



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

BURSARY POLICY

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I. PREAMBLE:

Developing and strengthening human resource is any organization's indispensable investment for survival, a *sine qua non* for its existence, a prerequisite for driving the service delivery vehicle towards implementing organization's strategic objectives with the sole purpose to fulfill the needs/demands as promised its customers.

To realize service delivery innovations and improvements in relation to ever-changing and challenging social conditions coupled with the advanced technological environment requires of the Department to focus on the supply of the appropriately qualified and committed personnel with necessary skills who would be responsive to and simultaneously be able to meet the daily social demands of the clientele population.

In order to do justice to the provisions of the legislative frameworks as reflected in the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, the Skills Development Act, Act No. 97 of 1998 and principles as embodied in The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, the Limpopo Department of Social Development is to facilitate for the provision of qualified and skilled personnel.

The Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa has as one of its objectives, improvement of the supply of high-quality skills (particularly scarce skills) which are more responsive to societal needs.

Based on the above understanding with the Department's challenges to realize its vision and mission inclusive of its strategic objectives, its mandatory obligations to render social and community development services, its commitment to indiscriminately and passionately deliver good quality services to meet the lifelong demands of the citizen of Limpopo Province, bursary scheme was introduced.

As a recruitment strategy, Bursary Scheme aims to recruit and supply the Department with personnel that are appropriately qualified and skilled to bridge the identified skills gap.

It is through these skilled personnel that the Department would be in a position to realize its vision and mission, attain its strategic objectives, fulfill its mandatory obligations of rendering services of quality to the people of Limpopo and South Africa and satisfy the requirements as directed by legislative frameworks.

2. DEFINITIONS / GLOSSARY

- 2.1 'Department' means Limpopo Provincial Department of Social Development
- 2.2 'Bursary' means financial assistance, with condition of service obligations, offered to a student (non-employee of the Department) in order to pursue field of study being sponsored by the Department
- 2.3 'Employment Equity Act' means Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998
- 2.4 'Public Service Regulations' means Public Service Regulations of 2001
- 2.5 'Constitution' means the Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996
- 2.6 'Study Assistance' means financial assistance afforded to Departmental employees pursuing either full-time or part time studies for formal training in specific course.
- 2.7 'Bursary holder' means the student who is being financially supported by the Department, in the form of a bursary, to pursue particular study field at institution of Higher Education and Training within South Africa.
- 2.8 'Part-time study' means the study being undertaken on part time basis by Departmental employees
- 2.9 'Public Finance Management Act' means Public Finance Management Act, Act No. 29 of 1999.
- 2.10 'Variation Contract' means amendment effected on the initial agreement undertaken entered into between the Department and bursary holder.
- 2.11 'Gross income' means the total amount being received by an individual, without deductions, as a salary/remuneration of whatever kind.
- 2.12 'Bursary selection process' means step by step identification of suitable applicants with a view to grant them financial assistance.
- 2.13 'MEC' means Member of Executive Council as The Political Head of Department of Social Development.
- 2.14 'Provincial Training Committee' means the committee appointed by the Head of Department for purposes of adjudicating and recommending bursary applications.
- 2.15 'Districts' mean districts falling under Limpopo Department of Social Development namely: Capricorn, Waterberg, Vhembe, Mopani and Sekhukhune.
- 2.16 'Contractual service obligations' means the agreed upon period to be served within

Limpopo Department of Social Development by each individual person/official who received financial assistance pursuing studies agreed upon at particular institution of higher education and training.

2.17 'Study leave' means educational leave granted to the employees of department with the purpose to pursue studies in specific field for a specific period aiming to develop and empower them with necessary skills needed to positively impact on service delivery, such employees shall retain their salaries, which shall count as part of the financial assistance during their studies.

2.18 'Universities' means the institutions of Higher Education and Training learning.

2.19 "Service" for the purpose of fulfilling bursary contractual obligations shall mean employment only in Limpopo Provincial Department of Social Development on a continuous and uninterrupted full-time basis, which shall commence after the bursary holders have fulfilled and satisfied the requirements for the attainment of the degree and registered with the professional statutory body.

3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK:

The following legislation underpins the Bursary policy:

- 3.1 Section 195 (1) (h) of the Constitution, 1996, inter alia, determines that good human resource management and career development practices must be cultivated, in order to maximize human potential.
- 3.2 The White paper on Public Services Education and Training calls for a culture of lifelong learning and the encouragement of employees to develop themselves to assist with career path.
- 3.3 Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998 introduces the formation of new institutions, programs and funding policies designed to make skills development a focus area in terms of investment, to improve the quality of skills development and to ensure that the economy benefits from this focus.
- 3.4 Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998; Chapter 3 Sec 15, 2 (d) (ii) maintains to retain and develop people from designated groups and to implement appropriate training measures, including measures in terms of an Act of Parliament providing for skills development.
- 3.5 Public Service Regulations Part IX E.3 of 2001, provides that the Head of the Department may approve the granting of bursaries for tertiary study to:
 - (i) Persons not employed by the Department, as a specific recruitment measure / strategy;

- (ii) Serving officers and employees to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills required to achieve the vision and mission of the Department.

3.6 The National Skills Development Strategy for South Africa.

3.7 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997

3.8 Public Service Bargaining Council Resolution No.7 of 2000

3.9 Labour Relations Act, 1995, as amended

3.10 White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service

3.11 White Paper on Human Resources Management

4. OBJECTIVES:

4.1 Bursary is a recruitment and retention strategy for the sciences, critical and other support functions skills necessary for rendering effective and efficient social services within the Province.

4.2 To encourage employees to develop themselves to aid their career path and improve service delivery objectives of the Department.

5. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY:

5.1 The Bursary scheme will target the following categories:

- i. Applicants who are South African citizens.
- ii. Applicants who are permanent residents of Limpopo Province.
- iii. Applicants who have passed matric and or presently doing matric.
- iv. The policy is applicable to students studying towards Social Work and Community Development degrees and any other critical field of studies as identified by the Department.
- v. Learners outside the employment of the Department of Social Development and the Public Service in general who are pursuing Social Work and Community Development Degrees

- vi. Learners who completed their Social Work and Community Development degrees but are unable to graduate because they owe the learning institution.
- vii. Learners who come from disadvantaged communities/backgrounds
- viii. Social Services Professionals employed within the Department who will like to further their studies provided funds are available.

5.2 The Bursary Scheme covers the following items:

- i. Registration fees
- ii. Tuition fees
- iii. Meals
- iv. Accommodation at the rate of the institutional fee structure.
- v. Prescribe book allowance which will be determined by the Department from time to time.
- vi. Field work practical's (stipend) as determined by the Department on annual basis for third and fourth year students only if funds are available.
- vii. Special equipment's in case of people with disabilities.

5.3 Provincial Human Resource Management and Development Committee:

The Committee shall be appointed by the Head of Department and shall be responsible for adjudication and recommendation of the selected applicants for approval.

6. CRITERIA FOR AWARDING BURSARIES:

6.1 Full time basis students

6.1.1 Applicants must be South African either by birth or by naturalization. Applicants who acquired citizenship through naturalization must not have dual citizenship.

6.1.2 Applicants must be permanent residents of Limpopo Province. Proof of residence must be attached.

6.1.3 Applicants must have passed matric or presently doing Grade 12 and satisfy the institution of higher learning means test in terms of the National Senior Certificate and the National Curriculum Statement respectively.

6.1.4 Preference will be given to applicants who were historically disadvantaged from designated groups who meet minimum requirements e.g. geographical factors, equity mainly rural / deep rural, child headed families / orphans and military veteran children.

6.1.5 Selection has to ensure equitable distribution of bursaries in line with population and nodality of Districts.

7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING: FULL TIME

7.1 It is obligatory for the bursary holder to be an investment to Limpopo Provincial Department of Social Development for equivalent number of years in which the bursary was awarded.

7.2 In the case the Bursar fails to honour his/her bursary service obligation he / she will be obliged to repay the bursary amounts paid on his / her behalf in terms of the Bursary Agreement interest at the ruling rate applicable from time to time.

7.3 Pursuant to the above, the Bursar shall be liable to pay penalty calculated at twenty three percent (23%) per amount of the overall amount expended towards his / her studies.

7.4 In the event that a bursary holder fails to progress to the next level of study, he / she has the option to fund herself / himself or be paid for on condition that he / she signs a variation contract of one year for each year failed provided funds are available.

7.5 In case of study debts take-over, the Department will determine the number of years to be served based on the accrued debt and the applicant will be subjected to enter into contract.

7.6 The learner should sign a contract with the Department, which is equal to the number of years sponsored by the Department. Students will be placed across Limpopo Province according to the needs of the Department.

7.7 There shall be no transfer of bursary service obligations to other areas outside the Limpopo Province; hence bursary holders are to honour their entire bursary contractual obligations with the Department.

7.8 Candidates who were awarded bursaries for a specific field of study and have not as yet completed their studies; do not qualify for a second bursary in another study field.

7.9 Contractual service obligation can be deferred if a person is unable to complete his / her studies as a result of illness or injury and a medical certificate to that effect is submitted and also if an

official is unable to complete his / her studies as a result of work pressure and or work circumstances as confirmed in writing by his / her supervisor.

7.10 The learners should progress to the next level of study.

7.11 The learner cannot change the field of study once granted the bursary.

7.12 The learner cannot be a holder of another bursary.

7.13 Therefore the following actions shall be deemed to have been a breach of contract:

- i. Termination of studies
- ii. Dismissal due to misconduct
- iii. Failure to complete the degree within a stipulated timeframe

8. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING: PART TIME STUDY:

Employees can only be considered for part time study assistance under the following conditions:

- 8.1 That the training needs have been identified by the Department.
- 8.2 That the intended field of study is relevant to the achievement of service delivery objectives of the Department.
- 8.3 That the budget is available and the Committee has recommended the study assistance.
- 8.4 That the field of study is in line with the training needs identified by the Department and relevant to the official's current job requirements.
- 8.5 Successful employees must sign part -time study assistance agreement / contract.
- 8.6 Should an employee fail to comply with service obligations as contained in an Agreement Undertaking, she/he will be subjected to refund to the Department all monies paid for her/his studies and any other remuneration he/she received whilst studying with interest.
- 8.7 The officer who is serving contractual service obligations and intends studying further, will be required to firstly redeem the outstanding bursary obligations, by serving the Department for at least one year for each year of funding

9. BURSARY REFUND

9.1 Refund to qualifying bursary holders will only be considered under the following circumstances:

- i. Where the bursary holder's parents had already paid a sum of money to secure registration prior to bursary award.
- ii. Where the bursary holder is not staying in any residences owned/ contracted by the University.
- iii. Where the bursary holder's dietary needs cannot be catered by the university, in case of practical's and ill-health supported by medical certificate.
- iv. Where the bursary holder is accommodated in a self-catering university residence.

9.2 Unutilized funds:

- i. No Bursary Holder, who did not utilize funds allocated for accommodation, meals and books, will be entitled to claim such unutilized funds.
- ii. Unutilized funds due to abandonment of studies based on merits (death, ill health) to be refunded to the Department.

10. INCEPTION DATE:

The policy will be applicable from the date of approval by the Member of the Executive Council.


11. POLICY REVIEW:

The review of the policy shall be influenced by the socio economic challenges, development, national priorities and the mandates.


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HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

1/10/2021
.....
DATE

APPROVED / ~~NOT APPROVED~~


.....
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

20/11/22
.....
DATE