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Urhla : 26 August 2013
Datum:

The Member of the Executive Council
Ministry of Social Development
Private Bag x 5042
Kimberley

ATTENTION: MEC.C.T.CHOTELO

APPROVAL OF THE BEREAVEMENT POLICY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Hereby attached find the Bereavement Policy for approval by yourself for the Department of Social Development.

The Policy has been consulted with all relevant stakeholders in the Department and is therefore recommended by myself for approval

RECOMMENDED / NOT RECOMMENDED

MS.E.BOTÉS
HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT
DATE: 201308-26

APPROVED / NOT APPROVED

MEC.MS.C.T.CHOTELO
DATE: _____





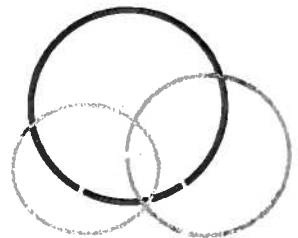
social development

Department:
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NORTHERN CAPE

Department of Social Development

Bereavement Policy

August 2013



APPROVAL

The Bereavement Policy for the Department of Social Development is approved by the Member of the Executive Council and shall come into effect from the date of approval thereof.



DATE: 27th/08/2013

C.M.CHOTELO (MPL)

Member of the Executive Council for Social Development

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1. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines on how to deal with matters relating to funerals and memorial services directly involving all employees and their immediate families.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all permanent employees as well as those officials who are employed on contract in the Department of Social Development in the Northern Cape Province.

3. DEFINITIONS

"Employee"

As defined in section 213 of the Labour Relation Act No.66 of 1995 and for the purpose of this policy, a person who is appointed in the Northern Cape Department of Social Development in terms of section 8 of the Public Service Act .

"Deceased employee"

A person who at the time of death was still an employee of the Department of Social Development

"Immediate family members of employees"

The biological children and or adopted children (proof to be provided);

spouse or life partner of 1year or more;

minor biological siblings who are in the direct care of employee (proof to be provided) as well as

biological and foster parents (proof to be provided) of the deceased employee.

Minor biological siblings would include unemployed and/or school going brothers and sisters of an employee who are under the age of 21 years old and who were in the direct care of the deceased employee at the time of his or her death.

"Bereavement Committee"

The Departmental Committee consisting of representatives from all Chief Directorates charged with the responsibility of attending to bereavement matters regarding employees and their immediate families and to be chaired by the District Corporate Head at district office level and at provincial office the Program Manager/Deputy Director: EHWP

4. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service May 1997
- South African Constitution, 1998
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997
- Departmental Employee Health and Wellness Policy, 2008
- Labour Relations Act No 66 of 1995 (as amended)
- Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998
- White Paper on Human Resource Management, 1997.)
- Public Service Regulations, 1999. (Government Gazette No. 20271)
- Public Finance Management Act (Act no. 1 of 1999).
- Batho-Pele Principles

5. DELEGATIONS

The powers described in this policy are delegated to various levels of authority.

Responsibility	Delegation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reporting of death within 24 hours to Departmental management and EHWP Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immediate supervisor of employee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organization of memorial service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bereavement Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buying of wreath by employee's unit/Chief Directorate, Donation and collection of contributions from the employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finance section through Bereavement Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arrangement of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bereavement committee chaired by District Corporate heads or Deputy Director: EHWP at provincial office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approval of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief Director: Corporate Service or delegated authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Departmental representative at funeral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With regard to the death of an employee a Provincial office manager will at all instances be delegated to attend the funeral e.g. Head of Department and/or Chief directors and or delegated Senior Managers in the Chief Directorate. The designated senior manager will convey a message on behalf of the department to the family of the deceased ▪ With regards to the death of a family member of an employee the relevant Bereavement Committee will delegate a relevant senior manager or official to attend the funeral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Payment of deceased's benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deputy Director: Conditions of Service / Finance section
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notification of death to all employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication Manager

6 NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE AND ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

Upon the death of an employee, the employee's manager should within 24 hours notify the Human Resources Department and forward the following details, in writing:

- 6.1 Name and Persal number of the deceased employee
- 6.2 Marital status
- 6.3 Date of birth
- 6.4 Designation
- 6.5 Residential Address
- 6.6 Length of service
- 6.7 Certified copy of the death certificate and or a certified copy from a medical practitioner or institution, if possible

Upon receipt of the abovementioned information the Chairperson of the bereavement committee must prepare a submission for the contribution to be made for submission to and approval by the relevant District or Executive Manager or where applicable the Head of Department in consultation with the District Finance Head and or Chief Financial Officer.

The Bereavement Committee and a representative of the bereaved unit must arrange for representatives from mainly the relevant unit to a maximum of 10 staff members to visit the next of kin on a Wednesday before the funeral to convey condolences, depending on the radius as indicated under section of transport arrangement.

- Date and place of funeral
- A marriage certificate (if applicable)
- Birth certificate/s of all dependants (if applicable)
- Name and address of the beneficiary/executor

The Bereavement Committee representative must advise representatives of the bereaved family within 48 hours of death regarding the benefits of the relevant funds the deceased is entitled to such as the Government Employee Pension Fund for permanent employees etc.

The HR/EHWP Practitioner must arrange through the affected employees Chief directorate/Unit a wreath and a condolence card, which should extend condolences on behalf of the "Management and Staff – Department of Social Development. The cost of the wreath will be to a maximum of R350 per incident.

Where the deceased employee has to be buried on the same day or the following day e.g. Muslims the Department will make means to access funds immediately for buying a wreath.

A spokesperson (communication manager) shall speak on behalf of the Department, in the event that there is a need for a public announcement and/or comment.

On the day of the funeral or memorial service, all staff scheduled to work must be at their place/s of work. However, management should undertake to release as many employees from their duties as possible, without disrupting the general operation and effectiveness of the bereaved unit.

Employee spouse/Life-partner or biological/ adopted child/ren and other immediate family members defined under Definitions section paragraph 3 of this policy

The employee has to report the death of a spouse/life partner or biological child/ren to their immediate supervisor. Hereafter the supervisor has to relay the message to the District Bereavement committee, District Manager and EHWP manager.

The Employee Wellness practitioner will be requested to make contact with the employee to provide counselling support to the employee, immediate family members or by prior approval other next of kin either through the employees' medical aid or through counselling sessions being paid by the employee's relevant District Office, Chief directorate and or Unit.

Transport Arrangements

The Department will provide an appropriate mode of transport for representatives and staff to attend the funeral of the deceased employee or his/her immediate family members.

The Bereavement Committee will arrange vehicles to a maximum of 3 vehicles for the transportation of employees on the day of the funeral.

The Bereavement Committee will arrange vehicles through the Transport unit, once only on the Wednesday before the funeral, for representatives to convey condolences and any deliveries.

The capacity of the mode of transport and the total number of staff members attending the funeral would be subject to approval by the District Manager and at provincial office Chief Director: Corporate Services or delegated authority.

Employees who use unauthorized and unapproved own transport shall not be reimbursed for any costs incurred to attend the funeral e.g. employees using their subsidized vehicles will not be reimbursed by the Department without prior approval by the relevant senior manager.

The Bereavement Committee will nominate a manager to accompany the employees in the same mode of transport.

A fully delegated and mandated employer representative must attend and represent the Department. The Head of Department and Executive managers will receive preference with regard to the latter, otherwise any other nominated Senior or Program manager e.g. District Manager. Official transport and accommodation will be provided to them. The employer representative must submit within two working days after the funeral, a feedback report to the Executive Authority through the Office of The Head of Department.

The report must reflect:

- The proceedings of the funeral
- Transport utilisation
- Message from the bereaved family or next of kin

Transport shall be approved under the following standardized conditions and shall apply to all employees:

- Attendance of funeral only

- Within the District a radius of 200km, if it is more than the stated radius the employees attending the funeral shall pay the difference.
- Within the Province a radius of 500km, if it is more than the stated radius the employees attending the funeral shall pay the difference. Employees attending who are from other Districts of the deceased/bereaved employee and are not delegated employees by the Bereavement committee will only with prior approval be a maximum total of 5 and they will have to pay their own accommodation if they want to attend the memorial service or funeral. If these employees have prior approval, special leave to a maximum of 2 working days are allowed.
- Outside the Province a radius of 1000, if it is more than the stated radius, the employees attending the funeral shall pay the difference. Employees attending who are not delegated employees by the Bereavement committee will only with prior approval be a maximum total of 3 and they will have to pay their own accommodation if they want to attend the memorial service or funeral. With regard to the latter and in exceptional circumstances the Bereavement committee and per their discretion may prepare a submission to assist those employees with accommodation costs. If these employees have prior approval, special leave to a maximum of 2 working days are allowed and one car to the discretion of the Executive Authority may be provided.

7 STAFF COLLECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The Bereavement Committee shall determine a fixed amount e.g. R10 to be contributed by each employee in the event of a death of a colleague. The Bereavement Committee will co-ordinate the collections/condolences on behalf of the bereaved family during office hours. No pressure will be put on any staff member to make contributions and the collection and contribution process should be finalized and be handed over to the deceased employees' family or to the affected employee within 48 hours after the Department becomes aware of the relevant death.

8 ASSISTANCE WITH FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Directorate HRM in conjunction with the Bereavement Committee in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act read with the Public Service Act and Regulations shall make a donation to the maximum of R2000 to the family of the deceased employee or to the employee who lost immediate family as defined in Paragraph 3.

The donation of R2000 per incident will be limited to a maximum of 3 incidents per year.

The donation will only be made upon the receipt by the Bereavement committee of the death certificate together with documented approval of such donation by the relevant District Manager, Executive Manager and where applicable the Head of Department.

For contract employees, newly appointed permanent employees of less than a year service and for employees with exceptional circumstances the amount of R2000 could be increased based on the discretion and motivation submission prepared by the Bereavement committee.

The department will contribute R2000 towards the hosting of a memorial services for the deceased upon consultation with the bereaved family.

9 COMMUNICATION

The department pay will for a quarter page segment advert for notification of the death in a local newspaper. The advert segment will be sensitive to the culture and religion of the deceased and will be placed only with the permission of the affected employee's bereaved next of kin.

The Communication unit will further ensure that, with the affected employee's families' permission, the national flag as well as departmental banner be displayed at the funeral/memorial of an employee who has lost his or her life whilst on duty.

10. POLICY FRAMEWORK

10.1 IDENTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

The buy-in and ownership of the Bereavement policy of relevant identified stakeholders such as the Department of Social Development personnel themselves, unions and managements will impact greatly on the success of policy implementation.

Stakeholders will therefore be consulted through quarterly EHWP Advisory Committee meetings at Provincial level as well as within the 5 districts. Consultations will also be done by regular policy needs assessments of personnel.

10.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation plan is subject to provision of the following:

- 10.2.1 Approval of Bereavement policy
- 10.2.2 Funding to implement the policy
- 10.2.3 The Accounting Officer (Head of Department) through delegated authority shall take responsibility for the Policy.

10.3 MONITORING OF COMPLIANCE

The Employee Health and Wellness policy defines an integrated, holistic approach to the well being of personnel.

Matters that need to be monitored regarding the Bereavement policy are the following:

- Non-compliance to applicable legislation
- General awareness of the policy by all staff members

The Chief Director Corporate Services together with Manager: Employee Health and Wellness will take responsibility for the overall monitoring of the implementation of the policy.

All wellness practitioners, District Corporate Heads and Human Resources staff shall monitor the implementation of the Bereavement policy to ensure that the objectives are adhered to.

The Manager, Health and Wellness and all wellness practitioners will be responsible for developing mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the Policy and to address any shortcomings.

At provincial level, monitoring and evaluation of the Bereavement policy will be done on a quarterly basis and will focus on the following:

- Challenges experienced during the implementation of the programme.
- Rate of utilizing the policy.

10.4 POLICY REVIEW

The Bereavement policy shall be reviewed annually to determine the extent of the application and to identify gaps, changes or trends.

10.5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy has been evaluated against all relevant legislation and regulations and has been found to be compliant. Noncompliance with the policy by any official shall constitute misconduct which can result in disciplinary action

10.6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy shall have financial implications for the Department regarding the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review. It will be functional that cross-program assistance and communication happen in terms of financial support, resources and expertise to the Departmental bereavement committee.