



Lori A. Weaver
Commissioner

Morissa Henn
Deputy Commissioner

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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July 27, 2026

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, to enter into an educational tuition agreement and to pay said costs in an amount of \$3,000.00 as follows:

Institution:	University of Florida 300 Southwest 13 th Street Gainesville, FL 32611
Course Title(s):	Fundamentals of Bioinformatics Fundamentals in Molecular Genetics
Course Date(s):	Begin: 08/20/2026 End: 12/02/2026
Employee:	Caitlin Costello
Funding Source:	05-95-95-953010-56770000-066-500544
Total Cost of Course(s):	\$3,424.50
State Share:	\$3,000.00
Source of Funds:	Employee Training; 27.47% Federal, 67.95% General, 4.58% Other

EXPLANATION

This education will benefit the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Caitlin Costello by improving the overall efficiency of the employee's work in the Division of Public Health Services (DPHS). It will help Caitlin to develop the necessary skills to analyze the data produced in the Bureau of Laboratory Services. It also will provide Caitlin a foundational understanding of the molecules involved with the transmission, utilization, and evolution of genetic information. Caitlin's enhanced knowledge and skills will give her a better understanding of microbiology and allow her to better fulfill her duties within the laboratory.

The first course, *Fundamentals of Bioinformatics*, will equip Caitlin with essential computational skills to process sequencing data and analyze microbial genomes. Given the lack of a bioinformatician in the molecular diagnostic unit, it will be beneficial for Caitlin to have training on this topic to more efficiently use bioinformatic pipelines and online genomic databases. The second course, *Fundamentals in Molecular Genetics*, will improve Caitlin's understanding of a wide variety of both bacterial and viral pathogens that affect human health. It will enhance her knowledge of commonly found antibiotic-resistant organisms, which are frequently encountered at the Public Health Laboratories. Also, this will complement her course in bioinformatics by teaching her how to upload and extract information from online genomic databases. Completing these courses is part of Caitlin's pursuit of a Master of Science in Microbiology and Cell Science.

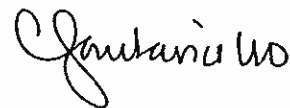
Caitlin Costello has been employed with DHHS for two and a half (2.5) years, in the position of 19-1020 Biological Scientists-3 (Laboratory Scientist III) in DPHS. In this position within the Bureau of Laboratory Services, Caitlin performs routine pathogen surveillance in food, sequences bacterial and viral isolates, and carries out clinical specimen testing. Her regular duties include clinical testing for norovirus, influenza, measles, and many other viral pathogens. She also assists with wastewater surveillance testing that covers RSV, influenza, and SARS-CoV-2. Other responsibilities include new method development, reagent management and ordering (to maintain laboratory efficiency), and document writing.

The Department of Health and Human Services encourages and supports employees who wish to further their professional growth through continuing education in disciplines that are mutually advantageous. Successful completion of the courses will add to the overall strength of the Department to perform its mission for the residents of New Hampshire.

These courses will not be taken on State time.

Attached is a fully executed Tuition Agreement for your review.

Respectfully submitted,



For:

Lori A. Weaver
Commissioner



**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EDUCATIONAL TUITION AGREEMENT**

Agreement dated this 30 day of 6 2026 by and through the Department of Health and Human Services (hereinafter referred to as the "State") and Caitlin Costello (hereinafter referred to as the "Recipient"). The State and the Recipient do hereby mutually agree as follows:

1. The State shall pay to the named institution the sum of \$1,500.00, which monies shall be used for the purpose of enrolling the Recipient in: Fundamentals of Bioinformatics (course name), which course is being offered by: University of Florida and which course shall commence on August 20th 20 26 and terminate on December 2nd 20 26.
2. The Recipient shall complete and achieve a passing grade in each course named in paragraph 1.
3. Should the Recipient fail to complete or achieve a passing grade in each course named in paragraph 1, the Recipient shall pay to the State the sum set forth in paragraph 1, provided, however, that if more than one course is named in paragraph 1, the amount which shall be paid to the State shall be calculated on a pro rata basis.
4. Upon the satisfactory completion of the courses named in paragraph 1, the Recipient shall continue in the employ of the State in his/her current position (or in such other position, at equal or greater compensation, to which he/she may be assigned) for a period of six (6) months.
5. The Recipient shall work in any area of the State to which he/she may be assigned, provided that such assignment will not constitute a severe hardship to said Recipient.
6. Should the Recipient breach any of the conditions set forth in paragraphs 4 and 5, the Recipient shall pay to the State a sum equal to all monies previously paid by the State for the Recipient pursuant to the Agreement, provided, however, that the Recipient shall receive a credit for each month in which he/she is employed by the State subsequent to the date upon which the named course(s) are satisfactorily completed, the value of said credit to be calculated on a pro rata basis.
7. The Recipient shall not raise any setoff or counterclaim against the State in any action brought by the State to collect any amount due under this agreement.
8. Should any amount be found to be due the State in any action brought against the Recipient pursuant to this Agreement, the State shall, in addition to said amount, be entitled to an award of costs and a reasonable amount in "attorney" fees.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the representatives of the State, in his/her official capacity only, and without personal liability, and the Recipient, have hereunto set their hands on the date first above written.

RECIPIENT

(signature) [Signature] (printed name) Caitlin Costello

NOTARY

State of New Hampshire, County of Merrimack:

On this the 30 day of June, 2026, before me, Holly Zielonko, the undersigned officer, personally appeared,

Caitlin Costello (recipient) known to me (or satisfactorily proven) to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged that he/she executed the same for the purposes herein contained.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and official seal.

NOTARY PUBLIC
HOLLY E. ZIELONKO - Notary Public
My Commission Expires December 7, 2027

[Signature]
Notary Public/Justice of the Peace Signature

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

DHHS Commissioner or Designee Signature

(printed name, title) Christine Santakillo Assoc. Commissioner

(date) 7/27/26



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EDUCATIONAL TUITION AGREEMENT

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1. The State shall pay to the named institution the sum of \$1,500.00, which monies shall be used for the purpose of enrolling the Recipient in: Fundamentals in Molecular Genetics (course name), which course is being offered by: University of Florida and which course shall commence on August 20th 20 26 and terminate on December 2nd 20 26.
2. The Recipient shall complete and achieve a passing grade in each course named in paragraph 1.
3. Should the Recipient fail to complete or achieve a passing grade in each course named in paragraph 1, the Recipient shall pay to the State the sum set forth in paragraph 1, provided, however, that if more than one course is named in paragraph 1, the amount which shall be paid to the State shall be calculated on a pro rata basis.
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF the representatives of the State, in his/her official capacity only, and without personal liability, and the Recipient, have hereunto set their hands on the date first above written.

RECIPIENT

(signature)

[Signature]

(printed name)

Caitlin Costello

NOTARY

State of New Hampshire, County of Merrimack:

On this the 30 day of June, 2026, before me, Holly Zelonko, the undersigned officer, personally appeared,

Caitlin Costello

(recipient) known to me (or satisfactorily proven) to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged that he/she executed the same for the purposes herein contained.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and

HOLLY ZEONKO - Notary Public
State of New Hampshire

My Commission Expires December 1, 2027
[Signature]
Notary Public/Judge of the Peace Signature

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

DHHS Commissioner or Designee Signature

[Signature]

(printed name, title) Christine Santanillo, Assoc Commissioner

(date) 7/27/26