



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Tuberculosis and
Sexual Transmitted Infections Management Policy**

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Recommended by:

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Head of Department

Date

(Maisela, RJ)

Approved by:

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Hon MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date

Mapula Mokaba-Phukwana (MPL)

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1. ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
COIDA	Compensation for Occupational Diseases Act
EW&SP	Employee Wellness and Special Programmes
GEMS	Government Employee Medical Scheme
HTS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Tuberculosis and Sexually Transmitted Infections
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOD	Head of the Department
HPM	Health and Productivity Management
LDARD	Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PILIR	Policy and on Incapacity Leave and ill-Health Retirement
SHERQ	Safety Health Environment Risk and Quality
STIs	Sexual Transmitted Infections
TB	Tuberculosis

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD) recognises the serious nature of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB) and Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs) referred to as HTS with its impact on efficient and effective service delivery. The results of HTS is experienced in the workplace through absenteeism, high mortality, early retirement, low staff morale. There is a need for coordinated multi-sectorial effective response to address new infections, promotion of human rights, and access to justice for all infected employees as well as dealing with social and structural drivers of the epidemic. The Policy pronouncements clearly indicate how the LDARD is committed to fight these diseases.

3. INTRODUCTION

HIV and AIDS is one of the major challenges facing South Africa today. South Africa is also amongst those countries with the highest TB incidence in the world and the workplace is no exception. The LDARD acknowledge the effects HTS will have on its ability to realise the vision and achieve set strategic objectives. This Policy serves as broad guide on how the LDARD will respond to the impact of HTS in the workplace.

4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this Policy is to establish and implement a workplace HTS Policy for the LDARD and to reinforce an ongoing commitment in the fight against the epidemic. The objectives are as follows:

- a) Provide prevention programmes to reduce the rate of HIV, TB and STIs incidence.
- b) Provide treatment, care and support programmes.
- c) Promote human rights and access to justice to employees living with HIV and diagnosed with TB and STIs.
- d) Prevent unfair discrimination and prejudice against employees living with HIV or infected with TB.

5. AUTHORITY OF THE POLICY

This Policy is issued under the authority and custodianship of the Hon. Member of the Executive Council (MEC) as the Executive Authority and the Head of the Department (HOD) as the Accounting Officer in the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD).

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996
- Public Service Act of 1994 as Amended and Regulations
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997
- Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998
- Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995
- Mental Health Care Act No. 17 of 2002
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act No. 4 of 200
- The Medical Scheme Act No. 131 of 1998
- The National Health Care Act No.60 of 2003
- Tobacco Products Control Amendment Act No. 12 of 1999
- HIV, TB and STIs National Strategic Plan 2017-2022
- Employee Health and Wellness Strategic Framework 2009

7. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Policy shall apply to all employees in the LDARD.

8. DEFINITIONS

Employee Health and Wellness (EHW) is a programme intended to enhance productivity of the employees and which hinges upon four pillars, i.e. (i) HIV, TB and STIs (HTS), (ii) Health and Productivity Management (HPM), (iii) Safety, Health, Environment, Risk and Quality (SHERQ) and (iv) Wellness Management.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a blood borne virus transmitted amongst human beings. HIV attacks the immune system and once it has rendered it incompetent, a person could develop variable illnesses because the body will be too weak to defend itself.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a condition that is present when the body's defence system is deficient and various life-threatening infections occur. These life threatening infections are called opportunistic infections or diseases.

Epidemic is a disease, usually infectious, that spread quickly through a population.

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infection caused by an organism called Mycobacterium Tuberculosis, characterised by fever, loss of weight, night sweat, and fatigue. Pulmonary TB refers to the TB disease which occurs in the lungs and is easily transmitted through droplets produced during cough and sneezing.

Employee Health and Wellness Coordinator is an employee tasked with the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of health and wellness programmes.

Peer Educator is an employee who is trained to work with his/her peers (colleagues), sharing health and wellness information and guiding a discussion using his/her peer experience and knowledge.

Incapacity Leave is a leave benefit that can be applied in the event where normal sick leave has been exhausted in the three year leave cycle.

Ill-health Retirement is when an employee becomes permanently unable to work due to medical reasons; he/she could be discharged from the employment of the Public Service on medical grounds.

Reasonable Accommodation is any modification to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability (temporary or permanent) to participate in the application process or perform essential job functions.

Department refers to Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

9. POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS

The LDARD is committed to:

9.1 PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

- a) Provide awareness, education and training on HTS to employees within the LDARD.
- b) Promote and distribute male and female condoms to all workplaces within the LDARD.
- c) Develop and maintain a Behaviour Change Communication strategy on HTS.
- d) Develop, monitor and manage the Peer Education Programme.
- e) Peer Educators take initiative to facilitate awareness campaigns in the workplace.
- f) Mainstream (internal and external) HIV and TB into the core mandate of the LDARD.
- g) Implement the programme in partnership with various stakeholders (e.g. internal directorates within the LDARD, labour unions, government departments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations).
- h) Ensure precautionary measures are taken to reduce the risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV or TB infection through occupational exposure.
- i) Ensure employees take reasonable care for their health and safety and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- j) Take reasonable steps (in the event of occupational accident) in terms of the national guidelines on Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to assist the employee in assessing the risk and preventing the risk of HIV transmission. All occupational accidents shall be reported to the supervisor or manager.

9.2 TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT

- a) Provide care and support for all employees affected and infected by HIV and TB.
- b) Conduct HIV Surveillance testing within the ethical and legal considerations. Anonymity of employees shall be ensured.
- c) Provide access to TB screening for all employees.
- d) Promote HIV Testing Services. There shall be professional pre-test, post-test counselling for HIV and referral to appropriate facilities.
- e) There shall be no compulsory workplace HIV testing and TB screening.
- f) Encourage voluntary disclosure to Wellness professionals; however employees are not under obligation to disclose their HIV status.
- g) Ensure confidentiality is maintained in case an employee voluntarily discloses his/her HIV status to the supervisor or manager or colleague; such individual must regard this information as confidential unless the employee has given an informed consent in writing.
- h) Ensure that any employee who happens to have had access to an employees' medical records shall treat that information confidential. Disciplinary actions shall be taken against an employee who violates the confidentiality clause.
- i) Ensure that employees living with HIV are encouraged to inform their Medical Aid of their HIV status in order to access disease management programmes.
- j) Reasonable accommodation in a work environment shall be provided in terms of relevant legislation where an employee is incapacitated as a result of HIV or TB.

9.3 HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- a) Ensure employees living with HIV or infected with TB are governed by the same contractual obligations as other employees.
- b) Ensure that no employee is discriminated against on the basis of his/her HIV or TB status and disciplinary actions shall be taken against employees who discriminate against others.
- c) Ensure managers and supervisors to adhere to incapacity management policies and regulations and eliminate practices that create barriers to human rights.

9.4 RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- a) Develop a research agenda that includes surveillance, Policy research and behaviour change research.
- b) Develop and implement a system for monitoring, evaluation and impact analysis.
- c) Provide budget for the implementation of HIV, TB and STIs management programme.

- d) The Employee Wellness and Special Programme shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy.

9.5 PRINCIPLES

This Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- a) **Confidentiality** shall be maintained at all times and any violation will be handled through the departmental disciplinary procedures.
- b) **Protection of human rights and dignity** is essential for prevention and management of HIV, TB and STIs.
- c) **Respond to the needs of designated groups** such as women, older persons, people with disabilities and people living with HIV.
- d) No employee shall be **unfairly discriminated** against on the basis of his/her HIV, TB and STIs status or perceived status, in any provision of services within the LDARD.
- e) **Openness, acceptance, care and support** for employees living with HIV, diagnosed with TB and STIs.
- f) **Mandatory HIV testing** services is **prohibited by Law** however employees are encouraged to participate voluntarily in HIV Testing Services.

10. DEFAULT

Non-compliance and deviations from this Policy is not acceptable. Any request for deviation to this Policy need to be made in writing and approved by the Accounting Officer.

11. INCEPTION DATE

The inception date is the date of approval of the Policy.

12. TERMINATION AND REVIEW CONDITIONS

This Policy will be reviewed every three years (3) or as and when a need arise. Should the Policy still be in the review process by the time it lapses, an extension period is applicable and this approved Policy remain valid until the reviewed version is approved.

13. INQUIRIES AND REPORTING

Enquiries regarding this HIV, TB and STIs Management Policy can be directed to:

Director: Employee Wellness and Special Programmes
Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development,
Private Bag x 9487, Polokwane 0700.

Telephone : 015 294 3000.

Employee Wellness and Special Programmes is responsible for the timeous review, circulation, advocacy, availability and feed-back regarding this Policy. Employee Wellness and Special Programmes is also responsible for reporting towards oversight bodies in the event of enquiries with regards to this Policy.

Recommended:



2017-09-12

Head of Department

Date

(Maisela, RJ)

Approved:



27/09/2017

Hon MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date

Mapula Mokaba-Phukwana (MPL)