


LDH Policy on Paying Membership Dues, Licenses and Subscriptions

	Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)	
	Policy Number	128.1
	Content	Outlines what Professional membership dues, licenses and subscriptions can be paid with state funds, including required approvals and applicable exceptions.
	Effective Date	August 8, 2019
	Inquiries to	Division of Planning and Budget P.O. Box 4094 Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4094 (225) 342-1581

I. POLICY STATEMENT

In order to support management objectives, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) encourages employees' educational and professional systematic development and the enhanced job performance of employees. To that end, LDH will reimburse expenses related to obtaining or maintaining licenses or certifications for LDH employees who meet the designated eligibility requirements. This policy will also outline which memberships and subscription type services are reimbursable by the department.

II. PURPOSE

This policy permits LDH to pay for employee license renewals, certifications and memberships in Professional Organizations if the license, certification, membership and/or subscription service is directly related to the goals and mission of the Department and specific to the employee's job. This authority is discretionary and not an entitlement or benefit of employment.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all offices of the Louisiana Department of Health.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of this policy is August 8, 2019.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

It shall be the responsibility of the applicable Department Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Undersecretary, Executive Counsel, Medicaid Director, or Assistant Secretary to certify and approve any payments applicable to this policy. All approvals shall be subject to availability of funds.

VI. POLICY STATEMENT

Outlined below are the certifications, licenses, memberships and subscriptions applicable to this policy.

1. Professional License or Certification Expenses Reimbursable by this Policy

a. License or Certificate Required for Position.

(i) The employee must obtain the initial license or certification required for the employee's current position. The Department may pay for licensing renewals or certification renewals.

___Example: A registered nurse requires a license through the Louisiana State Board of Nursing. The employee must initially obtain his/her license before being hired into a nursing position with LDH; LDH may pay the annual license renewal fee.

(ii) If the professional license or certificate is required to engage in the profession, but is not required for the job or position, the Department shall not make payment.

b. The Department may pay for continuing education credits required for annual renewals as required for the employee's current position and provided the license/certification was a requirement of the position when hired.

c. If position requirements change after an employee is hired and the position now requires a National Certification for new hires, the Department can choose to pay for the necessary training and testing fees for the current employees to obtain the certification. New hires must obtain the National Certification on their own prior to hire.

2. Memberships in Professional Organizations

a. LDH may pay for membership in professional organizations only when membership is directly related to the goals and mission of the Department and specific to the employee's job. Additionally, when paying for membership in professional organizations, an agency should weigh the benefit it derives from paying for the membership against the cost. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. The amount of influence membership gives the agency over standards setting decisions made by the professional organization;

- ii. Access to resources through the membership, such as interaction with other professionals, trainings and publications;
 - iii. Discounts on resources provided to members of the professional organization;
 - iv. The degree to which the membership enhances the employee's job performance;
 - v. The cost, benefit, or both to the agency of having multiple employees having membership in the same organization;
 - vi. The amount of participation required of the employee as a member of the organization;
 - vii. Funding availability to cover the cost of the membership; and
 - viii. Ethical considerations such as the organization's involvement in lobbying or political activities or the organization's promotion of endeavors in which the employee may have a direct or indirect financial interest.
- b. All memberships paid shall be in the Department/Agency name and transferable should the employee leave the position. Exceptions may be granted in instances where an organization does not permit institutional membership or where an individual membership is less expensive. If an individual membership is paid and the employee leaves the Department, a prorated refund should be requested, if available, and/or the membership renewal shall not continue to be paid for that individual by the Department.
 - c. Memberships necessary to maintain or enhance an employee's professional status (e.g. American Institute of Certified Public Accountant) should be considered the responsibility of the employee and the association dues considered a personal expense unless specifically required for the position held. Exceptions can be granted if the membership was a requirement when hired and required for the current position.

3. Newspaper Subscriptions

- a. Newspapers are not to be subscribed to for personal employee use. Newspaper subscriptions for clients' use are acceptable but numbers should be kept to the lowest quantity possible.

4. Miscellaneous Subscription Services

- a. Subscriptions are to be kept to a minimum and requested/approved only when critical to the operation of the office. All requests must include a detailed justification for the subscription.

VII. PROCEDURES

All requests applicable under this policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Undersecretary, Executive Counsel, Medicaid Director or Assistant Secretary via the Budget Freeze Exemption form for the applicable fiscal year. A detailed explanation/justification is to be provided including employee names and position numbers.

VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

IX. REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision
August 8, 2019	Policy created