



AOC POLICY-002
REIMBURSEMENT OR DIRECT PAYMENT OF PROFESSIONAL
LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS

DOCUMENT TITLE:	Reimbursement or Direct Payment of Professional Licenses/ Certifications and Professional Organization Memberships		
SUBJECT CODE ID:	AOC.002	DOCUMENT TYPE:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AOC POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICE/DEPARTMENT POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> MANUAL <input type="checkbox"/> STANDARD <input type="checkbox"/> STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
OFFICE:	AOC Director's Office		
DEPARTMENT:	N/A		
DIVISION:	N/A	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE:	2-12-21
APPROVING AUTHORITY:	AOC Director	RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE:	AOC Director of Finance and Administration
EFFECTIVE DATE:	2-12-21	PUBLISHED DATE:	2-09-21
REVIEWED DATE:	N/A	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	2-09-24
CITED AUTHORITIES:	N/A		
ASSOCIATED FORMS:	AOC-ACCT-8 (Accounting Form)		

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish and define the Administrative Office of the Court's approach to reimbursement or direct payment of an employee's expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining a professional license/certification or professional organization membership.

SECTION 2. APPLICABILITY

This Administrative Office of the Courts Policy applies to all offices, departments, divisions, and units of the AOC and all AOC personnel therein.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 "AOC" means the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts and all offices, departments, divisions, and units therein.
- 3.2 "AOC personnel" means all employees, contract workers, volunteers, and interns working in all offices, departments, divisions, and units of the AOC.
- 3.3 "AP Part VII" means the Rules of Administrative Procedure of the Court of Justice as adopted by the Supreme Court of Kentucky, Part VII, Reimbursement for Official Travel.

- 3.4 **"Appointing authority"** means an individual who is authorized to act on behalf of an agency or office of the KCOJ with respect to appointments, position actions, payroll documents, leave requests and disciplinary actions.
- 3.5 **"Approving authority"** means an employee who has the authority under this Policy to approve or deny requests for reimbursement or direct payment of an employee's expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining a professional license/certification or professional organization membership. The approving authority may appoint a designee to approve documents submitted for approval pursuant to this Policy. The approving authority for each AOC office or department is identified below by title:
- (a) Deputy Director for departments within the Office of Programs and Personnel;
 - (b) General Counsel for the Office of General Counsel;
 - (c) Executive Officer for the Office of Public Information;
 - (d) Director of Audits for the Office of Audits;
 - (e) Director of Finance and Administration for the Office of Finance and Administration; and
 - (f) Chief Information Officer or Director of Implementation and Court Services for the Office of Information and Technology Services.
- 3.6 **"Elective professional license/certification or professional organization membership"** means a professional license/certification or professional organization membership that is not described as required or preferred in the official job description of the employee's current position.
- 3.7 **"Professional certification"** means a designation earned from a professional society, university, a certification body, or from a private certifier by an employee indicating the employee has met minimum qualification standards to perform a job or task. Professional certifications typically must be renewed periodically or may only be valid for a specific period.
- 3.8 **"Professional license"** means an official designation indicating the holder has been determined by a professional licensing board, established and governed by the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to have met all qualifications set forth by statute, regulations, or rules, to engage in the practice or profession requiring the license. Professional licenses typically must be renewed periodically or may only be valid for a specific period.
- 3.9 **"Professional organization"** means an organization whose primary purpose is to enhance knowledge and skills associated with performance in a practice area or profession.
- 3.10 **"Required or preferred professional license/certification or professional organization membership"** means a professional license/certification or professional organization membership that is described as required or preferred in the official job description of the employee's current position.

SECTION 4. REQUIRED OR PREFERRED PROFESSIONAL LICENSE/CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Professional License/Certification

- (a) The AOC will reimburse an employee or pay directly for costs incurred to obtain and maintain a required or preferred professional license/certification (excluding the common driver's license) if the employee complies with all the requirements outlined in this Policy.
- (b) A professional license/certification includes all requirements and fees necessary for obtaining and maintaining the license/certification at the level required or preferred in the employee's official job description, and may include the following:
 - 1. Application fee.
 - 2. Fee(s) associated with a required examination(s) or test(s).
Reimbursement or direct payment may be made for up to two attempts to obtain or renew the professional license/certification during any one license/certification term or period.
 - (i) Costs for additional attempts within a license term or period are solely the responsibility of the employee.
 - (ii) It is the responsibility of the approving authority to monitor the number of attempts made by an employee and to deny requests for reimbursement or direct payment for a third or more attempt within a license/certification term period.
 - 3. Travel costs associated with obtaining or maintaining a professional license/certification may be reimbursed if submitted in accordance with AP Part VII.
- (c) Reimbursements or direct payments will be not be made for required or preferred professional license/certifications unless the employee obtains preapproval under Section 8 of this Policy and follows the reimbursement and direct payment requirements outlined in Section 9 of this Policy.
- (d) Only those courses and exams required to obtain or maintain a professional license/certification will be eligible for reimbursement or direct payment.

4.2 Professional Organization Membership

- (a) The AOC will reimburse an employee or pay directly for costs associated with membership in a required or preferred professional organization if the employee complies with all the requirements outlined in this Policy.
- (b) Professional organization membership fees include, where applicable, membership at the level required or preferred in the employee's official job description and may include the following:

1. Membership application fees; and
 2. Membership dues.
- (c) Reimbursements or direct payments will be not be approved for required or preferred professional organization memberships unless the employee obtains preapproval under Section 8 of this Policy and follows the reimbursement and direct payment requirements outlined in Section 9 of this Policy.

SECTION 5. KENTUCKY BAR ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Required or Preferred.

- (a) An employee will be reimbursed for his or her annual Kentucky Bar Association (KBA) dues if the official job description of the employee's current position requires or prefers the employee to be a licensed attorney and if the employee complies with all the requirements outlined in this Policy.
- (b) Preapproval under Section 8 of this Policy is not required for reimbursement of KBA dues, but the employee must take the following steps to receive reimbursement:
 1. Complete an *AOC Travel Voucher Form* (AOC T-1) and obtain the approval of his or her appointing authority; and
 2. Submit the completed and signed *AOC Travel Voucher Form* to the AOC Office of Financial Services, Department of Financial Services, Division of Accounting Services ("Division of Accounting Services"), with a copy of the annual dues notice or proof of payment, within 60 days of payment of the dues or by November 15, whichever occurs first. Late submittals will be denied.

5.2 **Elective.** If an employee's official job description does not require or prefer the employee to be a licensed attorney, the employee may request approval for reimbursement of his or her annual KBA dues under Section 6 of this Policy.

5.3 **Amount Eligible for Reimbursement.** Reimbursement for KBA dues includes only those dues required for annual membership renewal. Section dues or additional payments that are discretionary or optional, including Kentucky Bar Foundation contributions, late fees, processing fees, or any other administrative fees will not be reimbursed.

SECTION 6. ELECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LICENSE/CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

6.1 The AOC may, but is not required to, reimburse an employee or pay directly for the costs incurred to acquire and maintain an elective professional license/certification or professional organization membership.

6.2 In order to be eligible for reimbursement or direct payment, the professional license/certification or professional organization membership must be determined by

the employee's approving authority to have an official business purpose, be relevant to the mission of the KCOJ, or be beneficial to the employee's role within the KCOJ.

6.3 Only one (1) elective professional license/certification or professional organization membership may be approved for each employee, per fiscal year, per specialty.

6.4 Preapproval is required and must follow the requirements outlined in Section 8 of this Policy.

SECTION 7. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVED PROFESSIONAL LICENSE/CERTIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS

7.1 Renewals.

(a) The AOC will continue to reimburse the employee or pay directly for the professional license/certification or professional organization membership so long as the employee remains in a position with an official job description that describes it as required or preferred.

(b) If an employee accepts a position that does not describe the professional license/certification or professional organization membership as required or preferred, the employee is responsible for all the costs of renewal, unless the renewal is approved under Section 6 of this Policy.

(c) A request to renew a professional license/certification or professional organization membership must be submitted to the approving authority for approval annually or prior to the renewal deadline period. Request must follow the approval requirements outlined in Section 8 of this Policy.

7.2 **Optional Fees.** Reimbursement or direct payment will only include fees that are required to be paid to obtain or maintain a professional license/certification or professional organization membership. Additional payments that are discretionary or optional will not be reimbursed, including the following: add-on memberships, certifications, or services; late fees; or any other administrative fees.

7.3 **Late Fees.** No reimbursement or direct payment will be made for late fees.

7.4 **Fleet Vehicle Usage.** An AOC fleet vehicle may be used to attend required training, courses, or appointments to obtain or maintain a professional license/certification approved in accordance with this Policy. All required fleet policies and procedures must be followed.

7.5 **Documentation.** When required by the AOC-ACCT-8 *Request for Reimbursement or Direct Payment of Professional License/Certification or Professional Organization Membership*, the employee must provide his or her approving authority and the Division of Accounting Services with documentation confirming successful completion of professional license/certification or other training.

- 7.6 **Funding.** Approval for reimbursement or direct payment of any professional license/certification or professional organization membership is subject to sufficient budget appropriations for the fiscal year in which the request is made.

SECTION 8. PREAPPROVAL REQUIRED

- 8.1 Requests for reimbursement or direct payment of a professional license/certification or professional organization membership under Sections 4 and 6 of this Policy must be submitted and approved prior to attending the training course or exam, or before the payment is due and made by the employee.
- 8.2 To request approval, an employee must complete and submit an AOC-ACCT-8 *Request for Reimbursement or Direct Payment of Professional License/Certification or Professional Organization Membership* ("AOC-ACCT-8") to his or her approving authority.
- (a) If the professional license/certification or professional organization membership is elective, then the employee will be required to specify the business purpose(s) of the proposed professional license/certification or professional organization membership.
- (b) Fees must be itemized, and an invoice must be attached to AOC-ACCT-8.
- 8.3 If approved by the approving authority in accordance with this Policy, the employee must submit the approved AOC-ACCT-8 to the AOC Budget Director.
- 8.4 The AOC Budget Director will document whether funds are available, code the AOC-ACCT-8, submit the completed AOC-ACCT-8 to the AOC Director's Office, and copy the employee.
- 8.5 The Director's Office will review a properly submitted request and approve or deny it in accordance with this Policy. The Director's Office will email the AOC-ACCT-8 to the employee, his or her approving authority, and the Division of Accounting Services, at accounting@kycourts.net, and indicate whether the request is approved or denied. The Division of Accounting Services will maintain a record of every received AOC-ACCT-8.

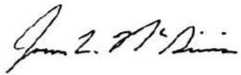
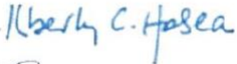
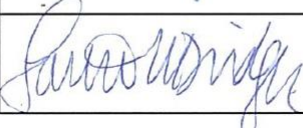
SECTION 9. REIMBURSEMENT AND DIRECT PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS

9.1 Reimbursement.

- (a) All requests for a reimbursement must comply with AP Part VII.
- (b) A request for reimbursement approved under this Policy must be submitted to the Division of Accounting Services on an *AOC Travel Voucher Form* no later than 60 days from the date the expense was incurred. Late submittals will be denied.
- (c) The following must be attached to the *AOC Travel Voucher Form*:
1. Dues statement or invoice;
 2. Receipt(s) showing proof of payment of all itemized expenses; and

3. An approved AOC-ACCT-8.

9.2 **Direct Payment.** Requests for direct payments must be submitted and approved 30 days or more prior to the due date. Requests for direct payment received by the Division of Accounting Services less than 30 days prior to the due date may not be processed before the due date.

	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
REVIEWED & APPROVED BY APPROVING AUTHORITY:	Jason L. McGinnis		1/28/21
REVIEWED & RECOMMENDED BY OGC:	Kimberly C. Hosea		2/3/21
REVIEWED & APPROVED BY AOC DIRECTOR:	Lauren K. Dudgeon		2/3/21