

DEPARTMENT OF

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

POLICY TITLE:	DISCIPLINARY CODE AND PROCEDURES POLICY
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER:	S8/10/P
COMPILED BY:	SBU:LABOUR RELATIONS & EMPLOYEE WELLNESS Mas hudhle 2011/04/21
ACKNOWLEGED BY:	GENERAL MANAGER: TRANSVERSAL SERVICES
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RECOMMENDED BY	SENIOR GENERAL MANAGER: SHARED SERVICES
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ADOPTED BY: (Executive	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Management Chairperson)	AManaelo
APPROVED BY:	MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL(MEC)
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DATE INITIATED	
EFFECTIVE DATE:	
REVIEW DATE:	
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DRAFT DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. Whereas Resolution No. 1 of 2003 of the Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public enjoins all government departments to develop internal Disciplinary Codes and Procedures for the enforcement and inculcation of discipline in the workplace;
- 1.2. And whereas the Code constitutes a framework within which departmental policies may be developed to address appropriate circumstances and that such policies shall not deviate from the provisions laid down in the framework.
- 1.3. Wherefore, this Policy is hereby introduced to guide the Department in the management of discipline.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- 2.1. to support constructive labour relations in the Department;
- 2.2. to promote mutual respect between employees and the employer;
- 2.3. to ensure that managers share a common understanding of misconduct and discipline;
- 2.4. to promote acceptable and exemplary conduct;
- to provide employees and the employer with a quick and easy reference for the application of discipline;
- 2.6. to avert and correct unacceptable conduct;
- 2.7. to prevent arbitrary or discriminatory actions by managers towards employees.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise-

- (a) "Act" means the Public Service Act No. 103 of 1994
- (b) "Appeal Authority" shall refer to a Member of the Executive Council (herein after referred to as the "MEC" or an employee appointed by the MEC to act as an appeal authority.
- (c) "Code" means Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service Resolution No.1 of 2003.
- (d) "Days" means working days.
- (e) "Department" means the Department of Local Government and Housing for the Limpopo Provincial Government.

(f) "Employee" means -

- (i) A person who works for the Department and who receives, or is entitled to receive remuneration or.
- (ii) Any person who in any manner assists in carrying on or conducting the business of the employer, excluding an independent contractor.

(g) "Employer" means -

- (i) the Head of Department or any member of this Department designated to perform the specific action, unless the context indicates otherwise;
- (ii) in respect of the Head of Department, the Member of the Executive Council(MEC)
- (h) "Executive Authority" means a Member of the Executive Council(MEC);
- (i) "Fellow employee" means an employee from the same office/ institution than the employee charged with misconduct, except full- time shop stewards.
- (j) "Legal practitioner" means a person who is admitted to practice as an advocate or an attorney in South Africa.
- (k) "Recognized trade union" means National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, hereinafter referred to as "NEHAWU", as well as the Public Servants Association, hereinafter referred to as "PSA".
- (I) "Recording device" means any recording device that is able to print transcripts.

4. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Policy applies to the employer and all employees including interns and learners who are employed by the Department.

5. PRINCIPLES

The following principles inform the Policy and must inform any decision to discipline an employee:

- 5.1 Discipline is a corrective measure not a punitive one.
- 5.2 Discipline must be applied in a prompt, fair, consistent and progressive manner.
- 5.3 Discipline is a management function.
- 5.4 A disciplinary policy is necessary for the efficient delivery of services and the fair treatment of public servants, and ensures that employees:
 - a. have a fair hearing in a formal or informal hearing;
 - b. are timeously informed of allegations of misconduct made against them;
 - c. receive written reasons for a decision taken; and
 - d. have the right to appeal against any decision.

- 5.5 As far as possible, disciplinary procedures shall take place in the workplace and be understandable to all employees.
- 5.6 If an employee commits misconduct that is also a criminal offence, the criminal procedure and the disciplinary procedure will continue as separate and different proceedings.
- 5.7 Disciplinary procedures do not replace or seek to imitate court proceedings.

6. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Policy draws its mandate from the following legislations and prescripts:

- (a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1996
- (b) Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995
- (c) Public Service Act 103 of 1994 as amended
- (d) Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service Resolution No. 1 of 2003
- (e) Code of Conduct for Public Servants
- (f) Public Service Regulations, 2001
- (g) Public Finance Management Act N0.1 of 1999
- (h) Explanatory Manual on the Code of Conduct for the Public Service, 2002
- (i) Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997
- (j) Senior Management Service (SMS) Hand Book
- (k) Disciplinary Code and Procedures for Members of the Senior Management (SMS), 2003, as amended
- (j) Skills Development Act N0.97 of 1998

7. CODES, RULES AND STANDARDS

- 7.1. The Code of Good Practice contained in Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995, in so far as it relates to discipline, constitutes part of this Disciplinary Policy and Code of SMS.
- 7.2. Employee conduct that may warrant a disciplinary action is listed in Schedule A. This list is not exhaustive. Management may discipline an employee in respect of other conduct, if the employee knew, or ought to have known, that the conduct constituted grounds for disciplinary action.
- 7.3. In applying Annexure A, management must assess the seriousness of the alleged misconduct by considering:
 - a. the actual or potential impact of the alleged misconduct on the work of the public service, the employee's component and colleagues, and the public;
 - b. the nature of the employee's work and responsibilities, and
 - c. the circumstances in which the alleged misconduct took place.

8. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- 8.1. **Corrective counseling**: In cases where the seriousness of the misconduct warrants counseling, the manager of the employee must:
 - a. bring the misconduct to the employee's attention;
 - b. determine the reasons for the misconduct and give the employee an opportunity to respond to the allegations;
 - c. seek to get agreement on how to remedy the misconduct; and
 - d. take steps to implement the agreed course of action.
- 8.2. **Verbal warnings**: In cases where the seriousness of the misconduct warrants a verbal warning, the manager of the employee may give a verbal warning. The manager must inform the employee that further misconduct may result in more serious disciplinary action and record the warning. Verbal warning for SMS members shall be recorded and be valid for a period of 3 months.
- 8.3. **Written warnings**: In cases where the seriousness of the misconduct warrants a written warning, the manager may give an employee a written warning. The following apply to written warnings:
 - a. the manager must give a copy of the written warning to the employee, who must sign receipt of it. If the employee refuses to sign receipt of it, the manager must hand the warning to the employee in the presence of another employee, and sign in confirmation that the written warning was conveyed to the employee.
 - b. The written warning must be filed in the employee's personal file.
 - c. A written warning remains valid for six months at the end of which the written warning must be removed from the employee's personal file and destroyed.
 - d. If during the six-month period, the employee is subjected to disciplinary action on a same or related offence, the written warning may be taken into account in determining an appropriate sanction.
- 8.4. **Final written warnings**: In cases where the seriousness of the misconduct warrants a final written warning, the manager may give the employee a final written warning. The following apply to final written warnings:
 - a. The manager must give a copy of the final written warning to the employee, who must sign receipt of it. If the employee refuses to sign receipt, the manager must hand the warning to the employee in the presence of another employee, and sign in confirmation that the final written warning was conveyed to the employee.
 - b. The final written warning must be filed in the employee's personal file.
 - c. A final written warning remains valid for six months at the end of which the final written warning must be removed and destroyed.
 - d. If during the six-month period, the employee is subject to disciplinary action on a same or related offence, the final written warning may be taken into account in determining an appropriate sanction.
- 8.5. For less serious forms of misconduct, no formal enquiry shall be held.
- 8.6. For the purpose of determining appropriate disciplinary actions, valid warnings for similar offences by the employee shall be taken into account.

9. SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

If the alleged misconduct justifies a more serious form of disciplinary action than provided in Paragraph 7, the employer may initiate a disciplinary enquiry. The employer must appoint an employee as a representative, who as far as possible should be the manager for the employee, to initiate the enquiry.

10. DISCIPLINARY ENQUIRY

10.1. Notice of enquiry

- a. The employee must be given notice at least five working days before the date of the hearing.
- b. The employee must sign receipt of the notice. If the employee refuses to sign receipt of the notice, it must be given to the employee in the presence of a fellow employee who shall sign in confirmation that the notice was conveyed to the employee.
- c. The written notice of the disciplinary hearing must use the form of Annexure D, and provide:
- i. a description of the allegations of misconduct and the main evidence on which the employer will rely:
- ii. details of the time, place and venue of the hearing; and
- iii. information on the rights of the employee to representation by a fellow employee or a representative or official of a recognized trade union, and to bring witnesses to the hearing.

10.2. Precautionary suspension

The employer may suspend an employee on a full pay or transfer the employee if:

- i. the employee is alleged to have committed a serious offence; and
- ii. the employer believes that the presence of an employee might jeorpadise any investigation into the alleged misconduct, or endanger the wellbeing or safety of any person or state property.
 - A suspension of this kind is a precautionary measure that does not constitute a judgment, and must be on full pay.
 - b. If an employee is suspended or transferred as a precautionary measure, the employer must hold a disciplinary hearing within a month or sixty days, depending on the complexity of the matter and the length of the investigation. The Chairperson of the hearing must then decide on any further postponement.

10.3. Conducting the disciplinary hearing

- a. The disciplinary hearing must be held within ten working days after the notice referred to in paragraph 10.1. (a) is delivered to the employee.
- b. The Chairperson of the hearing must be appointed by the employer and be an employee on a higher grade than the representative of the Department.

- c. The Department and employee charged with misconduct may agree that the disciplinary hearing be chaired by an arbitrator from the relevant sectoral bargaining council appointed by the council. The decision of the arbitrator will be final and binding and only open to review in terms of the Labour Relations Act, 1995. All the provisions applicable to disciplinary hearings in terms of this Policy will apply for purposes of these hearings.
- d. The Department is responsible to pay the costs of the arbitrator. The Department may, if circumstances demand, procure an external Chairperson and incur the cost of that Chairperson.
- e. If the employee wishes, she or he may be represented in the hearing by a fellow employee or a representative of a recognized trade union.
- f. If necessary, an interpreter may attend the hearing.
- g. In a disciplinary hearing, neither the Department nor the employee may be represented by a legal practitioner, unless
 - i. the employee is a legal practitioner or the representative of the Department is a legal practitioner and the direct supervisor of the employee charged with misconduct; or
 - ii. the disciplinary hearing is conducted in terms of paragraph 10.3(c).
- h. If the employee fails to attend the hearing and the Chairperson concludes that the employee did not have a valid reason, the hearing may continue in the employee's absence.
- i. The Chairperson must keep a record of the notice of a disciplinary hearing and the proceedings of the meeting.
- j. The Chairperson shall read the notice for the record and start the hearing.
- k. The representative of the Department shall lead evidence on the conduct giving rise to the hearing. The employee or the employee's representative may question any witness introduced by the representative of the Department.
- The employee is entitled to an opportunity to lead evidence. The representative of the Department may question the witnesses.
- m. The Chairperson may ask any witness(es) questions for clarification.
- n. If the Chairperson decides the employee has committed misconduct, he or she must inform the employee of the finding and the reasons for it.
- o. Before deciding on a sanction, the Chairperson must give the employee an opportunity to present relevant circumstances in mitigation. The representative of the employer may also present aggravating circumstances.

- p. The Chairperson must communicate the final outcome of the hearing to the employee within five working days after the conclusion of the disciplinary enquiry, and the outcome must be recorded on the employee's personal file.
- q. Notwithstanding the provisions of item 10.3 above, an employee may be represented by a legal representative subject to approval by the chairperson of the disciplinary hearing.

10.4. Sanctions

- a. Should the Chairperson find an employee has committed misconduct, he or she must pronounce a sanction (within the period referred to in clause 10.3(p), depending on the nature of the case and the seriousness of the misconduct, the employee's previous record and any mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Sanctions consist of:
 - i. counseling;
 - ii. a written warning valid for six months;
 - iii. a final written warning valid for six months;
 - iv. suspension without pay, for no longer than three months;
 - v. demotion:
 - vi. a combination of the above; or
 - vii. dismissal.
 - viii. If an employee is demoted, she/he may only, after a year, apply for promotion to a higher advertised post without prejudice.
- b. The Department shall not implement the sanction during an appeal by the employee.

10.5. Appeal

- 10.5.1. An employee may appeal a finding or sanction by completing Annexure E.
- 10.5.2. The employee must, within five working days of receiving notice of the final outcome of the hearing or other disciplinary procedure, submit the appeal form to his or her executive authority, or to her or his manager, who shall then forward it to the appeal authority.
- 10.5.3. The appeal authority may, on good cause shown, condone the late lodging of an appeal.
- 10.5.4. Members of SMS (Senior Management Services) do not have the right to appeal directly to the MEC, but may invoke dispute resolution mechanisms in terms of the Labour Relations Act.
- 10.5.5. The appeal authority, who shall consider the appeal, shall be:
 - a. the executive authority of the employee, or an employee appointed by the executive authority, who
 - i. was not involved in the decision to institute the disciplinary proceeding, and
 - ii. who has a higher grade than the chair of the disciplinary hearing.
- 10.5.6. If the MEC or any person appointed by him or her to consider the appeal requires a hearing, he or she shall notify the employee of the date and place where the hearing is to take place.

- 10.5.7. The MEC or any person appointed by him or her to hear the appeal may
 - a. uphold the appeal, and/or
 - b. reduce the sanction to any lesser sanction allowed in terms of 10.4.(a).
 - c. confirm the outcome of the disciplinary hearing.
- 10.5.8. The Department shall immediately implement the decision of the appeal authority. Where the appeal authority decides to reduce the sanction or to confirm the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings (e.g. dismissal cases), the sanctions shall be implemented by the Department from a current date.
- 10.5.9. The Department must finalise an appeal within 30 days, failing which, in cases where the employee is on precautionary suspension, he or she must resume duties immediately and await the outcome of the appeal while on duty.

10.6. Recording

- 10.6.1. The proceedings of the disciplinary hearing must be recorded in writing and by means of a mechanical device provided by the employer.
- 10.6.2 Records of the proceedings contemplated in sub item 10.6.(1) must be kept in a safe custody of the Department and may only be disposed of in terms of the National Archives of South Africa Act 43 of 1996.
- 10.6.3. A copy of the record may be provided to the employee who has been charged with misconduct or a representative of the charged employee on a written request.

10.7. Re- institution of the disciplinary hearing

- 10.7.1 The Department may, if dissatisfied about the outcome imposed by the Chairperson of the disciplinary hearing, re-institute the hearing with a proviso that such re-institution does not lead to unfairness and prejudice against the employee.
- 10.7.2 Should the procedure in 10.7.1. be applied, the hearing shall be presided over by a new Chairperson who, to all intense and purposes, must not have played any role in the first disciplinary hearing and the Department shall bear the costs of procuring such Chairperson.
- **Note**: The employee retains the right to utilize dispute resolution mechanisms provided under the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

11. ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

ANNEXURE A

An employee will be guilty of misconduct if she/he, among other things (this list is not exhaustive):

- 1. Fails to comply with, or contravenes an Act, regulation or legal obligation.
- 2. Willfully or negligently mismanages the finances of the Department.
- 3. Without permission, possesses or wrongfully uses the property of the Department, another employee's and/ or a visitor.
- 4. Willfully, intentionally or negligently damages or causes loss of departmental property.
- 5. Endangers the life of self or others by disregarding safety rules or regulations.
- 6. Prejudices the administration, discipline or efficiency of the Department, office, or institution of the State.
- 7. Misuses his or her position in the public service to promote or to prejudice the interest of any political party.
- 8. Steals, bribes or commits fraud.
- 9. Accepts any compensation in cash or otherwise from a member of the public or another employee for performing her or his duties without written approval from the Department.
- 10. Fails to carry out a lawful order or routine instruction without just or reasonable cause.
- 11. Absents or repeatedly absents him/herself from work without reason or permission.
- 12. Commits an act of sexual harassment.
- 13. Discriminates against others on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexuality or other grounds outlawed by the Constitution (the list is not exhaustive).
- 14. Performs poorly or inadequately for reasons other than incapacity.
- 15. Without written approval from the Department, performs work for compensation in a private capacity for another person or organization either during or outside working hours.
- 16. Without authorization, sleeps on duty.
- 17. While on duty, is under the influence of intoxicating, illegal, unauthorized, habit-forming and/or stupefying drug, including alcohol.
- 18. While on duty, conducts himself or herself in an improper manner, disgraceful and unacceptable manner.
- 19. Contravenes any prescribed Code of Conduct for the Public Service.
- 20. Assaults, or attempts or threatens to assault, another employee or person on duty.
- 21. Incites other personnel to unprocedural and unlawful conduct.
- 22. Displays disrespect towards others at the workplace or demonstrate abusive or insolent behavior.
- 23. Intimidates or victimizes other employees.
- 24. Prevents other employees from belonging to any trade union or body.
- 25. Operates any money- lending scheme for employees for own benefit during working hours or from the premises of the public service.
- 26. Carries or keeps firearms or other dangerous weapons on state premises, without the written authorization of the Department.
- 27. Refuses to obey security regulations.
- 28. Gives false statements or evidence in the execution of his or her duties.
- 29. Falsifies records or any other documentation.
- 30. Participates in unprocedural, unprotected and unlawful industrial action.
- 31. Commits a common law or statutory offence while on departmental premises.

12. WRITTEN WARNING

ANNEXURE B

DATE
NAME OF EMPLOYEE
PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE

This is a written warning in terms of the disciplinary procedure. Should you engage in further misconduct, the written warning may be taken into account in determining a more serious sanction. The written warning will be placed in your personal file and will remain valid for a period of six months from the date of the written warning. After six months the written warning will be removed from your personal file and be destroyed.

The nature of the misconduct is:

If you object the warning, you may direct an appeal to the MEC or (Name) appointed by the MEC within five working days.

The nature of the misconduct is:

SIGNATURE OF THE EMPLOYEE DATE

SIGNATURE OF THE MANAGER DATE

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (If applicable) DATE

13. FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

ANNEXURE C

DATE
NAME OF EMPLOYEE
PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE

This is a final written warning in terms of the disciplinary procedure. Should you engage in further misconduct, the written warning may be taken into account in determining a more serious sanction. The written warning will be placed in your personal file and will remain valid for a period of six months from the date of the written warning.

After six months the written warning will be removed from your personal file and be destroyed.

The nature of the misconduct is;

If you object the warning, you may direct an appeal to the MEC or (Name) appointed by the MEC within five working days.

The nature of the misconduct is:

SIGNATURE OF THE EMPLOYEE DATE

SIGNATURE OF THE MANAGER DATE

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (If applicable) DATE

14 .NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY HEARING

ANNEXURE D

DATE
NAME OF EMPLOYEE
PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE

You are hereby given notice to attend a disciplinary hearing in terms of clauses 8 and 9 of this Disciplinary Policy and Procedures of the Department.

The alleged misconduct and available evidence is:

{A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF MISCONDUCT MAY BE ATTACHED}

The hearing will be held at ______ {PLACE} on _____ DATE at _____ {TIME}. If you do not attend and cannot give reasonable grounds for failing to attend, the hearing will proceed in your absence.

A fellow employee or a representative or official of a recognized union may represent you. You may give evidence to the hearing in the form of documents or through witnesses. You will be entitled to question any witness introduced by the Department.

Should the enquiry hold that you are guilty of misconduct, you may present any relevant circumstances to assist the enquiry in determining an appropriate disciplinary sanction.

SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE DATE

SIGNATURE OF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT DATE

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (If applicable) DATE

15. NOTICE OF APPEAL **ANNEXURE E** DATE NAME OF APPEAL AUTHORITY PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE ______ {NAME OF EMPLOYEE} am hereby appealing against a disciplinary action Imposed on_____{DATE} at______{PLACE}. I attach a copy of the notice of the disciplinary enquiry and/or the written warning. {THE APPEAL REQUEST IS NOT VALID UNLESS THESE DOCUMENTS ARE ATTACHED) My reasons for appeal are: The desired outcome of the appeal is: I wish/ do not wish {CHOOSE ONE} to provide additional evidence not available at the time of the disciplinary proceeding. SIGNATURE OF THE EMPLOYEE DATE {PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEE} SIGNATURE OF THE MANAGER

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (If applicable) DATE

DATE

16. CHARGE SHEET	ANNEXURE F
In the disciplinary hearing of	
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING	
And	
THE EMPLOYEE	
You, (hereinafter referred to as "the employee") are with misconduct as mentioned hereunder:	hereby charged
Charge 1: That you are guilty of misconduct by	
In that: You	
Charge 2 That you are guilty of misconduct by	
In that: You	
Charge 3 In that:	

You	
Prosecutor/ Initiator	Date
Acknowledgement of receipt of the charge sheet	
Employee	Date
Witness (If applicable)	Date

17. SUMMONS TO APPEAR BEFORE A DISCIPLINARY HEARING ANNEXURE G Name of witness _____ Address _____ You are hereby summoned to appear before the presiding officer of a disciplinary hearing as a witness in respect of _____(Name of the employee) who has been charged with the following misconduct: The hearing has been scheduled as follows: Date: _____ Time: _____ Venue: _____ During the hearing you will be required to provide evidence orally or by way of document(s), book(s), object(s) in your possession, custody or control, which may have a bearing on the matter. Prosecutor/ Initiator Date

18. IMPLEMENTATION	
This Policy comes into effect from the	e date of approval.
19. POLICY REVIEW	
This policy will be reviewed annually	as and when the need arises.
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APPROVED+NOT APPROVED CASTONICAL	
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (MEC)	DATE