



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is the embodiment and the reflection of the Municipality's intentions, attitude and position to the wellbeing of its employees.

2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

2.1 All the employees of the Municipality will enjoy an environment that promotes wellness and provide a scope for them to bring issues related to their wellness and lack thereof to the fore.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 This policy underscores the Municipality's good disposition towards its employees and their wellness and, as such, forms the basis for all the other related policies of the Municipality.

This policy must be read together with the employment and wellness program.

4. CONDUCIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The Municipality will, at all times, promote an environment that is conducive to both the productive capacity of its employees as well as their general happiness and wellbeing. In this regard, inter employee strife, bullying, physical harm, emotional and mental attack to its employees shall not be tolerated. Anyone found guilty of such an offence will be subjected to disciplinary action.

4.2 Through its design of jobs management practices, the Municipality shall endeavour to rationalise all its employees' workload to avoid undue stress and hardship. Accordingly, employees shall always exercise the right to approach management with requests for review of their jobs where they are of the view that the load and or other circumstances that may arise, is unreasonably affecting and undermining their state of wellness. This will be considered and weighed against the employee's job description, operational requirements and service delivery. Only the Head of Department, with the approval of the Municipal Manager, can review the employee's workload.

4.3 The Municipality will promote a conducive working environment; and, as such, the following will be promoted at all times:

(a) A healthy working environment

- (b) Guaranteed employees rights to privacy
- (c) Confidentiality in handling sensitive and private employee information
- 4.4 All employees are encouraged to bring forward any issues that are affecting their wellbeing.
- 4.5 The Municipality will promote and encourage its employees to live a healthy lifestyle through activities like:
 - (1) Regular exercises and taking up of membership of a gymnasium and or engaging in individual and group sporting activities.
 - (2) And other lifestyle organizations, where possible
 - (3) Adoption of healthy eating habits
 - (4) Minimising the risk to their health by dealing with the threats of such activities like smoking, excessive drinking and generally avoiding high stress activities
- 4.6 Where possible the Municipality will support employee initiatives forming sporting and social clubs whose expressed aims is to increase and promote employee wellness.
- 4.7 The Municipality will always adopt a homely and understanding environment and support its employees through hard times as when they are experiencing life crisis, including, but not limited to:
 - (1) Death of a spouse and a close member of the family
 - (2) During periods of ill- health
 - (3) Personal crises, like divorce or separation with a close acquaintance.
- 4.8 Custodians of this policy
 - (1) The Human Resource Section and Managers in the Municipality shall be the guardians of this policy and employees will be encouraged to refer all their cases to them or their representative.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.1 Management and the Human Resources Section must guarantee confidentiality of all personal issues brought to their attention by individual employees.
- 5.2 The Human Resources Section and the Municipal Manager shall represent a normal outlet for employees to air their personal challenges without fear of being seen as stabbing their managers behind their backs.

6. EXTERNAL REFERRALS

- 6.1 Under certain circumstances the Municipality will refer employees who are in direct need to rehabilitation and or treatment centres as the case might be.
- 6.2 The Municipality may in complex and more sensitive cases the Municipality shall refer employees to a recognised employee wellness specialist from among its government partners or a practicing practitioner. In the case of the practising practitioner, the Municipality may incur the reasonable costs of consultation.

7. TRAINING

The Municipality will take extra steps to train its managers with the necessary skills to deal with the wellness challenge of their employees.

8. Employee's responsibility

8.1 The responsibility for wellness lies first and foremost with the employees who shall take necessary steps to safeguard her/ his wellness as well as take responsibility to approach the Municipality with the request for help when the need arise.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND COR-ORDINATION OF WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

9.1 For administrative and monitoring purposes, the Human Resources Section must keep safe records of cases of wellness of employees it attended to. Such records must remain confidential.

9.2 The Human Resources Section will become the central point for coordinating wellness activities of the Municipality.

10. ARREARS OF ASSISTANCE

10.1 The employee assistance programme shall provide assistance in a broad range of personal concerns, including, but not limited to:

- (a) Marital, family and relationship problems;
- (b) Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, prescription medication) and other addictive behaviour such as gambling;
- (c) HIV/ AIDS Counselling and treatment
- (d) Workplace violence and Trauma Counselling and after care
- (e) Workplace discrimination or victimisation, for example, description against people with disabilities or from designated groups;
- (f) Personal debt and financial management problems
- (g) Stress (family, social, job)
- (h) Family violence
- (i) Psychological Problems
- (j) Sexual Harassment
- (k) Injury
- (l) Chronic illness
- (m) Any other area of personal concern approved by the EAP advisory committee

11. EAP EDUCATION


11.1 Msinga Municipality recognises that EAP education is an important component of a successful EAP intervention.

- 11.2 The education and orientation of key persons (who will act as referral agents) to the nature and function of the EAP is paramount to the ultimate effectiveness of the programme.
- 11.3 The correct identification of the troubled employee and the steps that have to be taken to encourage the employee to seek professional help will be the primary focus of this education.
- 11.4 The EAP shall be responsible for on-going education and personal development of individual employee and shall be responsible for on-going preventative and educative mental health education programmes in Council.



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**Mr. SL Sokhela
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