Managing Director’s Guidance Memo

Reasonable Expenses Related to a Field Placement

August 2015

Interpretation 305-2
A law school may not grant credit to a student for participation in a field placement program for which the student receives compensation. This Interpretation does not preclude reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses related to the field placement.

In general, costs that are specifically tied to a field placement program may be reimbursed. Examples of various types of reimbursable and non-reimbursable expenses are listed below.

Local transportation
● The cost of getting to and from the placement including bus fare, subway fare, parking, or mileage is reimbursable.
● The general cost of owning a car, such as depreciation, license registration fee, etc., is not reimbursable.

Travel to non-local field placement
● The cost of airfare or other transportation to the field placement location is reimbursable.

Housing
● The cost of housing over and above the cost of reasonable accommodations at the student’s home location is reimbursable. The school would need to establish the amount of the differential.
● If an employer provides housing for employees, the student may live in that housing.
● Reimbursement may not take into account any ongoing housing expense the student claims at the student’s law school home location.
Food
● The cost of food over and above the cost of food at the student’s home location is reimbursable. The school would need to establish the amount of the differential.

General
● Stipends from employers are not permissible.
● If an expense is reimbursable, the amount can be paid for by either the employer or the law school.

The Managing Director’s Office will issue Guidance memoranda from time-to-time when new Standards or Interpretations have been adopted or when, in the course of the Office’s dealings with schools about compliance with the Standards, a number of schools are asking for clarification or direction regarding a particular Standard, Interpretation or reporting requirement. The Office does its best to provide helpful guidance, but we remind schools that we do not have the authority to bind either the Council or the Accreditation Committee. That said, the Council and the Accreditation Committee understand the necessity of providing guidance and will take that guidance into account in any determination about a school’s operating in compliance with the Standards.