

DR JS LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The Municipality recognizes and acknowledges that employees may experience personal, work related and family problems, which may affect their performance adversely and have a negative influence on service delivery.

Through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) the Municipality aims to provide holistic support system aimed at enhancing the service delivery and quality of life for all its employees. This is done through individual wellness interventions which results in the promotion of the physical, social, emotional, occupational, spiritual and intellectual wellness to be created. The municipality is committed to creating an organizational climate and culture that is conducive to employee wellness and comprehensive identification of psycho-social health risks. The EAP is work site based for easy accessibility.

The problems being experienced by employees may manifest themselves in factors such as:

- Substance and alcohol abuse
- Excessive absenteeism
- Poor work performance
- Conflict
- Lateness for work
- Tardiness
- High staff turnover
- Accidents

The Municipality seeks to administer EAP in a manner that is consistent with the various laws policies and strategic frameworks which exist so that employees' rights are not violated and that they receive the best care and services which the municipality can reasonable afford.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy seeks to maintain the wellness of employees so that they are able to properly manage and undertake their responsibilities. In this respect it seeks to encourage and preserve wellness through proactive and preventative programmes, and it seeks to restore wellness when employees are not well. It

seeks to assist employees in the manner it can to regain good health, comfort and productivity.

2. PURPOSE

To provide measures aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles by assisting employees to manage and resolve personal problems that have a direct bearing on their job performance.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Municipality.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996
- Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000
- Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998
- Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003
- Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995
- Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998
- Local Government: Regulations on appointment and conditions of employment of senior managers, dated 17 January 2014
- Local Government: Municipal Staff Regulations, 2016 (issued in terms of Section 72, read with Section 120 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000)
- Local Government: Guidelines for the Implementation of the Municipal Staff Regulations, 2016 (issued in terms of Section 72, read with Section 120 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000)
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997
- South African Local Government Bargaining Council: Collective Agreements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993
- Medical Schemes Act 131 of 1998
- Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act 56 of 1974
- South African Nursing Council as referred to in the Nursing Act 50 of 1978
- Skills Development Act 97 of 1998
- EAPA-SA Standards of 2002
- Mental Health Care Act 17 of 2002

5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- 5.1 To sustain morale and productivity and to retain the services of valued employees of the municipality.
- 5.2 To provide a consistent and constructive set of guidelines to assist troubled employees through the provision of confidential and professional services by the EAP.
- 5.3 To assist the Municipality by means of an effective system to facilitate the early identification of performance impaired employees for referral and treatment.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

The formulation and review of policies and procedures related to the Employee Assistance Programme is the responsibility of the Manager Administration and Corporate Service. The Manager Human Resources will act as the Programme Administrator and be responsible for general administration of the EAP, including acting as liaison with the external Service Provider, overseeing the administration of the programme, ensuring policy and budget guidelines are followed, monitoring and approving budget expenditures, acting as a contact for general enquiries, and evaluating the programme on an annual basis in consultation with Service Provider.

The external Service Provider will deliver programme services in a manner which supports the spirit in which this programme has been developed.

The EAP Advisory Committee is responsible for overseeing programme implementation, evaluation of the policy and related procedures, and periodic review of procedures and recommendation for changes.

7. PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE POLICY

7.1 Confidentiality

The employee's right to privacy and confidentiality shall at all times be protected. Any information shared during consultation or counseling shall not be disclosed to anyone (management included) without the employee's written consent however, if the information provided will place the municipality or other individuals at the workplace, at risk the Municipality will have the prerogative to take whatever action is appropriate without consent.

7.2 Needs Based

All the programmes and services offered are based on employee and management needs.

7.3 Voluntarism

All the programmes offered to employees are voluntary where employee's can participate voluntarily.

7.4 Non Discrimination

Participation in the programmes will not prejudice an employee's job security or chances of promotion.

7.5 Accessibility

Services are offered at the workplace or as near to the employee's place of work as possible to all employees irrespective of position or level in the Municipality.

7.6 Equal and Dignified Treatment

All employees will be treated in an equal and dignified manner. No employee shall receive preferential or adverse treatment due to his/her participation in the programme.

7.7 Timely Intervention

Efforts shall be made to ensure early identification and treatment of problems, thus facilitating good prognosis. Leadership (i.e Supervisors and Managers) of each department shall be involved to ensure timely problem identification and referral.

7.8 Neutrality

The EAP shall not become enmeshed in the traditional interface between management and employees; and shall not clash with the existing

administrative procedures. For instance, EAP is not a replacement of the disciplinary procedure.

7.9 Prevention of Abuse

No employee or participating party shall use the programme for ulterior purposes other than what it is intended for, being to assist employees to manage and resolve personal problems that have a direct bearing on their performance in the workplace.

7.10 Pro – activeness

The EAP will initiate services and programmes aimed at addressing identified needs timeously.

8. APPLICABILITY

The policy applies to all persons who are employed in the DR JS Moroka Municipality. Assistance to employees will be limited to the extent that the problem experienced by the employee has a direct bearing on the employee's performance.

9. REFERRAL TO THE PROGRAMME

Referral to the EAP is voluntary, it is always by individual choice, but it may be encouraged by a colleague or management i.e supervisor or manager.

9.1 Types of Referral

Self- Referral – Any employee who is experiencing personal problems and wishes to seek help through the EAP may contact the Service Provider directly.

Assisted Referral – If supervisor or colleague believes that a coworker may be experiencing personal problems, the EAP should be explained to the employee and an informal suggestion made that the employee consider obtaining assistance through the programme. The employee's participation in the programme, however, remains voluntary.

10. PAYMENT AND INCURRING COST

10.1 Funding

Expenses incurred during the first treatment will be borne by the Municipality. However, in the case of relapse, the employee will bear the expenses incurred during the subsequent treatment.

The Municipality will, however, pay for a maximum of six sessions with an external service provider i.e psychologist etc. The Municipality will not be responsible for any prescribed medication.

10.2 Leave

Employees will be permitted to access the Service Provider during regular working hours. However regular counselling sessions should be scheduled, where possible outside of working hours.

In the event treatment for alcohol and drug abuse and rehabilitation is deemed necessary, the Municipality will grant three months paid special leave for complete treatment.

11. EAP AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION POLICY

Participation in this EAP will not be used for disciplinary purposes nor in any way restrict or jeopardize the participating employee's opportunity for advancement or other work related alternatives.

Any dispute arising out of the interpretation and application of this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the grievance procedure applicable within the Municipality.

Council Resolution: **R216.03.2023 ND**

Date of Approval: **30th March 2023**

Accounting Officer Signature: _____

