



GREATER GIYANI MUNICIPALITY

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OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS POLICY

Council Resolution: CR164-17/05/2024SP

Object

The primary object of this policy is :-

To set the guidelines and procedures on how employees in the Greater Giyani Municipality can access employee wellness services to assist in uplifting staff morale and work performance.

Table of Contents

CONTENT	PAGE NUMBER
PREMEABLE	3
DEFINITIONS	3
LEGAL FRAMEWORK	3
VISION	3
MISSION	4
SCOPE	4
OBJECTIVES	4
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES	4
EMPLOYEES WELLNESS COMMITTEE	4-5
STAKEHOLDER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5-6
ACCESS TO SERVICES	6
THE AREAS LIKELY TO AFFECT EMPLOYEES WORK PERFORMANCE	6
INTERVENTION PROCESS	6 – 7
REFERRAL TO EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	7
ACCESS TO INFORMATION	8
DURATION OF INTERVENTION SESSIONS	8
SERVICE PROVIDERS TO CONSIDER	8
COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO EAP	9
FUNDING OF THE PROGRAMME	9
POLICY REVIEW	9
DISPUTE RESOLUTION	9
POLICY AMENDMENT	9

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. The intention in this policy document is to provide guidelines on how employee assistance services will be rendered in the Greater Giyani Municipality.
- 1.2. This policy document outlines in simple terms how employees, supervisors and managers can make use of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) services in the municipality.
- 1.3. This policy makes emphasis on the principle of confidentiality as a fundamental principle on which the EAP services must be based on to gain confidence of the users, this will ensure that there are no fears or concerns as employee information will be kept as private as possible.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Employee Assistance Programme** is an employee benefit program that seeks to help employees with personal and work-related problems that may negatively affect their job performance, mental and emotional wellbeing. It is a work-based intervention program designed to assist employees in resolving personal problems and work-related challenges that may adversely affect the employee's performance at work.
- 2.2. EMPLOYER:** Greater Giyani Municipality
- 2.3. COUNCIL:** Council of Greater Giyani Municipality
- 2.4. MANAGEMENT:** Municipal Manager and Head of Departments
- 2.5. EAP PRACTITIONER:** Registered Counsellor, Employee assistance programme practitioner
- 2.5. REFERRAL:** means of seeking assistance for an affected employee either through self-referral, informal or peer referral or through formal referral.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. Constitution of the republic of South Africa, 1996
- 3.2. Basic conditions of employment act, 1997
- 3.3. Labour relations act, 1995
- 3.4. Occupational health and safety act, 1993
- 3.5. Employment equity act
- 3.6. SALGA human resource strategic plan, 2016

4. VISION

- 4.1. Create healthy working environment to enhance employees work performance in the Greater Giyani Municipality.

5. MISSION

- 5.1. To ensure that employees in the greater Giyani municipality receive quality and timeous employee assistance services that are provided at a prevention level, early intervention, statutory level and on reintegration and aftercare level to optimize work performance and productivity.

6. SCOPE

- 6.1. The policy covers all employees of the Greater Giyani Municipality and their immediate families.

7. OBJECTIVES

- 7.1. To improve employee health and wellbeing
- 7.2. To empower employees with health education and lifestyle skills that will enable them to live a well-balanced life.

- 7.3. To improve employee's morale and motivation state
- 7.4. To optimize performance and productivity

8. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE PROVISION OF EAP SERVICES

- 8.1 CONFIDENTIALITY** – information shared with the employee will be kept private and cannot be shared.
- 8.2 . Non _Judgemental**, no employee will be judged for whatever circumstances that they find themselves in.
- 8.3 Individualism**, each employee with their challenges will be treated as unique and won't be compared to any other employee.
- 8.4 Non-discrimination**, all employees will have equal access to the service irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, race, religion and political association.
- 8.5 Respect**, each employee's inherit human dignity will be respected.

9. EMPLOYEES WELLNESS COMMITTEE

- 9.1. The committee shall be composed of one staff member from each department in the institution and one member from each labour unions within the institution.
- 9.2. Committee shall be seconded to serve in the committee one from each department and must be formally appointed by the Municipal Manager
- 9.3. Secondment and appointment to serve in the Employees Wellness Committee shall bear no remuneration either in cash or kind.
- 9.4. All members of the committee shall be trained on their expected roles and responsibilities before assuming their committee functions.
- 9.5. Fifty percent plus one of the committees shall be female employees.
- 9.6. The term of office shall be three (03) years.
- 9.7. Members can serve for unlimited consecutives terms of office as committee members.
- 9.8. The committee shall review the Employee Wellness policy to ensure agreement and understanding of the procedures and practices.
- 9.9. The committee will recommend changes in the EAP policy as necessary after receiving input from various stakeholders or legislative requirements.
- 9.10. Oversee the evaluation of the evaluation of the policy and programme.
- 9.11. The committee shall prepare a report on the activities of the committee as deemed necessary or required.

10. STAKEHOLDERS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1. EMPLOYEES RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1.1. Employee 's personal information shall be kept private and confidential.
- 10.1.2. Information related to the employee's participation in EAP cannot be entered in their personnel file.
- 10.1.3. Employees may request their EAP file at any reasonable time.
- 10.1.4. Information shared during EAP sessions cannot be used to determine employee promotion, cannot be used in disciplinary hearing or used for any other purpose.

- 10.1.5. Employees participating in EAP sessions maybe granted extended leave according to the leave policy recommended by the Head of Department, EAP practitioner and approved by the Municipal Manger if it is deemed necessary for the employee's treatment and recovery.
- 10.1.6. It is the responsibility of the employee to seek help where they experience challenges that affect their performance and productivity in the workplace.
- 10.1.7. Employer will not be held accountable if employees recklessly divulge information of what transpired in the EAP sessions to unauthorised individuals whether its colleagues or private individuals.

10.2. MANAGER / SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1.1. Make employees aware of the EAP services.
- 10.1.2. Provide support to employees during treatment and upon return to work.
- 10.1.3. Verify attendance of the employee through the office of the EAP practitioner
- 10.1.4. Maintain confidentiality with all the cases.
- 10.1.5. Ensure EAP services are provided at an environment that promotes privacy and confidentiality to the participating employees.
- 10.1.6. Ensure budget availability.

10.3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EAP PRACTITIONER

- 10.3.1. Promotion of EAP services in the workplace
- 10.3.2. Liaise with service providers to ensure service standards are acceptable and in line with the needs of the affected employees.
- 10.3.3. conduct screening and preliminary assessment for employees seeking EAP assistance.
- 10.3.4. make referrals to service providers for quality care and treatment appropriate to employee's needs- provide aftercare and reintegration services to employees who participated in EAP services and those returning to work after being absent attending EAP services.
- 10.3.5. organize public education sessions and awareness campaigns on employee. wellness related topics.
- 10.3.6. ensure employees information is always at all times kept confidential.
- 10.3.7. provide statistics to relevant authorities of employees participating in EAP services without revealing employees' identities and service details.

11. ACCESS TO SERVICES

- 11.1. Access to EAP services by employees in the municipality will be through the following referral system:
- 11.2. **SELF REFERRAL** – An employee who thinks they are experiencing a problem that affects their work and work performance can voluntarily approach the EAP office for assistance.
- 11.3. **INFORMAL REFERRAL** – A colleague or supervisor who thinks / believes that a certain employee's performance is affected due to a particular problem approaches the EAP office to seek assistance for the concerned employee.
- 11.4. **FORMAL REFERRAL** – A Supervisor makes a formal referral to EAP service for an employee whose work performance is affected. A file can be opened for the affected

employee but the information in the file cannot be shared or used against the employee.

12. THE AREAS THAT ARE LIKELY TO AFFECT EMPLOYEES WORK PERFORMANCE

12.1. The following are the most recognised problematic areas that are likely to affect employees work performance hence timeous intervention is required to assist the employees manage and copy with the challenges with the aim of getting them back to their best work performance:-

12.1.1. marital problems

12.1.2. financial problems(debts)

12.1.3. work related (burnout, overload, unpleasant working relationship with colleagues, supervisors and managers)

12.1.4. health problems

12.1.5. legal problems

12.1.6. family problems

12.1.7. grief and bereavement

13. INTERVENTION PROCESS

Employees seeking assistance with the problems that affects their performance at work will be assisted using the below intervention strategy which is applied on four different levels and are all determined by the intensity of the problem, nature of the problem, as well as the willingness of the employee to receive help.

13.1. PREVENTION LEVEL

13.1.1. At this level employees are taught through awareness campaigns and public education on how to handle and manage issues that if not well managed can affect their performance at work.

13.1.2. Trainings, team building sessions and capacity building takes place at this level, for example employees can receive training on financial management, and or health education on management of HIV and other illnesses that are likely to affect work performance if not well managed.

13.2. EARLY INTERVENTION

13.2.1. At this level employees with presenting problems receive counselling irrespective of whether it was through self-referral, informal referral or formal referral.

13.2.2. Depending on the presented problem possibility of the client being referred to external service providers who can provide quality care is there.

13.3. STATUTORY INTERVENTION

13.3.1. Every case presents its own unique intervention approach, and some problems may need institutionalization where an employee may voluntarily accept to be placed in a rehabilitation centre or in a mental health institution.

13.3.2. Not every employee will volunteer for the service, some may be resistant to seek or get help and it is in cases like these where involuntary services must be used in the best interest of the employee.

- 13.3.3.** At this level a court of law will be approached to present the matter with the intention of securing a court order that will place the affected employee either at a mental health institution or at a rehabilitation centre.

13.4. REINTEGRATION AND AFTERCARE

- 13.4.1.** Each employee who has gone through counselling an aftercare service must be provided for a certain period to prevent relapse.
- 13.4.2.** It is also critical that those employees who end up being placed in institution like rehabilitation centres and mental health institution upon their release or discharge preparations are done for their return and their reintegration into the workplace, their families and communities.
- 13.4.3.** When well reintegrated, issues of stigma and relapse are easily prevented, and it allows the affected employees to settle with easy.

14. REFERRAL TO EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- 14.1.** Employees with a presenting problem that cannot be resolved through internal interventions will be referred to external service providers for interventions.
- 14.2.** The employee and his or her immediate supervisor/manager must be informed of the external services available and service providers.
- 14.3.** The employer must incur all the costs for external services where payment is required.
- 14.4.** Immediate family members of the concerned employee will be consulted about the decision to use external services.

15. RESISTANCE BY THE EMPLOYEE TO USE THE SERVICES

- 15.1.** In a situation where an affected employee is unwilling or refuses to make use of the external services for rehabilitation statutory services will be considered.
- 15.2.** In this instance a court order would be sought from the magistrate court to compel the employee to get help involuntarily (this will only apply in case where all the reasons are brought to the fore that the decision is taken in the best interests of the concerned employee).

16. PAYMENT OF EXTERNAL SERVICES

- 16.1.** The employer must pay for all the costs of external services irrespective of whether it is a voluntary or involuntary service.

17. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 17.1.** This policy is based on the fundamental principle of "CONFIDENTIALITY"
- 17.2.** All the employee's information shared during intervention either with internal or external practitioners must never be shared / or used for any other purpose except if it is used for the employee's best interests, and a consent to use the information must be gained from the employee concerned.
- 17.3.** The employee concerned must give consent if the information is to be shared with another service provider or any other person of interest for the employee's benefit.
- 17.4.** All the shared information during the interventions sessions remains confidential, between the employee and the service provider (EAP practitioner).

18. DURATION OF THE INTERVENTION SESSIONS

18.1. Duration of the services will be determined by the employee's reaction to the services provided.

19. COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME(EAP)

- 19.1. Council may provide employees with short term diagnostic, curative and referral services for all psychosocial problems experienced by its employees.
- 19.2. Council must guarantee that employee 's participation in EAP services do not jeopardise their position, benefits or promotion opportunities in the workplace.
- 19.3. Council must ensure that EAP services are made available to all employees of the municipality.
- 19.4. Council to ensure that EAP services do not replace standard disciplinary procedure and processes.
- 19.5. Council must ensure that information obtained and shared during EAP sessions is not used in disciplinary procedures.

20. FUNDING OF THE PROGRAM

- 20.1. For the implementation of this programme to function efficiently and effectively there must be funds allocated for that purpose by the employer.

21. POLICY REVIEW

- 21.1. The policy will be reviewed annually and be revised when necessary.

22. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

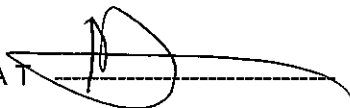
- 22.1. Any dispute arising from the programme be dealt with in line with the legislations and collective bargaining agreements.

23. AMENDMENT

- 23.1. This policy shall only be approved and amended by the council through its legislative powers.

SIGNED BY :

MAYOR : CLLR ZITHA T



17/05/2024

SURNAME AND INITIALS

SIGNATURE

DATE

COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO: CR164-17/05/2024SP