



SEIU UH W - WEST & JOINT EMPLOYER

EDUCATION FUND

Frequently Asked Questions: Upgrade Programs

What upgrade programs does the Education Fund offer?

What we offer is based on employer needs. Upgrade programs are expensive for the Education Fund and intensive for the participant. We don't want to do them unless we have reason to believe that participants will be able to get jobs with their employers when they are done. We have offered a wide range of shorter programs, such as phlebotomy, unit assistant, medical assistant, sterile processing, as well as longer trainings including LVN-t- RN, RN, mammography and medical coding. Not all managers are aware that the Education Fund is here to help them with hard-to-fill positions. If you see a need that we could meet by offering an upgrade program, talk to your manager and encourage her/him to consider filling those jobs with current employees, trained by the Education Fund.

The Education Fund also offers certification review classes for employees who want to get certified (or attain a higher certification) in their existing field. If you are interested in this kind of upgrade (and especially if it would result in a pay increase for you) talk to your co-workers and managers and then get in touch with the Education Fund (call and ask for an Implementation Specialist or Program Manager). You can also fill out our Program Interest survey at: <http://www.seiu-uhweduc.org/lrsurvey.html>

How often does the Education Fund offer upgrade programs?

Because upgrades are offered based on employer needs and, in some cases, based on the availability of grant funds, there is no regular schedule. One way to find out what's being offered is to visit our website frequently. Because there is no regular schedule for upgrade programs, we could put information about them on the website at any time. If you know what kind of program you're looking for (for instance, phlebotomy or RN), *call our office and ask to be put on the Upgrade waiting list* so you will be contacted the next time we offer that kind of program in your area. When you call us, talk to a counselor and make sure you have all of the classes (and the Grade Point Average [GPA]) that you'll need. Don't wait for a program only to find that you can't meet the school's entrance requirements.

How do I make sure that I'm ready when the Education Fund does offer a program I want?

Talk to an Education Fund counselor and make an Education Plan. You'll want to look at the requirements for the program you are interested in. You should consider looking at those requirements at several schools in your area, as requirements may differ. Go over your transcripts with your counselor.

Remember, you not only need the required classes but most schools have GPA requirements (both overall, and for the core sciences). If your career goal requires an Associate's Degree, don't forget to look at the general education requirements for that degree.

And while you're waiting for that Education Fund upgrade program, apply to other schools as well. Find out about financial aid and remember that if you get into another school's program, you can still apply for our Forgivable Loan Program (as long as your program meets our criteria) so that you can reduce your hours of work while you're in school. More information about the Forgivable Loan Program can be found at http://www.seiu-uhweduc.org/programs_stipend.html.

How do I find out what upgrade programs my employer offers?

If your employer has an Education Director or someone in charge of education, talk with that person. Let them know you're interested and want to be notified in the future, even if they don't have anything for you right now. If your employer doesn't have an Education Director, go to the Human Resources Department and ask. You might also ask your union steward, who may know what is being offered, or may be able to help you find out.