



Waterberg
District Municipality

on the Go for Growth

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The establishment of Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can alert the Municipality on workplace issues which impact on the performance and morale of its employees. Such issues may include but not limited to physical, mental, emotional, marital, family, financial and substance abuse including alcohol.

In response to such challenges Waterberg District Municipality shall offer employee access to a broad EAP services.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Employee Assistance Program Association of South Africa (EAPSA-SA) Standards 1999.

2.2. Labour Relations Act, 1995

2.3. Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997

2.4. Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993

2.5. Employment Equity Act, 1998

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 To promote and maintain the overall general state of the wellbeing of the employees of the municipality.

3.2 To improve productivity and workplace efficiency.

3.3 To reduce employees benefits costs by reducing absenteeism.

3.4 To demonstrate a caring and responsive attitude to employees.

3.5 To manage health and performance risks.

3.6 To assist employees to cope with work-related and personal problems that impact on performance.

3.7 To implement this policy in conjunction with the sports policy.

4. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy shall apply to both employees and managers who are employed by the Waterberg District Municipality.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 **Employee wellness** means the employees state of optimized social, physical and mental health and wellbeing.

5.2 **Employee Assistance** means a social service offered to an employee who need professional assistance for varying kinds of work related and personal challenges with which they cannot cope and which may have a potential impact on their work performance and personal lives.

6. **PRINCIPLES**

Management and employees who participate who participate in an EAP shall abide by the following principles.

6.1 The EAP must play a neutral role in an employment relationship.

6.2 All employees should have access to the EAP

6.3 An employee in need of EAP service can voluntarily seek assistance or be referred by their supervisors to the EAP.

6.4 All employees who participate in EAP must be treated equally

6.5 All participants in EAP must be treated with dignity and respect.

6.6 Job security will not be jeopardised as a consequence of seeking such service except where mandated by law.

6.7 All avenues to assist the affected employee must be exhausted before a disciplinary hearing process can be considered.

6.8 Any information shared during consultation or counselling shall not be disclosed to anyone including management without the employee's written consent except when the disclose is required in terms of the law or court order.

7. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

An advisory Committee which comprise of 8 members from management, council and trade unions shall be established to do the following:

7.1 Review the EAP policy annually

7.2 Develop an effective EAP strategy

7.3 Evaluates the EAP

7.4 Prepare EAP reports to Portfolio Committee

8. REFERRAL PROCEDURES

8.1. Self- referral: Where an employee consults the EAP co-ordinator voluntarily.

8.2. Informal- referral: the employee receives a recommendation from a colleague, union representative or friend to consult the EAP co-ordinator. No written documentation is necessary.

8.3. Formal referral: The supervisor refers the affected employee in writing to the EAP unit for assistance on issues that may include but not limited to physical, mental, emotional, marital, family, financial and substance abuse including alcohol.

If the challenge cannot be overcome at the workstation, then with the employee's consent a referral can be obtained.

9. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

- 9.1. Where it is possible, use the service providers that offer free service.
- 9.2. Some medical aid schemes cover costs related to EAP referrals. An enquiry should be made with the medical aid scheme in that regard with the consent of the employee.
- 9.3. If the council has to pay for the services of an external service provider the counselling sessions should be limited to three. The number of sessions can be exceeded if approval has been obtained.
- 9.4. The normal procurement procedure must be followed when paying the services of an external service provider.
- 9.5. Where it is possible transport should be provided for the employee unless the employee feels that they can transport themselves.
- 9.6. The cost effectiveness of the program will be evaluated from time to time.
- 9.7. The EAP co-ordinator will be in constant contact with the service provider to submit written reports on the referred employee at least monthly.
- 9.8. This documents/accounts will not be kept in the file of the employee.
- 9.9. After the re-entry of the employee, the impressions of the employee, friends, referring supervisor, employee representative and the service provider should be documented in the EAP records.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

- 10.1 Management and Trade Unions will ensure that EAP is established and implemented in the municipality.
- 10.2 Anyone who breaches this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures of the Municipality.
- 10.3 An annual report on EAP shall be submitted to Portfolio Committee on Governance and Administration.

Signed at Modimolle on 22 June 2015

A-  23/06/15

MUNICIPAL MANAGER