



Tuition Assistance Policy

Effective 5/1/2021

Niagara Bottling, LLC (“Niagara”) offers the Tuition Assistance Program for eligible Team Members who pursue a qualified undergraduate or graduate course of study. This program is offered as a benefit to Niagara Team Members and any tuition assistance made pursuant to it shall be made in Niagara’s sole discretion. This policy may be modified from time to time with or without notice, at Niagara’s sole discretion.

Team Member Eligibility

A Team Member is eligible for the Tuition Assistance Program provided they meet and maintain the following eligibility criteria:

1. Team Member successfully completes one year of continuous full-time employment prior to applying for tuition assistance
2. Team Member received at least an “achieves expectations” on their most recent periodic feedback
3. Team Member has not received a corrective action in the prior 12 months or at the time of submitting a tuition assistance application (includes all disciplinary action types)
4. Team Member received approval from Human Resources verifying that they meet these eligibility requirements
5. The education program must be towards a degree that is related to and will enhance the Team Member’s current job or position



Tuition Assistance Criteria

The Tuition Assistance Program is designed to help Team Members continue their education and to further enable them to grow in their **existing** job or position.

1. Program Guidelines

The following program guidelines apply:

- For purposes of calculating annual caps, the plan year begins January 1 and ends December 31.
- Approvals are valid only for the classes specifically approved on the application. Any amendments to the application must be reviewed and is subject to approval.
- All classes must be taken for a letter grade, whenever possible. Exceptions require manager and HR approval.
- All tuition assistance is subject to federal and state tax regulations. See *publication 15-B*, <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-benefits-for-education-information-center>
- This is not intended to qualify Team Member for a new trade, business or position. The course or program must not be one that facilitates Team Member's career change or enables Team Member to perform substantially different tasks or completely unrelated duties.
- Ph.D. programs generally will not qualify for reimbursement.
- Certification programs will not qualify for reimbursement under this program, however, you and your leader should contact your HR manager and the Niagara Training & Development department to discuss options.



2. Annual Tuition Assistance Benefit

Team Member may receive up to the amounts listed below depending on the program.

- Team Member may be reimbursed up to the annual cap listed below, for classes in which a 3.0 or above is achieved.
- The limit applies to the year in which the reimbursement is paid, not the year in which the expense is incurred.
- Unused Tuition Assistance allotments do not carry forward into the next plan year.
- Lifetime cap period begins with the first tuition assistance reimbursement payment and ends 5 consecutive years later for undergraduate/non-degree program and 3 consecutive years later for graduate degree program.

Effective 5/1/2021:

	Annual Tuition Assistance	Annual Cap	Lifetime Cap
Undergraduate or Non- Degree Program (Certificate)	\$0 - 5,250	\$5,250**	\$20,000 (5 years)
Graduate*	\$0 - 7,500	\$7,500	\$22,500 (3 years)

* For Graduate Programs- If Niagara pays more than \$5,250 for educational benefits for you during the year, you must generally pay tax on the amount over \$5,250. Niagara will include in your wages (Form W-2, box 1) the amount that you must include in income.

** For courses beginning prior to 5/1/2021, the annual cap is \$5,000.

Taxability

Per IRS regulations, any tuition reimbursement annual total over \$5,250 will be taxed. For more information please visit the <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-benefits-for-education-information-center> under “Employer-provided educational assistance”.

The tax treatment of employer paid tuition changes from time to time based on federal legislation. Niagara may be required to adjust the amounts displayed in this policy, in accordance with IRS regulations.



3. GPA/Program Completion Requirement

General Requirements:

- Team Member must be in good academic standing at all times during the program.
- Team Member must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above to receive all or partial tuition assistance at the approved threshold.

Team Member's final grade in each class correlates with the amount of tuition assistance as follows:

GPA for each course	% Reimbursement
3.0 – 4.0	100% of max allowed
2.5 to 2.99	50% of max allowed
2.49 and below	0%

- Where a GPA system is not applicable, Team Member must complete and pass the program previously approved by earning a certificate or showing proof of completion.
- Failure to fully complete or pass a course or program will result in disqualification for tuition assistance.

4. Team Member Responsibility

In the event of a Voluntary Termination:

- The Team Member will repay Niagara the full tuition reimbursement for any course(s) that end within twelve (12) months prior to the voluntary termination date.