



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIROMENT & TOURISM

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME POLICY

2012

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1. ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this policy:

AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

LEDET- Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism.

EAP - Employee Assistance Programme.

HIV- Human Immuno Deficiency Virus.

HOD- Head of Department.

OHS- Occupational Health and Safety.

SMS - Senior Management Service.

2. INTRODUCTION

It is vital for LEDET to have the EAP policy in place to ensure that guidance and consistency regarding the implementation of the Employment Assistance Programme exists within the department.

The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism acknowledges its responsibility to create an environment conducive to mental and social health of its employees in order to accelerate service delivery. To this extent, the department has introduced measures aimed at promoting the quality of life of its employees through the implementation of EAP.

The EAP is regarded as the work-site based programme designed to assist in the early identification and resolution of performance problems associated with employees impaired by personal and work related problems. These may include, but are not limited to, health (including persons living with HIV and AIDS and persons with disability), emotional problems (depression, anxiety, stress, grief or loss), financial difficulties, marital dysfunction, legal problems, and alcohol and drug dependency.



Employee Assistance Programme Policy

The EAP shall only be utilized to improve productivity and assist employees in identifying and resolving problems that may affect their work performance.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 To provide guidance and ensure consistency regarding the implementation of the Employee Assistance Programme within the Department.

3.2 To offer counseling and support to all employees who encounter personal, emotional, psychosocial or behavioral concerns that detrimentally affect their work attendance and job performance.

3.3 To render initial assessment and referral for proper diagnosis and treatment of employees who experience medical problems.

3.4 To provide timely intervention and support as a methodology that may prevent further deterioration of work performance and to endeavour to return employees to pre- crisis levels of production.

3.5 To ensure that employee personal and work related problems do not escalate to the extent of voluntary termination of service by an employee.

3.6 To promote healthy working relationships and improve productivity in the workplace.

4. AUTHORITY OF THE POLICY

This policy is issued under the authority of the MEC as the Executive Authority and the Head of Department as the Accounting Officer for LEDET.



5. LEGAL MANDATES

- 5.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997).
- 5.2 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996).
- 5.3 Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998).
- 5.4 EAPA-SA standards, 2002.
- 5.5 Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended.
- 5.6 Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995).
- 5.7 Manual on Managing HIV and AIDS in the workplace of 2002.
- 5.8 Mental Health Care Act, 2002 (Act No. 17 of 2002).
- 5.9 Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993).
- 5.10 Public Service Health and Wellness strategic Framework adopted in 2008.
- 5.11 Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended.
- 5.12 Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998).

6. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to all employees appointed in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 as amended within the department including those in learnership and internship programmes and their immediate families.

7. DEFINITIONS

“DEPARTMENT” means the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism;

“EMPLOYER” for the purpose of this policy, means the Head of Department;

“EMPLOYEE” means a person employed within the department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in terms of Public Service Act, 1994 as amended;

“EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME” means a workplace based programme designed to assist in the early identification and resolution of productivity problems

associated with employees' personal problems which include, but are not limited to health, marital, substance abuse, financial, emotional, stress, work-related and other personal problems that may adversely affect job performance; and

"IMMEDIATE FAMILY" for the purpose of this policy, mean nuclear family members (Spouse, children and parents of both partners) of the employee.

8. POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS

8.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF EAP

8.1.1 CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1.1.1 Any information shared during consultation or counseling shall not be disclosed to another person without the employee's written consent, except when disclosure is required in terms of the law or court order.

8.1.1.2 The information provided by the employee during consultation shall not be utilized for any purpose other than that agreed upon between the EAP Professional and the employee client. All employees' records shall be kept strictly confidential and not in the employees' personnel files or any official record of the department. The disposal of employee case file shall be done after approval by the Senior Manager: Information and Records Management.

8.2 NEUTRALITY

The EAP shall be implemented from a position of neutrality and objectivity without an intention to portray favoritism to management and employees.



8.3 ACCESSIBILITY

The EAP services must always be available to all employees and members of their immediate families in any personal or work related problems where such immediate family members are affected through interacting with the family.

8.4 VOLUNTARISM

Participation in the programme shall be voluntary. Management shall have the prerogative to recommend a troubled employee for EAP.

8.5 NON-DISCRIMINATION

Employees using EAP shall not be discriminated on any basis.

8.6 CORE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES PROVIDED

8.6.1 Consultation and advisory service

EAP Professionals and Practitioners must consult and educate managers, supervisors and appropriate persons during consultative meetings in the early identification and resolution of productivity problems, assessment and referral processes and development of communication path and ways of reporting dysfunctional behavior.

8.6.2 Organizational Climate Survey

8.6.2.1 EAP Professionals and Practitioners must consult with executive management, branch and sub-branch managers to provide scientific inquiry into the systems, functions and human interrelatedness that create a frustrating environment and thus impair the optimal functioning of teams or individuals including the following:

8.6.2.2 Team building - Facilitate team building interventions.

8.6.2.3 Counseling - render both face-to-face and telephonic counseling to



employees.

8.6.2.4 Trauma debriefing - offer critical incident response services to employees in the face of traumatic encounters.

8.6.2.5 Referral - make appropriate and relevant referrals for proper diagnosis, treatment and support (including rehabilitation services).

8.6.2.6 Follow-up services - ensure follow-up in all EAP cases that are not finalized.

8.6.2.7 Recommendation - recommend placement in the alternative work environment.

8.7 EAP MODEL

8.7.1 The Department has opted to use a combination of both internal (in-house) and external (Outsourced) model of EAP programmes. The internal staff mainly focuses on behavioral problems that interfere with job performance. Employees will only be referred to external EAP service providers for medical conditions such as but not limited to addiction, diabetes, hypertension and other psychological conditions that require medical attention such as depression, schizophrenia (mental-illness) and anxiety disorder.

8.7.2 The EAP shall provide a quick and immediate assistance to employee problems with an ultimate goal of re-instating the employee to a pre-crisis level. It is for this reason that the EAP must provide assistance for a minimum of four sessions per employee.



8.8 REHABILITATION SERVICES

8.8.1 The EAP Practitioner may refer an employee to a rehabilitation centre after conducting an assessment and a need is identified for such referral.

8.8.2 The employee is entitled to 1 (one) rehabilitation service for one diagnosed problem.

8.8.3 Expulsion from a rehabilitation centre before the treatment programme is completed or a relapse shall be regarded as misconduct and such employee shall on demand refund the money paid by the department to the rehabilitation centre.

8.9 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.9.1 The Head of Department as the Accounting Officer shall:

8.9.1.1 ensure the establishment and management of Employee Assistance Programme in the department;

8.9.1.2 appoint a member of the SMS to oversee the management of the programmes;

8.9.1.3 provide guidance to the practitioners at the operational level.

8.9.2 The appointed SMS member shall ensure that EAP is the key performance area of all supervisors in the Department and that supervisors play a key role in referring employees to EAP for assistance.

8.9.3 An employee is normally in the best position to identify difficulties that impact negatively in his or her work performance, therefore, an employee has the right and responsibility to seek support for such difficulties and give his or her full co-operation if support is offered through the EAP.



8.9.4 Managers and supervisors have a particular moral and professional responsibility to support the EAP by the identification of remedial steps required by an employee where a pattern of deteriorating work performance is detected. Such managers and supervisors must refer a troubled employee to EAP.

8.9.5 EAP Practitioners or Professionals shall provide progress reports to the Managers or Supervisors who referred employees.

8.11 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION AND SUPPORT

8.11.1 The department shall provide the necessary financial support to the EAP cases referred to the external Service Providers only upon the formal referral initiated by the EAP office. Funds shall be made available through the budget system.

8.11.2 Employees who do not belong to any medical scheme and fall within salary level 2 to 5 shall be given financial support. Employees who belong to medical scheme shall only be given financial support if due consideration of other factors such as depleted medical aid, affordability and credit profile have been explored.

8.12 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Transformation Directorate shall be responsible for the implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the EAP within the department.

9. DEFAULT

Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy will be dealt with in terms of the Public Service Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service.

10. INCEPTION DATE

The inception date of this policy is thirty (30) days after approval by the Head of Department.



11. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed after every twenty four (24) months.

12. ENQUIRIES

Enquiries with regard to any matter relating to this policy shall be directed to the Senior Manager: Transformation.

13. APPROVAL

APPROVED BY:



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: LEDET

10 SEPTEMBER 2012

DATE