to-year
- is not compensable and cannot be paid out

ONGOING EMPLOYMENT

As the Learning and Wellness Allowance is intended to support and enhance future personal and organizational performance, employees who have tendered their resignations and/or provided notice to terminate employment are not eligible.

REIMBURSEMENT

Employees should submit receipts on an expense claim as per standard procedure, indicating the pre-approved training category: **Learning-Specific**, or **Learning-General**. Expenses will be coded as *Staff Professional Development*.