

# NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE DEPARTMENT OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE



## POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON STAFF BEREAVEMENT

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 2013**

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. OBJECTIVE.....	3
3. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.....	3
4. GUIDELINES.....	4
5. DEATH IN SERVICE: BENIFITS.....	5
6. MEMORIAL SERVICE AND FUNERAL SERVICE FOR THE DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE .....	7
7. MEMORIAL SERVICE OF THE DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER OF AN EMPLOYEE.....	6
8. DSAC LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS.....	6
9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	6
10. DATE OF ADOPTION.....	6

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this policy is primarily in relation to the death of an employee, and or the death of an immediate family member of an employee. It is imperative that the DSAC responds appropriately to the loss, and sensitively supports the bereaved.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to bring together a common best practice approach to ensure that staff is provided with relevant and appropriate support during a state of bereavement or loss.

## 3. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- 3.1 **DSAC:** refers to Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
- 3.2 **EHWP:** refers to Employee Health and Wellness Programme
- 3.3 **District Offices:** refers to all or any one of the Departments outlying district offices, namely (ZF Mcgawu, Frances Baard, Namakwa, Pixley ka Seme and John Taole Gaetsewe)
- 3.4 **Head of DSAC:** refers to the Head of Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
- 3.5 **AO:** refers to the Accounting Officer
- 3.6 **Senior Manager:** refers to the Head of a Directorate
- 3.7 **Line Manager:** refers to the Head of a Unit
- 3.8 **EHWP Coordinator:** refers to the official responsible for the implementation of departmental Employee Health and Wellness Programme
- 3.9 **Immediate Family Member:** refers to:
- a) A spouse or cohabiting partner, including same sex relationships
  - b) biological children /stepchildren/ legally adopted children/ a child through foster care/grandchildren
  - c) mother/ step-mother/ legal guardian/mother in-law/father in-law/son-in-law/daughter in-law/grandparents
  - d) father/ step-father/ legal guardian
  - e) siblings (sister and brother)
- 3.10 **Spouse or co-habiting partner:**
- a) a partner in a civil marriage;
  - b) a partner in a customary marriage; or
  - c) a partner in a relationship in which both partners have cohabited for a period exceeding six (6) months.
- 3.11 **Official Representative:** refers to the official duly nominated by the HOD or his/her delegate to represent the department at the funeral vigil/memorial services and to speak on behalf of the department.

#### 4. GUIDELINES

In the event of the death of an employee the following actions shall take place.

These guidelines cover the following areas:

##### 4.1 Death of an Employee

In the case of the death of an employee the Senior Manager of the respective directorate should do the following:

- a) Ascertain the true state of affairs on behalf of the office, by visiting the family and thus the Senior Manager shall serve as a vital link between the office and the family.
- b) Send a message of condolence to the family on the second day after receiving the notice. A wreath together with a card not exceeding the amount of R350.00 subject to a 5% annual escalation increase, should be sent on the day of the funeral.
- c) Inform the Human Resources Management unit in writing so as to ensure that all HRA procedures and processes are followed but more importantly to get the HRA unit involved in terms of conveying information regarding possible benefits payable and the information and documentation required for these to be paid. HRA should support the family in this regard in a manner that is empathetic and efficient, to prevent unnecessary economic hardship for the family of a deceased employee.
- d) Send out a notification to inform all staff members about the death of their colleague including the residential address and also the arrangements regarding paying of respects to the family by fellow staff members, prayer sessions, memorial services, date and times of the funeral. The Senior Manager or delegated person shall also take responsibility for the contributions from the office.
- e) Circulate a contribution list requesting for a minimum of a R10 contributions. This contribution list needs to be duly sanctioned by the Head of the Department.
- f) The handing over to the bereaved family the total amount collected from the contributions.
- g) Liaise with the Communications unit to place a message of sympathy in the official communication media of the province (groupwise) and official social media of the department.

Employee's wishes and privacy should respected.

- i) Transport will be made available to a maximum of 60 employees and a car/cab with a departmental driver to assist with the logistical arrangements in the CBD only if a need exist.

- j) Accommodation will be made available to a maximum of 60 employees.
- k) No S&T claims will be paid to the employees attending the funeral.
- l) Employees attending the funeral will be obliged to complete and sign an indemnity form.

#### **4.2 Death of family member of an employee**

In the case of the death of an immediate family member of an employee, the Senior Manager/Delegated official of the unit shall do the following:

- a) ensure that message of condolence is sent to the employee and his/her family a day after receiving the notice.
- b) Send out a notification to inform all staff members about the bereavement of their colleague, including the residential address and also the details of the memorial service (if practically possible) to their colleague by fellow staff members, as well as time of the funeral of the deceased.
- c) Ensure that a wreath not exceeding the amount of R300 subject to a 5% annual escalation increase will be sent to the bereaved family on or before the day of the funeral as a sign of compassion.
- d) Circulate a contribution list requesting for a minimum of a R10 contributions. This contribution list needs to be duly sanctioned by the Head of the Department.
- e) Hand over the total amount collected from the contributions to the bereaved family.
- f) Employee's wishes and privacy should be respected.

#### **5. DEATH IN SERVICE: BENEFITS (NB Only applicable to permanently appointed employees members of Government Pension Administration Agency)**

##### **5.1 Funeral Benefit Withdrawal (Human Resource circular: 003 of 2013/2012 Pension Benefits)**

In the event of service termination due to death of a member or contributor of pension fund or on death of spouse and eligible children, be informed that the following amounts are claimable from the Government Pension Administration Agency:

##### 5.1.1. In case of a

5.1.1.1 member or pensioner, a payment of R7 500

5.1.1.2 spouse, a payment of R7500

- 5.1.1.3 eligible child a payment of R3000 per child
- 5.1.2 Members (refer strictly to employees who are contributing to the Government Pension Administration Agency-GPAA) can apply for the above mentioned benefit in their time of need.
- 5.1.3 A Z300 claim form should be obtained from HRM : Conditions of Service to be completed to access this benefit
- 5.1.4 The funeral claim form should be completed and submitted to HRM conditions of service within 5 working days of the notice of death. This will ensure timeous processing of payment.
- 5.1.5 Employees are advised to submit the following documents with the Z300 form for withdrawal of the funeral benefit:
  - 5.1.5.1 Certified death certificate from Home Affairs
  - 5.1.5.2 Z896- Bank Particulars of the claimant
  - 5.1.5.3 Certified ID copy of the deceased individual; and
  - 5.1.5.4 Certified ID copy of the claimant.

## **6. MEMORIAL SERVICES AND FUNERAL SERVICES FOR THE DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE**

### **6.1 Memorial Service**

- 6.1.1 The Senior Manager will arrange a memorial service for the employees of the department to attend the duration of the memorial service. This shall be done in liaison with the bereaved family.

### **6.2 Funeral Service**

- 6.2.1 It is the responsibility of the HOD to delegate an official to speak at the funeral service of the deceased employee on behalf of the department.

## **7. Memorial Service for the death of a family member of an employee**

- 7.1 The Senior Manager of the Directorate will arrange a memorial service for staff in support of the bereaved employee
- 7.2 This will be arranged in consultation with the family, during specified working hours.
- 7.3 Employees will be allowed time off from 12H30 until 14h00 to attend these pre-arranged memorial services.

**8. DSAC LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS**

8.1. Approval for the provision of logistical arrangements (transport etc) shall be at the discretion of the Head of Department.

**9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Employee Health and Wellness unit will monitor and evaluate the application of this policy and review it annually.

**10. APPROVAL**

Approved by: **Mr. F. Aysen**

Signature:   
Head of Department

Date: 30 September 2013

F.A