

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION



**the dpsa**

Department:  
Public Service and Administration  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON BEREAVEMENT AND HOSPITALIZATION

2011

Approved by Director-General: Signature

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2011/10/10

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POLICY ON BEREAVEMENT AND HOSPITALIZATION

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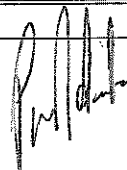
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POLICY ON BEREAVEMENT AND HOSPITALIZATION

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
Bereavement:	To deprive somebody of a beloved person, especially through death.
Employee:	An employee who is employed by the Department in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 including persons who are on contract like learners and interns.
Family Members	An employee's spouse/partner, parent, adoptive parent, child, adoptive child and sibling.
Hospitalisation:	To admit somebody to the hospital for treatment, diagnosis, or observation, usually as an inpatient.
SMS	The senior manager responsible for a specific Directorate or Programme in which the affected employee works.
Supervisor	First line supervisor of the affected employee.
ACRONYMS	
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment
DDG	Deputy Director-General
DG	Director-General
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
IEH & W	Internal Employee Health & Wellness
IOD	Injury on Duty
SMS	Senior Management Service

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# POLICY ON BEREAVEMENT AND HOSPITALIZATION

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The DPSA recognizes that the death of an employee and or family member is a traumatic event that affects the lives of employees and may impact negatively on the emotional well-being of those affected. Similarly, the impact of hospitalization of an employee and or family member whether planned or unplanned, or due to minor or major illness, the impact may be immense. In such cases there is a need to respond appropriately to assist affected employees in a well thought through and regulated way that show support and care for the employees. DPSA as a caring employer seeks to create a supportive working environment for its employees (whether male or female with disabilities) and their immediate family members during times of bereavement and hospitalization (see Part B).

For purposes of the implementation of this policy Programme 1 will be grouped in the Branch: Corporate Services.

## 2. PURPOSE

To ensure a uniform and consistent approach and response in dealing with the:

- 2.1 Death of an employee,
- 2.2 Death of the immediate family member/s of an employee (where relevant),
- 2.3 Hospitalization of an employee.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy will apply to all employees appointed in the Department in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994, including employees on Learnership & Internship programmes.

## 4. SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

The following legislation and policy framework informs the development and implementation of this policy.

- 4.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa
- 4.2 Public Service Act, 1994, as amended.
- 4.3 Public Service Regulations, 2001, as amended
- 4.4 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1998, as amended
- 4.5 Determination on Leave of Absence in the Public Service

## 5. PRINCIPLES

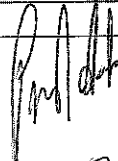
The following principles inform the development and implementation of this policy:

- 5.1 Fairness
- 5.2 Transparency
- 5.3 Non-discrimination
- 5.4 Procedural
- 5.5 Confidentiality
- 5.6 Equality

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## 6. POLICY PROVISIONS

### PART A: BEREAVEMENT

#### 6.1 INTERNAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE

- 6.1.1 The Internal Employee Health and Wellness (IEH & W) Committee will coordinate bereavement arrangements on behalf of any affected branch.
- 6.1.2 This Committee comprises of representatives from every Branch, including representatives from the Chief Directorate: Corporate Resource Management (IEH & W), Internal Communications, Finance and the Asset & Transport Management unit who will assist with the implementation of the arrangements emanating from this policy.
- 6.1.3 The Committee will ensure that all processes outlined in this policy are complied with in respect of each death notification received.

#### 6.2 DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE

##### 6.2.1 VISIT TO FAMILY

- 6.2.1.1 An official delegation may pay a home visit to the immediate family of the deceased employee upon notification of the death.
- 6.2.1.2 IEH & W is responsible for preparing an official condolence letter to the spouse and or family to be signed by the Head of Department or his/her delegate.

##### 6.2.2 MEMORIAL SERVICE

- 6.2.2.1 The IEH & W Committee will ensure that a memorial service is arranged for the employee who has passed on, facilitated by the Branch representative.
- 6.2.2.2 Attendance of the memorial service by employees is voluntary.
- 6.2.2.3 The Office of the DG and MPSA must be informed and invited to attend and participate in the memorial service.

##### 6.2.3 COMMUNICATION

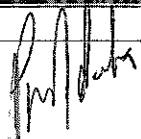
The affected branch head will inform the Directorate: Communication who will disseminate the information to the Department. The Branch Head will also inform the IEH & W unit so that the necessary support can be provided as soon as possible.

##### 6.2.4 ATTENDANCE AT FUNERALS

- 6.2.4.1 Where the funeral of an employee or immediate family member of employee takes place during normal working hours, employees will be allowed to attend without having to apply for vacation leave. However the Senior Manager(s) in the affected branch must ensure that a skeleton staff remains on duty so that work can continue.
- 6.2.4.2 Where an employee has passed away, it is recommended that the Department be represented by employees of that branch besides other employees and colleagues who voluntarily wish to attend.

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6.2.4.3 It is further recommended that a Senior Manager or his/her delegate represent the Department.

### 6.2.5 PROCEDURE APPLICABLE FOR TRANSPORT TO FUNERAL

6.2.5.1 While employees will make every effort to comply with the timeframes outlined below cognisance must be taken of the different cultures within the Dept whereby funerals take place within 24 hours of the death and in other cases sooner.

6.2.5.2 To agree in principle that in the event where there are official/s on duty in a province where a funeral will take place that the official/s can apply for the extended use of the hired vehicle for the visit to the bereaved family or to allow for a bigger delegation to represent the Department. Telephonic approval must be sought from the responsibility manager in this instance until the necessary forms can be completed at the office upon return.

6.2.5.3 The cost of transport will come from the budget of the branch of the affected employee. Heads of branches must budget for this expenditure. The following documentation must be submitted to the Asset & Transport Management Unit at least 5 working days before the event (where possible) in order to source a vehicle from G-Fleet and 2 working days to make use of the Department vehicle fleet:

6.2.5.5 A Trip Request Form must be fully completed and signed by the Responsibility Manager with the following information:

- a) An indication of the required vehicle must be stipulated ie: Mini Bus or sedan pending the number of passengers.
- b) Vehicles not available from the current Departmental fleet will be sourced from G-Fleet with a driver (12 seater or more including the driver).
- c) When Departmental fleet vehicles are to be utilized, the following is required.
- d) Whether a driver is required. If not, the designated driver must be in the possession of a valid and endorsed driver's license.
- e) Names and identity document numbers must be provided for the passengers being transported. Failure to provide the above-mentioned information will result in the passenger not being allowed to be transported in a Departmental Fleet vehicle.
- f) Should overnight parking be required, the overnight garaging form must be completed and supported by the relevant Responsibility Manager.
- g) If vehicles are not available from G-Fleet or a DPSA fleet vehicle, the required vehicles should be sourced via the current Travel agent through Finance.
- h) Transport Policy requirements remain the same regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Driver.
- i) SMS and MMS dispensation regarding transportation applies.

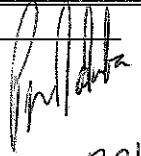
### 6.2.5 FUNERAL OF EMPLOYEE: IN GAUTENG

The Department will provide a maximum of 2 x 16 seater vehicles or equivalent for employees to attend a funeral. Where the number of attendees is small, state vehicles shall be used to transport employees to the funeral. Trip Request form shall be signed by the relevant Responsibility Manager of the affected Branch.

See procedure under paragraph 6.2.5.

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### 6.2.6 FUNERAL OF EMPLOYEE: OUTSIDE GAUTENG

See procedure under paragraph 6.2.5.

- 6.2.6.2 Where an employee who is not in the same Branch as the affected/ employee wishes to attend the funeral, that employee must utilize his/her own transport and vacation leave if he/she wishes to attend the funeral. This leave must be approved by the relevant manager before departure to the funeral.
- 6.2.6.3 In cases where distances is more than 500km from the office and where it will not be economical to use land transport, a maximum of two (2) employees may fly to represent the Department.
- 6.2.6.4 The cost of accommodation for ONE night ONLY either before or after the funeral shall be for the budget of the affected branch.
- 6.2.6.5 Subsistence and Travel allowance will be payable in terms of the S & T policy of the Department.

### 6.2.7 WREATHS OR FLOWERS

Where an employee has passed away, the Branch Head may send a wreath or flowers to the family on behalf of the Department. An amount of R500 is capped for this purpose and Petty cash may be utilized. The amount will come from the budget of the Branch concerned. This amount may be reviewed annually on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

### 6.2.8 TOKENS OF CONDOLENCE

- 6.2.8.2 Death of an Employee:  
Contributions (money) may be collected from co-workers as a token of condolence to be presented to the family of the employee. A branch representative will facilitate this process.
- 6.2.8.3 Death of immediate family member of Employee:  
Where an employee has lost a family member (spouse, child, siblings or parents) contributions may be collected from the co-workers of the relevant Branch members only.
- 6.2.8.4 If colleagues from other branches wish to make contributions, this will be done voluntarily. Such colleagues must contact the affected Branch representative to make their contributions.


### 6.2.9 BENEFITS DUE TO SPOUSE/FAMILY AND INTERIM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- a) The relevant Manager must facilitate that the documentation required by CD: CRM for processing the benefits due to the family of the employee are obtained and made available within 5 working days of the notification of death.
- b) Interim financial assistance in the form of an advance (leave credits or pro rata bonus if available) may be granted to the spouse/partner/family on receipt of death certificate, and (should such a need arise) on condition that the employee had designated such beneficiary prior to death.

### 6.3 DEATH OF FAMILY MEMBER OF EMPLOYEE

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### 6.3.5 CONDOLENCE LETTER

A condolence letter will be prepared by IEH & W to be sent on behalf of the Department. This official condolence letter to be sent to the employee is to be signed by the Head of the affected Branch or his/her delegate.

### 6.3.6 WREATHS/ FLOWERS

Where a family member of an employee has passed away the Department will send a wreath/flowers to the employee. A capped amount of R500 maybe spent from the budget of the affected Branch for this purpose. This amount may be reviewed annually on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

### 6.3.7 FUNERAL OF EMPLOYEE'S FAMILY MEMBER

Where the funeral of a family member of an employee takes place during normal working hours, employees may be allowed to attend and represent the Department taking into account the service delivery requirements of the Department.

## 6.4 TRANSPORT

6.4.1 Where an employee who is not in the same Branch as the affected/ employee wishes to attend the funeral, that employee must utilize his/her own transport and vacation leave if necessary.

6.4.2 In cases where distances is more than 500km from the office and where it will not be economical to use land transport, a maximum of two (2) employees may fly to represent the Department.

6.4.3 The cost of accommodation for ONE night ONLY either before or after the funeral shall be for the budget of the affected branch.

6.4.4 Subsistence and Travel allowance will be payable in terms of the S & T policy of the Department.

## 6.5 FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE

6.5.1 In the event of death of a family member (the employee's spouse/partner, parent, adoptive parent, child, adoptive child, grandparent and sibling) an employee is allowed to take family responsibility leave as provided for in the Determination on Leave of Absence, on condition that the death certificate or a certified copy of a death certificate is submitted. In cases where no death certificate is available, the funeral programme maybe accepted.

## 6.6 COUNSELLING

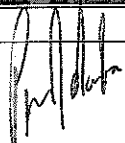
6.6.1 The IEH & W unit is responsible for providing crises intervention, trauma debriefing and counselling to the employee and immediate family members/dependants when incidents of this nature occur.

6.6.2 All employees attached to the affected Branch/ Department/Unit/Section may attend a voluntary group debriefing session, which will be facilitated by the IEH & W Unit.

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6.6.3 Should additional support be required, on an individual basis, an assessment will be made by IEH & W.

### 6.7 DEATH DUE TO INJURY ON DUTY

6.7.1 Information regarding the IOD will be managed by the IEH & W unit (Occupational Health and Safety).

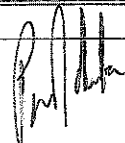
6.7.2 The documentation will be forwarded to the Department of Labour's Compensation Fund in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries Diseases Act to determine the benefits.

## 7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICIALS DURING THIS PERIOD

Person/s Responsible	Role and Responsibilities
Director- General	To ensure that the Department has a policy on bereavement and hospitalization. To ensure appropriate delegation of policy provisions. To ensure the principles of this policy are consistently applied.
Managers	Managers are responsible for supporting their employee during these periods by staying informed and making sure they are aware of what has transpired. Managers need to drive the Departmental Response Process if the official(s) affected are in their Directorates. Managers need to drive the process of a motivation to be written to the DG and the assistance to be recommended as the Departmental response. Managers must budget funds for transport/wreaths/flowers for the implementation of this policy.
Corporate Resource Management (CRM)	To ensure that the assistance recommended in this document is in line with HR and other DPSA directives. To ensure that this policy is implemented in line with the principles stated. To provide appropriate support to affected official(s) and their immediate family members which also covers crises interventions, trauma debriefing and counselling as soon as possible after the event has transpired. To ensure that financial assistance is processed as soon as possible in the format approved by the DG. Facilitate the process of accessing funds (if leave credits and pro rata bonus is available). To ensure that arrangements are done in line with the policy.
Chief Financial Officer	To ensure that financial assistance, if required, is processed as soon as possible in the format approved by the DG.
Affected Employee	To alert the manager to her/his funeral and hospitalization benefits in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

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## 8 PART B : HOSPITALIZATION

### 8.1 HOSPITALIZATION OF AN EMPLOYEE

In the event of an employee being hospitalized, the Department shall give support to the employee concerned. The IEH & W Unit shall endeavour to address the employee's needs where necessary.

### 8.2 HOSPITALIZATION

8.2.1 In the event of hospitalization **due to injury on duty**, the Departmental guidelines on Injury on duty shall be followed. Information regarding the IOD will be handled by the IEH& W unit (Occupational Health and Safety).

The documentation will be forwarded to the Department of Labour's Compensation Fund (COIDA) to determine the Department's liability.

### 8.3 COMMUNICATION

8.3.1 Upon the receipt of information regarding the hospitalization (the name of the hospital, date of hospitalization and if possible date of discharge) of the employee, the administrative assistant of the affected Branch is to notify IEH & W Unit ONLY if permission has been obtained from the employee concerned to do so.

8.3.2 Communication of the hospitalization will be limited to the relevant Branch.

8.3.3 Confidentiality should be kept in terms of the reasons why the person was hospitalized (i.e. type of illness, surgery etc.) unless the affected employee gives consent of disclosure of such information. The IEH & W Unit shall only communicate information relevant to the recovery of the hospitalised employee, to those who enquire.

8.3.4 Employees privacy must be respected if they do not wish to announce their hospitalization to their colleagues.

### 8.4 HOSPITAL VISITS WITHIN THE PROVINCE

8.4.1 Employees may visit their colleague in hospital and state vehicles may be utilized with the permission from the affected Branch Head. However, some employees must always remain at the office to continue with the day to day work operations. SMS and MMS dispensation on transportation applies.

8.4.2 A representative from the IEH & W Unit may visit the employee, if permitted and subject to work schedule.

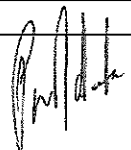
8.4.3 Prior permission to visit the colleague must be obtained from their respective manager.

### 8.5 VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions (money) may be collected to buy a gift for the employee.

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## 8.6 HOSPITALIZATION OUTSIDE THE PROVINCE

In the event where an employee is hospitalized outside the province or is recuperating at home outside the province, a delegation of up to 2 employees may be sent to represent the Department. Approval must be sought from the relevant Branch Head for the visit and for use of state vehicles.

## 8.7 TRANSPORT

8.7.1 Employees who wish to visit a hospitalized employee outside the province of Gauteng should do so on their own accord, i.e. use own leave and own transport.

8.7.2 If the affected employee is ill at home or hospitalized in Gauteng then employees who wish to visit the affected employee either at home or in hospital shall seek approval to visit and utilize state vehicles from the affected Branch head.

## 9 IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The implementation and compliance in terms of this policy will be monitored and reported on annually by the CD: CRM.

## 10. DEVIATION

Authority to deviate from the provisions of this policy is vested in the Director-General of the Department.

## 11. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed at least once in two years (biennially) on the month it was approved or earlier if a need arises.

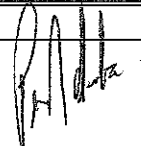
## 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy takes effect on the date of approval.

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