Release Time is defined as time off from normal work hours, not required to be charged to leave credits, for attendance at a college event/function for which such time has been authorized by the college President or designee.

An employee’s use of Release Time is not automatic. Permission must be sought from the supervisor to attend the event/function if that attendance is during work hours. Permission to attend may be denied by the supervisor if such attendance would significantly disrupt operations.

While permission to grant Release Time may not be automatic, neither should it be routinely denied. Every effort should be made by the supervisor to make adjustments within a department or office to accommodate attendance at an authorized event/function.

Release Time will be considered for educational purposes when those events are sponsored by the college, offered under negotiated programs or considered job-related or career-related. Employees utilizing their SUNY tuition waiver, CSEA LEAP voucher, or other waivers are not automatically eligible for Release Time. However, the employee and supervisor may reach a Flex Time* agreement, Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule (VRWS)* agreement, or the employee may elect to charge leave accruals to attend a course during normal work hours.

Course work must meet one of the following criteria to be approved as job-related:

- It is specifically required by New York State, or by law or regulation, to maintain salary, status, or job; or
- It directly supports or improves skills required for current job assignments, duties, or responsibilities.

Course work must meet one of the following criteria to be approved as career-related:

- It directly prepares employees for advancement within the employee's current title series or occupation;
- It directly develops the administrative or management capacity of employee's; or
- For non-degreed employees, it is course work necessary to obtain an undergraduate degree to qualify them for job opportunities within State service at the paraprofessional or professional level.

Based on current Federal guidelines, even if course work meets these conditions, it does not sufficiently meet the test of job-relatedness if:

- It is required to meet the minimum educational requirements to qualify employees for permanent status in present job assignments; or
- It is part of a program of study that can qualify employees for a new occupation or profession, even if there are no plans to enter that occupation or profession.
*See Flex Time Work Scheduling and Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule (VRWS) agreements for further details.