



Tuition Assistance Policy

Effective 10/1/2022

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 a “Consistent Performance” on their most recent periodic feedback
3. Team Member has not received a Corrective Action¹ in the prior 12 months or at the time of submitting a tuition assistance application
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

¹ Corrective Actions are detailed in a team member’s Workday record and include the following types:

- Level 1 – Conduct/Rule Violation, Performance, Safety Level
- Level 2 – Attendance, Conduct/Rule Violation, Performance, Safety Level
- Final Opportunity – Attendance, Conduct/Rule Violation, Performance, Safety Level
- Termination – Attendance, Conduct/Rule Violation, Performance, Safety Level



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 partner 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 program and 3 consecutive years later for graduate degree program.

Effective 5/1/2021:

	Annual Tuition Assistance	Annual Cap	Lifetime Cap
Undergraduate	\$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 tax 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.



Team Member Checklist

Application & Reimbursement Process

Before starting any program or class, the Team Member must obtain **prior approval** for tuition assistance.

Before you take the class:

- Log into [Tuition Manager](#) (Splash→Team Member Tools→Benefits/Tuition Assistance)
- Choose **New Application**
- Please complete **one application** for all classes taken per term (quarter, semester, etc)
- You will need to include the following information in your application:
 - An explanation as to why the course or program will enhance Team Member's current position
 - A program or course plan, including but not limited to a breakdown of courses by semester (quarter) and estimated costs for each course
 - The actual total cost of the program or course
 - Any additional information that the Team Member believes is necessary for the evaluation and approval
 - Have a conversation with your manager/supervisor
 - Team Member shall pay for the course or program at the commencement of such course or program. Upload to the application proof of tuition payment (Registrar's receipt, cancelled check, credit card receipt, etc.).

After you take the class:

- Upon course completion, the Team Member will upload their final grades into the application within 90 days
- The Team Member will be required to sign a Promissory Note before any tuition assistance is dispersed. Signed Promissory notes are due within 30 days



Reimbursement Procedures

- Upon receipt of the signed Promissory note, your reimbursement will be entered in Workday for payment within 1-2 pay periods.
- **IMPORTANT DEADLINE:** For tuition reimbursements to be issued by year-end, all documentation (including grades) must be submitted by December 10th.

*If you have completed one or more classes for your Fall/Winter term and have received your grades prior to the December 10th deadline, we can apply the class(es) towards the current year maximum reimbursement. For the remainder of the classes pending grades until after December 10th, these classes will count towards the following year's annual maximum reimbursement within the limits of your lifetime cap. You have up to 12 months following the end of each course to be reimbursed for your classes.

Any applications approved for payment after December 10th will not receive reimbursement until the following month and into the new tax year; which will apply to the following year's annual cap.



Tuition Reimbursement Policy Flow Chart

