

2025-2026

NYS & CSEA
Partnership

TUITION BENEFITS GUIDE

For CSEA-Represented NYS Employees

Receive Vouchers and Reimbursements for Tuition Payments,
Certification, and Licensure Exam Fees!



Applications accepted until March 31, 2026.





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Save Money on Tuition & Exam Fees

Balancing work and education can be difficult, especially with time and financial constraints. For over two decades, the NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training has been a trusted partner in supporting thousands of CSEA-represented NYS employees toward advancing their careers.

Our tuition benefits program helps reduce college tuition and exam costs, making it easier to gain essential skills, certifications, or a degree to reach your career goals.

Discover Your Benefits

- **Tuition Vouchers**

Choose from over 140 [educational providers](#) that accept tuition vouchers to pay for your course(s) upfront.

- **Tuition Reimbursements**

You can get reimbursed for eligible exams and course tuition from approved providers.

- **Adult Education Basics & Skills Support**

We provide financial support to improve your basic knowledge, whether you want to improve your English skills, get your high school diploma, or prepare for other courses.

- **Statewide Targeted Tuition Benefits**

If you qualify for one of our statewide targeted tuition programs, you can save even more on tuition while training for a high-demand career field in NYS service.

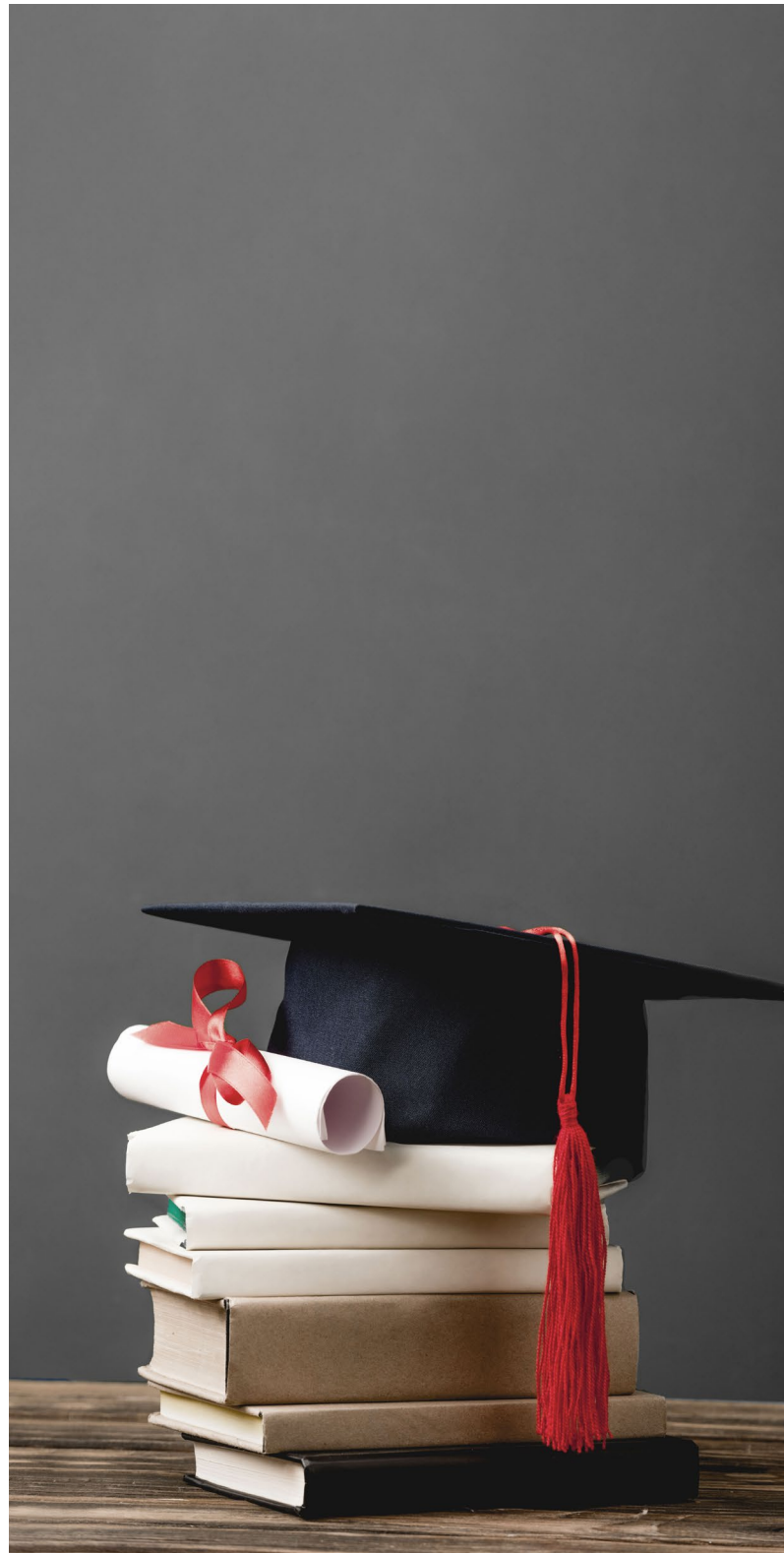
- **Credit-by-Exam Fee Reimbursements**

You can earn college credits by passing exams. We'll reimburse you for all eligible exams, so you can start college with more credits.

- **Certification & Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursements**

We understand the importance of keeping up with certifications and licenses in today's job market. Our program covers eligible exam fees, ensuring you have the necessary credentials to succeed in your field.

Take advantage of these opportunities - your success starts with you!





Eligibility

Eligible bargaining units are the:

- ▶ Administrative Services Unit (ASU/02),
- ▶ Operational Services Unit (OSU/03),
- ▶ Institutional Services Unit (ISU/04), or
- ▶ the Division of Military Naval Affairs (DMNA/47).

If you are a CSEA-represented NYS employee in one of the above eligible bargaining units, here are the criteria to qualify for tuition benefits:

- You must be receiving a NYS paycheck when you apply. Your application must be received after your first paycheck and before your last paycheck.
- If you were laid off in the past year and are on a Civil Service Preferred List, you are eligible.
- If you are on approved non-disciplinary leave without pay or workers' compensation leave, you may still qualify with proper documentation. The documentation must specify the type of leave and the start date, and it must be signed by a human resources officer and attached to your tuition benefits application.

Dates & Deadlines

Eligible employees may apply for tuition benefits each program year from April 1 to March 31. To ensure that you don't miss out, please keep the following dates in mind:

- **The current program year is from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026.** Courses and exams must be in session or taken during this timeframe to be eligible for tuition benefits.
- **You must apply for your tuition benefits by March 31, 2026.** Please note that you do not have to complete your course/exam before applying. However, you will not receive reimbursement until after completing your course/exam. Please note that applications sent via postal mail must be received (not postmarked) by March 31, 2026.

- **After you apply, you must submit all necessary follow-up documentation for reimbursement by June 30, 2026.**



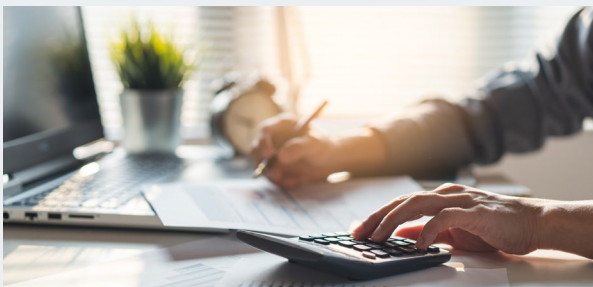
If you cannot provide the required documentation by the deadline please contact us at:

(800) 253-4332 Option 2 or

reimbursement@nyscseapartnership.org

If you miss these deadlines, you will not be eligible to receive your tuition benefits. **Tuition benefits cannot be carried over from one program year to the next or transferred to another individual.**

Tax Implications



In general, job-related educational assistance benefits are not taxable, with the following clarifications:

- Currently, no tax withholding is required on educational assistance benefits provided to employees up to a \$5,250 limit during the calendar year, except for Certification and Licensing Exam reimbursements, which are always taxable.

- Educational assistance benefits that exceed \$5,250 will be taxable unless they can be excluded as a "working condition fringe benefit."



If employer-sponsored benefits from the Partnership alone, or in combination with educational/tuition assistance from other NYS employer-sponsored benefits add up to more than \$5,250, you will have taxes taken out of your State paycheck(s) in December.

These exemptions, however, can change from one tax year to another.

We encourage you to contact your tax advisor/accountant for guidance.



How Benefits Work

STEP 1

- Review this guide.
- Watch the “Using the Tuition Benefits Program” webinar recording at <https://nyscseapartnership.org/tuition-benefits>

- Connect with our advisors to ensure you get the most out of your tuition benefits:



(800) 253-4332 Option 1
advisors@nyscseapartnership.org

STEP 2

- Find the course(s) or exam(s) you want to take during our application period.
- Search our Provider Directory at <https://nyscseapartnership.org/tuition-benefits-participating-voucher-schools>.
- Many providers have specific requirements you must meet before you can register. We suggest you contact the provider directly for information before you apply for your tuition benefits.

STEP 3

- Apply for and receive your tuition benefits.

STEP 4

- Register for your course or exam with the provider.

STEP 5

- Manage your benefits.
- If you receive a tuition voucher, give it to the provider so they can bill the Partnership directly for your course tuition.
- If you are approved for tuition or exam reimbursement, pay for the course/exam, complete it, and follow the directions on the approval form to submit the required reimbursement documentation to us by the deadline.



Tuition

Types of Tuition Benefits

You have the flexibility to choose between using tuition vouchers at a participating provider or opting for tuition reimbursements. You can also choose one of each!

Tuition Vouchers

Apply for a voucher if the educational institution you want to attend is one of [our participating providers](#). A voucher is a piece of paper that acts as payment for tuition at participating providers. Over 140 providers accept vouchers, covering the cost of your course directly. This is an ideal solution for avoiding out-of-pocket expenses at participating institutions. The provider will bill us directly for the cost of your course tuition.

Tuition Reimbursements

Apply for reimbursement if any of the following are true:

- ▶ The provider you want to use is not [a participating provider](#).

- ▶ A participating provider does not offer a convenient location or the type of course you are interested in taking.
- ▶ You have already paid for the course and prefer to be reimbursed directly.



Reimbursement will not be provided for coursework taken at a provider that is not accredited. Before you register with a provider, please contact us to ensure they are an approved reimbursement provider. If it's not approved, you won't be reimbursed.

We will only approve requests for providers who are accredited educational institutions.

Tuition Coverage Limits

You may request up to \$5,000 per program year. If applying for a voucher or reimbursement, you must submit one application per school/educational provider. If you have a remaining balance after your benefit is issued, you may submit a new application for the same school or different educational provider until your \$5,000 is depleted.

If you are in one of our Targeted Tuition programs for high-demand careers in NYS, you may be eligible to receive an additional \$2,500 towards your tuition, per program year (see [page 8](#) for more information).



Remaining balances will not carry over to the next program year. Any tuition costs above the maximum provided will be your responsibility. All other expenses are also your responsibility, such as fees, books, and materials.



Ineligible Tuition Courses

Certain types of non-credit courses are **NOT** eligible for tuition benefits.

Examples include:

- X Bartending
- X Gaming (for example, billiards and poker)
- X Modeling and appearance enhancement
- X Physical education (for example, kick-boxing, karate, martial arts, dance, and Pilates)
- X Life coach, Reiki, yoga, meditation, and hypnosis
- X Starting your own business
- X One-on-one courses or tutoring
- X Non-instructor-led courses

Eligible Tuition Courses

Our tuition benefits program offers a wide range of courses, programs, and providers to choose from, including undergraduate credit courses, non-credit courses, and graduate courses. These courses must take place within the current program year and can be unrelated to your current role.

Please note that while most courses can be considered job or career-related, it is always best to verify with a Partnership advisor to ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria.



(800) 253-4332 Option 1

advisors@nyscseapartnership.org

Credit Courses (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Undergraduate credit courses are usually available at colleges and universities. Upon completion of the course, college credit is awarded.

These courses are mainly taken by students who have a high school diploma or equivalent and working towards an associate's or bachelor's degree.

It's important to note that most educational institutions do not allow you to register for graduate courses unless you already have a bachelor's degree.

Non-Credit Courses

Non-credit courses are typically offered at BOCES or college continuing education departments. These courses do not award college credits but may award Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

Courses must meet the following criteria:

- ▶ Relate to vocational, trade, technical, or business-related skills.
- ▶ Be taught by an instructor.
- ▶ Be relevant to an occupation or workforce need in NYS.



Adult Education Basic Skills Courses

In addition, we also cover the cost of basic skills courses such as English, reading, writing, math, adult basic education, high school equivalency, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). While most of these courses are available for free in your community, we will cover the cost of such courses in accordance with our guidelines.

[Learn more about our Adult Education Basics program at www.nyscsepartnership.org.](http://www.nyscsepartnership.org)

Statewide Targeted Tuition Benefits

Now is the perfect time to start training for a promising career in NYS. There is a high demand for skilled professionals in four career fields: Commercial Driver's License (CDL); Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC); Nursing; and Welding. Additionally, there are other agency-sponsored programs you may be able to explore.

Enroll in one of these eligible, high-demand training programs, and you may receive up to \$2,500 in additional tuition benefits - on top of your standard benefits - for a total of up to \$7,500 per program year. This is a great opportunity to enhance your skills while saving money.

Don't miss out - contact us today to check your eligibility!

A member of our advisement team will need to verify your eligibility before granting your additional benefits.



(800) 253-4332 Option 1

advisors@nyscsepartnership.org

For your convenience, specific details about each program and the requirements that need to be fulfilled to qualify for the targeted tuition benefits are listed below.

Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

If you are pursuing a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), you may be eligible for targeted tuition benefits. You may also apply for reimbursement of the knowledge and skills certification and licensure exam fee (road test). Please note that we can only cover the exam fee, not the license itself.



Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC)

You may be eligible for targeted tuition benefits if you are enrolled in any of the following programs:

- ▶ A bachelor's degree program in Facilities Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, or Marine Engineering.
- ▶ An associate's degree in HVAC.
- ▶ An approved HVAC certificate program from BOCES or an accredited technical/vocational training school or technology college.*

** Certification program must be accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology or recognized by the NYSED Bureau of Proprietary Schools.*

Nursing

To be eligible for targeted tuition benefits in nursing, you must have already enrolled in a full LPN or RN program. Any pre-requisite courses taken before enrolling in a declared nursing major will not be covered under this targeted benefit. It is important to note that this additional benefit does not apply to other medical programs or nursing assistant programs. We encourage you to make use of the certification and exam fee reimbursements for the NCLEX and other nursing exams.

Welding

Employees who wish to take welding courses are eligible, and there are no minimum or maximum credit hours required.

You can also apply for reimbursement of relevant certification and licensure exam fees. You will be reimbursed, whether or not you pass the exam, after submitting the required documentation. There is no limit on the number of certification and licensure exam benefits you receive each program year.

Learn about our new CDL/LPN License Renewal Benefit by visiting:

<https://nyscseapartnership.org/license-fee-reimbursement-pilot-program>.

Search our Provider Directory by scanning the QR code with your phone or by visiting:

<https://nyscseapartnership.org/tuition-benefits-participating-voucher-schools>.





Exams

In addition to your other tuition benefits, you can get reimbursed for **credit-by-exam and certification and licensure exam fees up to a maximum of \$350 per exam**. There is no limit on the number of exams you can take.

Credit-by-Exam Fee Reimbursement

Passing college-level exams can help you earn credits and save time and money. It can shorten the time required to finish a degree program and help build your confidence to do college-level work

Eligible Credit-By-Exam Providers

Explore the major exam programs we cover below. Be sure to check with your provider first to confirm their participation. These programs offer college credit for the knowledge you have already acquired.

- **College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)** - This is a nationwide credit-by-exam program that allows you to earn credit for what you already know. The exams cover topics that most students take in the first two years of college.
- **DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST)** - This credit-by-exam program allows you to earn college credit for knowledge gained in the workplace, classroom, or through independent study. The exams cover various subjects, including physical sciences, social sciences, business, applied technology, humanities, and more.
- **Thomas Edison College Examination Program (TECEP)** - This program offers a wide range of exams for earning college credit. The exams are designed to allow you to demonstrate the college-level knowledge you have gained through work, independent reading, or other activities.

Certification & Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement

You can get reimbursed up to \$350 per exam for **unlimited** certification or licensure exam fees in addition to your other tuition benefits.

This program is not intended to replace existing agency exam reimbursement programs.



Exam Criteria

To be eligible, a certification/licensure exam must meet the following criteria:

- Be job- or career-related.
- Lead to certification or licensure for an occupation in New York State service.
- Be administered by an accredited organization.

Examples include:

- ▶ Boiler Inspector
- ▶ Certified Public Accountant
- ▶ Commercial Pesticide Applicator/ Technician
- ▶ Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor

- ▶ Dental Hygienist
- ▶ Physical Therapy Assistant
- ▶ Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator
- ▶ NCLEX
- ▶ Certain Nursing School Entrance Exams
- ▶ Exams for certification in specific software or hardware programs by Microsoft, Novell, Oracle, and others may also be covered.



Costs and fees NOT reimbursed by this program include, but are not limited to:

- Civil Service examination fees.
- Fees for exams leading to certification in a career not existing in NYS service.
- Academic and application fees.
- Study materials (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.) and supplies.
- Exam fees that are reimbursable by the employee's agency.



Apply & Manage Your Benefits

For your convenience, you can apply for tuition benefits by phone, via our application form, or by using the Tuition Portal.

You do not have to complete your course/exam before you apply. However, if you are seeking reimbursement, you will not receive it until after you complete your course/exam. Exceptions may apply if courses are more than one year long.

Three Ways to Apply

To make the application process as seamless as possible, you may apply using the best method for you.

1. Call Us

Call (800) 253-4332 Option 1 to complete your application over the phone with our advisement team.

2. Apply via Email, Fax, or Mail

Complete the application form (pdf) on [page 16](#) or download it at: <https://nyscseapartnership.org/tuition-benefits>.

Type or print legibly and complete all

required form fields. Submit your application via email, fax, or mail:

- ▶ **Email:** Send the completed application to tuitionapplications@nyscseapartnership.org.
- ▶ **Fax:** (518) 486-1989
- ▶ **Mail:** NYS & CSEA Partnership, Corporate Plaza East - Suite 502, 240 Washington Ave. Ext., Albany, NY 12203. *Applications sent via mail must be received (not postmarked) by March 31.*

3. Use our Tuition Portal

Sign in to the Tuition Portal using your NYS.gov ID and password at: <https://tuitionportal.nyscseapartnership.org/>



You can expect a response within **ten business days**. If you do not hear from us by this time, please call us at:

(800) 253-4332 Option 1 or email: advisors@nyscseapartnership.org.

Manage Your Benefits

Get Vouchers

If you receive a voucher for a participating provider, you must:

- Follow the provider's registration instructions and schedule. If you do not register with the provider, you may not be allowed to attend the course.
- You will receive one voucher per course requested. Submit the voucher to the provider when you register or pay for your course. By doing so, you permit the school to bill the Partnership. If you do not submit the voucher to the school, you may be billed by the school.



Get Reimbursed

If you receive reimbursement approval, you must follow the instructions on the front of the approval form. You will receive one benefit approval form per course requested. These instructions include the following steps:

- After completing and paying for the course, return the completed approval form to the Partnership. *Be sure to include a copy of the following materials:*
 - ▶ Your account statement from the

school detailing tuition charges (separate from fees)

- ▶ Proof of tuition payment
 - ▶ Sources of payments
 - ▶ Your transcript or grade report indicating course completion
- Once we receive all required supporting documents, we will mail your tuition or exam reimbursement to you within 60 days.

You must complete your course or exam to receive reimbursements.

It is possible to change your tuition benefits after you apply based on your situation. However, please be sure to follow the next steps.

Changing/Canceling Provider, Benefit Type, or Courses

We can only approve changes/cancellations if no charges were incurred against the original benefit, voucher, or reimbursement approval.



To change/cancel a voucher or reimbursement, contact a Partnership advisor at:

(800) 253-4332 Option 1 or email:
advisors@nycseapartnership.org

Changing/Canceling a Voucher

If you want to change your tuition benefit or you were unable to use it during the eligible time frame and want to cancel it, you must contact our advisors for a Change of Benefit Form. You must submit the Change of Benefit Form to the contact at the school listed on your voucher. You and the educational provider/school must sign the form indicating that no

charges were incurred towards the benefit(s). Once this form is returned, and signed by both you and the educational provider, we can then process the request.

Changing/Canceling a Reimbursement

To change or cancel a reimbursement approval, please contact our advisors for more information.

Changing Courses

We do not need to approve course changes if the new course(s) meet our course criteria.

Dropping Courses

Please contact the provider directly to learn about their drop procedures and refund policy.

- If you register for a course but withdraw **within** the school's 100% refund period (if one is available), the Partnership will not be required to pay for your participation in the course and your tuition benefit may still be valid for you to use.
- If you drop your course **outside** the school's 100% refund period, the Partnership will pay the school as required, and the payment amount will be deducted from your annual tuition benefit balance.

Tuition benefits cannot be transferred to another individual or carried over to the next program year.



Tuition Benefits Instructions & Application

Program Year: April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026

ELIGIBILITY

NYS employees in bargaining units ASU/02, OSU/03, ISU/04, or DMNA/47 who have received a NYS paycheck at the time the application is received by the Partnership. Applications submitted must be used for courses that are in session during this program year (04/01/2025 – 03/31/2026) and must be received by March 31st, 2026.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

To complete your Tuition Benefits Application, you will need:

- Personal contact and employment details
- Educational provider/school name
- Course name(s)
- Course type(s) (Credit/Noncredit)
- Number of credits (for credit-bearing courses)
- Course cost(s)

HOW TO APPLY

1. Submit one application per benefit type (voucher or reimbursement) with up to four courses per educational provider.
2. To apply for additional courses or a different provider, submit a new application.
3. Instructions on how to submit the application are at the bottom of this form.

Please Note: You will receive one benefit form per course listed on your application.

REMAINING BALANCE/PARTIAL PAYMENT

If your benefit does not cover the full course cost, you may apply partial payments until your \$5,000 limit is reached. For balance inquiries, contact a Partnership advisor.

INCOMPLETE OR INCORRECT APPLICATIONS MAY:

- Require follow-up with Partnership staff.
- Affect your available balance.
- Require you to complete a Request for Benefit Change Form.
- Require you to contact the school listed on your voucher.
- Delay processing, impacting course enrollment.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Important updates will be sent using the contact information you provide below.

NYS Employee ID Number (check your NYS paystub): _____

CSEA ID Number (check your member card): _____

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Mailing Address (including city, state, zip): _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

Employer (NYS Agency Name): _____

If you have a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a course, visit <https://nyscseapartnership.org/accessibility-contact-information> for helpful information and resources.

BENEFIT REQUEST

You may request up to \$5,000 per program year. If applying for a voucher or reimbursement, you must submit one application per school/educational provider. If you have a remaining balance after your benefit is issued, you may submit a new application for the same school or different educational provider until your \$5,000 is depleted.

Remaining balances will not carry over to the next program year. Please note that the amount requested may be different from the benefit issued, based on actual tuition cost. Tuition costs are subject to change based on the provider. Any tuition costs above the maximum provided will be your responsibility. All other expenses are also your responsibility, such as fees, books, and materials.

Tuition Benefit Type - Are you applying for a voucher or a reimbursement benefit? Please check one.

Voucher (for payment up front to participating schools)

How do you want your benefits sent? Check one.

Reimbursement (for repayment upon course completion)

Email Mail

School Information - Visit our website to see the [full list of participating provider schools](#).

Name of School: _____

Number of courses applied in application: _____

Subject Area: _____

Estimated total amount requested: _____

If you are enrolled in one of the programs listed below, please check one, and a Partnership advisor will follow up with you to discuss additional benefits.

Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Nursing

Welding

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Name	Check box if graduate course.	Start Date	Credit or Non-Credit	# of Credits	Course Cost
			Credit Non-Credit		
			Credit Non-Credit		
			Credit Non-Credit		
			Credit Non-Credit		

AUTHORIZATION AND AGREEMENT

By checking this box, I acknowledge that if employer-sponsored benefits from the Partnership alone, or in combination with educational/tuition assistance from other NYS employer-sponsored benefits add up to more than \$5,250, I will have taxes taken out of my State paycheck(s) in December.

By checking this box, I agree that all the information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I hereby authorize the school named above to release to the Partnership final billing information.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Save and return the completed application via email, fax, or mail using the information below. Do not send payment/documentation at this time. For questions, contact a Partnership advisor at (800) 253-4332 Option 1.

▶ Email: tuitionapplications@nyscseapartnership.org

▶ Fax: (518) 486-1989

▶ NYS & CSEA Partnership,

Corporate Plaza East – Suite 502,

240 Washington Ave. Ext. Albany, NY 12203



Resources and Support

Don't let education costs hold you back from your dreams. Join the thousands of CSEA-represented NYS employees who have achieved success with the help of tuition and exam savings. Take the first step towards your future today.



Webinar: Using Your Tuition Benefits

Watch a recording on [our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX7WdRtEhhw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX7WdRtEhhw)



Webinar: Financing Your Education

Watch a recording on [our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZOj3ocSlvA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZOj3ocSlvA)



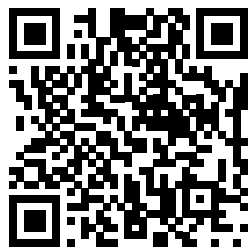
Connect with a Partnership advisor.

Get help using and applying for your tuition benefits.

(800) 253-4332 Option 1 or advisors@nyscseapartnership.org.



Take the first step.
Connect with us today!



Tuition Benefits Program

Corporate Plaza East - Suite 502
240 Washington Ave. Ext.
Albany, NY 12203

(800) 253-4332 Option 1

advisors@nyscseapartnership.org