



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SCARCE SKILLS RETENTION POLICY

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Recommended by

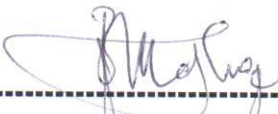


HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
(MAISELA, RJ)

2015-06-26

DATE

Approved by



HON MEC FOR AGRICULTURE
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10/07/2015

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1. Acronyms and abbreviations

EEA	Employment Equity Act
EPWP	Extended Public Works Programme
HOD	Head of Department
HRP	Human Resource Plan
HRD	Human Resource Development
LDA	Limpopo Department of Agriculture
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
SMS	Senior Management Services
OSD	Occupational Specific Dispensation
PDP	Personal Development Plan

2. Executive summary

The Scarce Skills Retention Policy has been developed to ensure that the Department as an organ of state strives for the retention of employees to address skill shortage and staff turnover in the workplace. This specific policy outlines the objectives of the policy and also indicates how these objectives can be obtained.

The Policy Pronouncements set out and the literature also attends to the various principles which underpins the policy, explain the powers, roles and responsibilities of all involved in the process and discuss considerations for the implementation of the policy. Apart from that, it is also addressing the very important success factors on retaining employees as well as service delivery priorities of the department. The institutional arrangements are set out clearly and indicate the responsible persons regarding the implementation of the policy.

3. Introduction

The dynamics in the country and particularly in the Public Service has resulted in the shortages of skilled staff and this has prompted and compelled the Department of Public Service and Administration to call for a renewed focus by Departments on retention of employees and management thereof.

Government departments and South Africa as a whole are experiencing a shortage of skilled and specialist employees. These types of employees are sought after and competitive/lucrative remuneration packages are offered by the private sector for their services. The Public Service is diverse and employees are taking for their own personal responsibility for career-mobility/growth, career opportunities and advancement.

The Department for Public Service and Administration embarked on a programme “Occupation Specific Dispensation” (OSD), especially for scarce skills and highly skilled occupations in the public sector. The revised occupation specific salary structures are aimed at improving the public service. This alone will not solve the problem in its entirety because it is selective and does not address a number of skills and occupations that is limited and difficult to attract.

LDA saw a need to develop comprehensive retention strategies in the light of their own unique needs and circumstances. It has been observed that certain specific occupational categories are characterized by resignations of employees due to variety of reasons such as lower salaries, career mobility, management practices and working conditions. It is the aim of this policy document to value and address concerns of competent employees whose services are regarded as critical towards the achievement of departmental objectives.

4. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this policy is to provide a policy framework to facilitate and enhance the retention of employees particularly those who have scarce, critical and high risk skills to achieve departmental objectives.

OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives underpin the development and implementation of this policy and they are as follows:

- a) To retain scarce, critical and high risk skilled employees to ensure pursuance and service delivery of departmental mandate.
- b) To provide measures to retain employees with scarce and critical skills

5. Authority of the policy

This policy is issued under the authority and functions under the custodianship of the Honourable Member of the Executive Council (MEC) as the Executive Authority and Head of the Department (HOD) as the Accounting Officer in the Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA).

6. Legal framework

The policy is aligned and reflects the provisions of the following core legislations and prescripts:

- (a) Public Service Act 103 of 1994(as amended)
- (b) Public Service Regulations, 2001, Chapter 1, Part V
- (c) The Scarce Skills Strategy Framework for the Public Service, 2002
- (d) The Scarce Skills Policy Framework for the Public Service, 2003
- (e) Managing Staff Retention, An information Guide for the Government Department

7. Scope of application

The policy applies to all current, prospective employees in respect of jobs classified as scarce/critical skills and other significant job categories in the Limpopo Department of Agriculture.

8. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, Scarce, Critical and High-Risk skills shall be defined as follows:

1. **Scarce skills** –skills that are needed to realise the department’s goals and objectives, but which are difficult to recruit and expensive to replace. These are skills which are in short supply in the labour market. These will not always be the same and may change due to various reasons e.g. changes in the labour market environment (supply and demand) and changes in the strategic direction of the department.

2. **Critical skills** – these are those scarce skills which are critical to the Department, however the focus is not on the scarcity of the skill as such but rather on the critical staff member who contributes positively and whose loss would have a negative impact on the department's ability to meet its objectives.
3. **High Risk Skills:** These are scarce skills which are critical to the department, however the specific employees who possess these skills are either demotivated or have reached a career ceiling, and as such are considering leaving the department or for some reasons are highly susceptible to poaching other institutions.

9. Policy pronouncements

9.1 Scarce skills retention strategies

9.1.1 An employee who has been offered a post of higher salary level or notch in another department or any other organization outside the public service may be retained in line with the objectives and priorities of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, if such an employee has:

- (a) scarce/critical skill i.e. he/she has skills needed to achieve the core operational objectives of a branch/component; or
- (b) A scarce/critical , i.e. he/she has highly valuable skills which are difficult and expensive to recruit and are rarely available on short notice; or

9.1.2 The retaining of an employee shall occur to the extent that the retention offer made to the employee by the prospective new Employer shall be similar to the total remunerative package to the notch closest to the salary scale used in the Public Service that LDA may consider offering.

9.1.3 LDA shall provide growth, development and empowerment opportunities to ensure employees within specified categories acquire competencies that improve their ability to work in other areas within the department to enable progress to higher salary levels.

9.1.4 LDA shall ensure that employees have access to development and training that should support work performance and career

development , i.e. bursaries, short courses, job rotation(within specialised field), in-house training to further their education and expertise.

- 9.1.5 LDA shall design and conduct job evaluation on scarce/critical skills and high risk categories and evaluate them to maximize the compensation that can be offered to employees
- 9.1.6 An officer shall be given counter offer in the event that the officer has an approved appointment letter of which the job description of the job offered need to be matched with the job content within the LDA.
- 9.1.7. An officer requesting horizontal transfer to another institution within the department may be retained taking into consideration categories declared as scarce/critical in the Department.
- 9.1.8 Contractual obligations entered with bursars (funded by LDA) especially scarce skills such as Veterinary and Agricultural Engineering shall be monitored and adhered to.

9.2 Principles

- 9.2.1 The Executing Authority or his/her delegate shall utilize his or her discretion to determine the appropriate salary range for employees whose services are considered critical/scarce skills for the Department in line with relevant legislations.
- 9.2.2. The continuous training and development of staff shall be maintained in line with the Skills Development Act and as per individuals Performance Instruments.
- 9.2.3 The creation of sustainable, pleasant and human working environment that values and recognize the contribution made by its employees.
- 9.2.4 The potential and reasons for leaving the Department shall be determined through conducting exit interviews

9.2.5 The career development plan should be used as a means to create a pool of capable and potential employees.

9.2.6 Information about the employee's career path should be kept confidential and under no circumstance should be disclosed to other employees.

9.3 Roles, responsibilities and powers

Authority/ Office	Policy Agenda	Formulation & Drafting Policies	Policy Approval	Policy Implementation	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEC	Contributes to policy agenda Approves development of new policies	Contributes to policy agenda Approves development of new policies	Approves all policies applicable to LDA	Oversees policy relationship of policy implementation with electoral mandates.	Approves amendment of policy resulting from a review
HOD	Contributes to policy agenda -Can approve development of new policies in line with powers conferred by law or delegation	Recommends approval of draft policy to The MEC on advise of Executive Management	Can approve policies relevant to LDA in line with powers conferred by law or delegation	Oversees implementation of policies	Can approve amendments to policies relevant to LDA in line with powers conferred by law or delegation
Executive Management	Inputs into policy agenda	Recommend the draft policy before submission to HOD and/or The MEC	None	Implement policy within area of responsibility	Monitor and evaluate implementation of the policies at a strategic level
Senior Management	Inputs into policy agenda	Draft policy within the area of responsibility (as policy sponsor)	None	Implement policy within area of responsibility	Monitors & evaluates implementation of policies within areas of responsibility
SPPC	Inputs into policy agenda	-Supports all branches in the drafting of policies; -Coordinate the consultation process	None	None	Supports branches and the Executive Authority/ Accounting Officer in monitoring & evaluating implementation of policies

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	NONE	NONE	NONE	Ensure that all employees are informed about all policies applicable to LDA	NONE
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9.4 Policy implementation considerations

A) IDENTIFICATION OF SCARCE/CRITICAL SKILLS

- i) The identification of scarce and critical skills could be done through conducting skills audit and references.
- ii) In assessing the supply/demand, the department shall determine the scarce skills/critical skills on an annual basis.
- iii) In this way it will be possible to identify and classify the current skills and future needs of the Department.
- iv) The outcome of such analysis should be reviewed annually to take into consideration changing circumstances.
- v) The Employee's Personal Development Plans (PDP's) as well as Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) will form the basis of such analysis.

Line functionaries play a critical role in providing inputs to the process of scarce skills determination. The Human Resource Development submits for approval on an annual basis to the Head of Department a list of priority fields or skills that are essential to enhance service delivery.

The following fields are prioritized as critical/scarce as per approval by the Accounting Officer, i.e.:

1. BVSc:Veterinary Medicine = Veterinarians
2. BSc: Agricultural Engineering = Agricultural Engineers
3. BSc Hons (Aquaculture) = Aquaculture Specialist/Scientist
4. BSc: Geomatics / Geographic Information Systems = GIS Professionals, GIS Technicians & GIS Technologists
5. BSc: Entomology = Entomologists

B) ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

- i) The decision to request the retention of an employee rests with the line manager.
- ii) The relevant line manager may provisionally indicate to the employee concerned that he/she would submit a proposal for the retention of the employee's services to the Executive Authority/HOD.
- iii) The line manager must request the relevant employee to complete the Retention Questionnaire (Form RQ) without creating any legitimate expectation of retention and this must be sent to the General Manager: HRM. The line manager must consult the relevant branch manager and both must submit to the GM:HRM written motivation for the retention of the employee
- iv) Human Resource Management shall write a submission for consideration and approval by the Executive Authority or Accounting Officer.

9.5 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

This matter will be taken care of as follows:

- (a) General Manager: Human Resource Management shall be responsible for overseeing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Scarce Skills Retention Policy.
- b) All line managers shall also be responsible and take steps in ensuring that scarce skills within the relevant division is recruited, developed and retained.
- (c) Quarterly Exit Interview Report detailing staff turnover trends shall be compiled with recommendations and submitted to Executive Management for further considerations and discussions.

9.6 Institutional arrangements/delegations

Strategic Management has facilitated the establishment Policy Coordinating Committee to oversee the ratification of all policies prior approval by the Executive Management.

(a) HOD is the Accounting Officer and custodian of Scarce Skills Retention Policy in the workplace and the General Manager: HRM shall provide support and advice in this regard to ensure effective and efficient implementation.

(b) General Managers/Senior Managers/Managers are also obliged in support of the HOD to ensure that good representative workforce are recruited, developed and retained in the department.

(c) Officials implementing this policy are required to comply with the latest delegation framework and identify appropriate delegations applicable to this policy, which may be subject to change from time to time.

9.7 Service delivery priorities

This policy aims to contribute towards the retention of staff to sustain departmental objectives and is underpinned by the following Government Priorities:

(a) Creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods

(b) Education, e.g. HRD

(c) Health

(d) Rural Development

(e) The fight against Crime and Corruption, e.g. Anti-fraud and Corruption Unit

(f) Food Security

10 Default

Since it is the intention of this policy to ensure Scarce Skills Retention, it will be an infringement of the policy to deviate from the policy. Should it be impossible to comply with the policy, for whatever reason, and therefore to deviate from the policy, a written motivation would be needed and approved by the Accounting Officer. Such incidences should be treated with the greatest care and consideration.

11 Inception date

The date of inception is the date on which this policy is approved by the Hon. MEC for the Department Agriculture.

12 Termination and review conditions

Although this policy intends to cover the 2 year period for the 2015 to 2017 MTEF, it can be revised and/terminated as and when the need arise.

13 Enquiries

Enquiries regarding this policy should be directed towards:

DIRECTORATE: HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES

TEL: 015-294 3547/3076/3382

RECOMMENDED:


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**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
(MAISELA, RJ)**

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2015-06-24

DATE

APPROVED:

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**HON MEC FOR AGRICULTURE
(MATSHOGE, BAJ)**

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2015/06/24

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