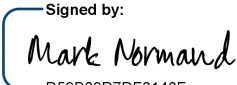




State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

Issuing Agency	Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy (C&E)
Policy Title	Payment and Reimbursement of Employee Licensing and Certification Fees
Policy Number	Administrative Policy No. 16
Effective Date	August 2026
Revised Date	NEW August 2026
Applies To	All unclassified and classified employees of the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy
Approval	Signed by:  D53B03D7DF0140F... Undersecretary, Department of Conservation and Energy

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy (“C&E” or “the Department”) to pay or reimburse employees for the reasonable and necessary costs of obtaining and maintaining professional licenses and certifications that (1) are directly related to the duties of the employee’s position or to the mission of the Department, and (2) produce a demonstrable benefit to the Department. Payment under this policy may be made by direct payment to the issuing body at the time the fee is due or by reimbursement to the employee after the employee has paid the fee. Payment under this policy is a discretionary benefit made in furtherance of a public purpose, is subject to prior written approval, and is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds.

This policy is adopted in recognition that licensed and certified professionals — including attorneys, petroleum engineers, geologists, geoscientists, surveyors, environmental specialists, water well drillers, plug-and-abandon inspectors, coastal scientists, and administrative and financial professionals — are essential to the Department’s statutory mission to conserve, manage, and regulate the energy and mineral resources of the state and to protect the public and the environment.

II. PURPOSE

The purposes of this policy are to:

- Ensure that payment and reimbursement of licensing and certification fees are administered uniformly, transparently, and in compliance with Article VII, Section 14 of the Louisiana Constitution (public-purpose requirement) and applicable civil service and fiscal rules.
- Attract and retain a qualified, credentialed workforce capable of carrying out the Department’s regulatory and scientific responsibilities.
- Reduce employee out-of-pocket expense for credentials the Department requires or reasonably relies upon, including by paying the issuing body directly when feasible.



State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

- Ensure that expenditures for licensing and certification fees yield a tangible, documented benefit to the Department.

III. **AUTHORITY**

This policy is issued by the Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Energy pursuant to the Secretary's general authority to administer the Department and to adopt rules for the internal management of its offices, and is consistent with the Constitution of Louisiana, applicable rules of the State Civil Service Commission and the Department of State Civil Service, and applicable policies and procedures of the Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Uniform Payroll and the Office of State Travel.

The Department of Conservation and Energy is responsible for administering this policy. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to supersede any controlling statute, Civil Service rule, or statewide policy; in the event of any conflict, the controlling external authority shall govern.

IV. **DEFINITIONS**

"License" means an authorization issued by a governmental body (state, federal, or other) that an individual must hold in order lawfully to perform a regulated activity (e.g., Professional Engineer, Professional Geoscientist, Professional Land Surveyor, Water Well Driller, Notary Public).

"Certification" means a credential issued by a governmental body or recognized professional organization that attests to an individual's qualifications in a specified field (e.g., Certified Public Accountant, Certified Information Systems Auditor, Certified Safety Professional, SHRM-CP, PMP).

"Job-Related" means the license or certification either (a) is required by law, rule, regulation, or the Department's job specification as a condition of holding or performing the employee's position, or (b) materially supports the duties of the employee's position and the mission of the Department as documented in the pre-approval request.

"Department Benefit" means a tangible, documented contribution to the Department's operations, such as satisfying a statutory or regulatory staffing requirement, enabling in-house performance of work that would otherwise be contracted, improving regulatory compliance, enhancing public health, safety, or environmental protection, or increasing the qualifications of personnel assigned to the Department's core functions.

"Direct Payment" means payment made by the Department directly to the issuing body, certifying organization, or training vendor at or before the time the fee is due. Direct Payment is the preferred method when the issuing body accepts payment from the Department and the timing of approval permits it.

"Reimbursement" means payment made by the Department to the employee after the employee has personally paid the fee and submitted a properly documented claim under Section X.B.

"Payment" means either Direct Payment or Reimbursement under this policy.

"Appointing Authority" means the Secretary or the Secretary's designee for personnel actions within a given office of the Department.

V. **SCOPE AND ELIGIBILITY**

This policy applies to all permanent full-time unclassified and classified employees of the Department who have successfully completed any applicable probationary period as of the date the request is submitted.

Part-time and temporary employees, contract personnel, interns, and student workers are not eligible for payment or reimbursement under this policy, except where expressly approved in writing by the Secretary in the interest of the Department.



State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

An employee must be in active pay status and in good standing (no unresolved disciplinary action for unsatisfactory performance) at the time payment or reimbursement is processed.

Employees receiving premium pay for licensing credentials are not eligible for payment or reimbursement of those credentials under this policy.

VI. ELIGIBLE CREDENTIALS

To be eligible for payment or reimbursement, a license or certification must meet all of the following criteria:

- It is issued by a governmental body or a nationally or regionally recognized professional or accrediting organization.
- It is directly related to the duties of the employee's position or, in the case of a generally applicable credential (e.g., project management, information security, accounting), it materially supports the Department's mission.
- It produces a demonstrable benefit to the Department, documented in the pre-approval request.
- It is not used to satisfy a basic or minimum qualification that the employee was required to possess at the time of hire, unless the Department has subsequently required the credential as a condition of continued employment.

VII. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Subject to the pre-approval and documentation requirements of this policy and to the availability of appropriated funds, the Department may pay or reimburse the following:

Eligible Item	Pre-Approval Required	Documentation Required	Annual Cap
Renewal fees for a previously approved, job-related license or certification	Yes	Itemized invoice (Direct Payment) or paid receipt (Reimbursement); current license or certification number	Covered in full, subject to budget
Professional association dues where membership is required to hold or maintain the credential	Yes	Itemized invoice (Direct Payment) or paid receipt (Reimbursement) showing member type; statement of credential linkage	Actual required amount only

**Dollar caps set forth above may be adjusted annually by the Secretary by internal memorandum without reissuance of this policy.*

VIII. NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following are not eligible for payment or reimbursement under this policy:

- Fees associated with credentials that are not job-related as defined herein.



State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

- Fees an employee paid prior to receiving written pre-approval, except as expressly waived by the Secretary for good cause.
- Late fees, reinstatement penalties, or disciplinary fees imposed by a licensing or certifying body for the employee's failure timely to renew or comply, unless the delay was caused by circumstances attributable to the Department.
- Degree tuition, fees for academic credit toward a degree, and application or testing fees for admission to a degree program, which are governed by the Department's separate HR Policy No. 7, Educational Leave/Reimbursements.
- Professional association dues that are not required to hold or maintain an approved credential (general membership or lobbying dues).
- Travel, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses, which are governed by the State Travel Policy (Policy and Procedure Memorandum No. 49) issued by the Office of State Travel.
- Fees for credentials paid to the employee by another employer or third party.

IX. PRE-APPROVAL PROCESS

Employee Request - The employee shall submit a Licensing and Certification Form, which is available on the Employee Resource Center under the "Forms" section, to the employee's supervisor, identifying: (a) the credential sought or to be renewed; (b) the issuing body; (c) the fees or costs requested; (d) the requested method of payment (Direct Payment to the issuing body or Reimbursement to the employee), together with any vendor information required to enable Direct Payment; (e) a statement of job-relatedness and the specific benefit to the Department; and (f) whether the credential is a condition of the position.

Supervisor Review - The supervisor shall evaluate and recommend approval or denial, including a written statement of job-relatedness and Department benefit. The supervisor shall forward to HR for review.

HR Review - Human Resources shall confirm eligibility and forward to the Appointing Authority for review.

Appointing Authority Review - The Appointing Authority shall approve, deny, or modify the request and forward approved requests to HR for the Undersecretary's final approval.

Undersecretary Review - The Undersecretary shall approve, deny, or modify the request, including the approved method of payment, and forward approved requests to the Department's Human Resources office.

Final Approval - Final written approval shall be issued by the Undersecretary or designee. The approval shall specify the approved amount, the credential, and the approved method of payment.

Timing - Requests should be submitted at least 30 calendar days in advance of the date fees are due, except where a shorter period is unavoidable. Direct Payment requests should be submitted with sufficient lead time for the Department's accounts payable system to process payment to the issuing body before the fee due date.

X. PAYMENT PROCESS

Approved requests shall be processed through one of two methods, as designated in the Undersecretary's final approval:

A. Direct Payment to the Issuing Body

Where Direct Payment has been approved and the issuing body, certifying organization, or training vendor accepts payment from the Department, the Department shall pay the fee directly. The fee may be paid directly using a "LaCarte" Purchasing Card (P-card). The employee shall:



State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

- Submit a Licensing and Certification Form to Human Resources promptly upon receipt of the issuing body's invoice or registration confirmation, and in any event with sufficient lead time for the Department to process payment before the fee due date;
- Attach the issuing body's itemized invoice or registration confirmation, the original pre-approved form, and the vendor's payment instructions (e.g., remittance address, online payment link, or vendor account information), and
- Submit, within 30 calendar days after the credential is issued or renewed, proof of issuance, including license or certification number and expiration date, and certificate(s) of completion paid by Direct Payment.

B. Reimbursement to the Employee

Where Reimbursement has been approved or where Direct Payment is impracticable, the employee may pay the fee personally and seek reimbursement. The employee shall submit a Licensing and Certification Form to Human Resources within 60 calendar days after payment and credential issuance or renewal, together with: (a) paid itemized receipt(s); (b) proof of passage, issuance, or renewal of the credential, including license or certification number and expiration date; and (c) the original pre-approval.

Reimbursement shall be processed through the Department's accounts payable system in compliance with the Louisiana Government Travel and Expense Reimbursement rules and the requirements of the Office of State Uniform Payroll where applicable.

C. Tax Treatment and Records

Payments and reimbursements shall be treated for tax purposes in accordance with applicable Internal Revenue Service guidance. Where a payment or reimbursement is treated as taxable income to the employee, the Department shall report it accordingly.

The Department shall maintain, in the employee's official personnel file, a copy of the approved request, claim form, supporting documentation, and proof of credential for the retention period required by the State General Records Retention Schedule.

XI. ANNUAL MAXIMUM AMOUNT

The total amount the Department may pay or reimburse to or on behalf of any single employee under this policy shall not exceed seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) per State fiscal year. For purposes of this Section, the amount counted toward the annual maximum includes both Direct Payment to the issuing body and Reimbursement to the employee under Section X.

A request that would cause total payments to or on behalf of an employee to exceed the annual maximum for the applicable State fiscal year shall be approved, if at all, only up to the remaining balance of that maximum, unless the Secretary grants a written exception under Section XIII upon a documented finding that the expenditure serves a public purpose and the interests of the Department.

The annual maximum established in this Section may be adjusted prospectively by the Secretary by internal memorandum, without reissuance of this policy.



State of Louisiana
Department of Conservation and Energy
Administrative Policy No. 16

XII. RECORD-KEEPING AND OVERSIGHT

Human Resources shall maintain a log of all payments and reimbursements issued under this policy, including employee name, position, credential, payment method (Direct Payment or Reimbursement), amount, fiscal year, and date of payment.

The Department’s internal auditor may audit payments and reimbursements issued under this policy at any time. Any misrepresentation in a request or claim shall be grounds for denial, recovery of funds previously paid, and disciplinary action up to and including termination, without prejudice to civil or criminal remedies available to the State.

XIII. EXCEPTIONS

The Secretary may, in writing and upon a documented finding that doing so serves a public purpose and the interests of the Department, grant exceptions to any non-mandatory provision of this policy, including approval of Direct Payment in circumstances not otherwise contemplated. Exceptions shall be filed with the policy record maintained by Human Resources.

XIV. REVISION HISTORY:

Date	Action
August 2026	Policy Established