



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
EDUCATION

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***EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HEAD - OFFICE EMPLOYEE BEREAVEMENT  
POLICY***



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HEAD - OFFICE EMPLOYEE BEREAVEMENT  
DRAFT POLICY***

**NAME: EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
EMPLOYEES BEREAVEMENT POLICY**

**CONTENTS**

**Preamble**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Purpose and Objectives .....                 | 3   |
| 2. Scope of Application.....                    | 3   |
| 3. Legislative Framework .....                  | 3-4 |
| 4. Abbreviations .....                          | 4   |
| 5. Definitions .....                            | 4-5 |
| 6. Principles.....                              | 5   |
| 7. Policy Statement. ....                       | 5   |
| 8. Emotional Support .....                      | 6   |
| 9. Individual Donations and Contributions ..... | 6   |
| 10. Employer's Role and Responsibility.....     | 7-8 |
| 11. Bereavement Counselling .....               | 8   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review..... | 9 |
| 13. Policy Amendment. ....                 | 9 |
| 14. Related Policies .....                 | 9 |
| 15. Effective Date .....                   | 9 |

## **PREAMBLE**

The Department of Education:

**REALISES** that death of employees is inevitable especially after the outbreak of COVID – 19 Pandemic and this affects employees in a fundamental way, impacting on their wellbeing and productivity.

**BELIEVES** that the principles underpinning Batho Pele require the Department as an employer to respect the rights of employees and provide a basis for affording them a healthy work environment and supporting them when death of fellow employees occur.

**FURTHER BELIEVES** that challenges concerning funeral/bereavement have to be addressed collectively by the stakeholders without prejudice.

**COMMITTS ITSELF** to implement this policy to promote fairness and equal consideration to all employees in Department.

### **1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1 The policy is developed because the department seeks to standardize the procedure to be followed in the event of an employee's death.
- 1.2 To provide guidelines and to regulate the way in which the Department responds to death/funeral of its staff members.
- 1.3 To ensure consistency in treating death of employees.
- 1.4 To provide emotional support to the staff members affected by the death of a colleague.

### **2 SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

- 2.1 This policy is applicable to all employees of the Department at Head office.

### 3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Constitution of South Africa, 108 of 1996, Chapter 2;

3.2 Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995 as amended;

3.3 Public Service Act, 103 of 1994; as amended;

3.4 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997;

**4.1 EWS:** "means Employee Wellness Services;

### 5 DEFINITIONS

**5.1 Funeral:** "means the ceremony before the actual burying or cremation of a dead body;

**5.2 Counsellor:** "means a person trained to give guidance on personal, social and Psychological problem;

**5.3 Chaplain:** "means a person trained to give guidance on personal, social, spiritual and psychological problems;

**5.4 Department:** "means the Eastern Cape Department of Education;

**5.5 Employee:** "means an employee includes all employees of the Department employed in terms of the Educator Employment Act 76 of 1998, Public Service Act (Act No. 103 of 1994), the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1998, as amended and includes contract workers, interns/internship and Volunteers

**5.6 The Committee:** "means Employee Wellness Services Committee

**5.7 The Manager:** means a person who is supervising the Directorate or Chief Directorate

**5.8 Memorial Service:** "means a service held to pay last respect in honour of the deceased in the workplace;

**5.9 Bereavement:** "means the period of mourning and grief following the death of a beloved person;

**5.10 Designated Officer:** "means an employee who performs the role of the Employer;

### 6. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE POLICY:

6.1 The promotion of emotional and mental well-being of employees

6.2 The progressive realization of constitutional rights as an indication of care and concern

by the employer; and

- 6.3 The adopting and maintenance of a passionate environment of solidarity in the workplace with the observation of individual norms, values, religions and cultural diversities.

## **7. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 7.1 All departmental employees that have succumbed to death shall be treated with dignity they deserve, compassion informed by a balance between a productive workforce and a caring workforce.

## **8.1 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

- 8.11 An appointed Counsellor and Chaplain from Employee Wellness Services should attend to the affected parties
- 8.12 In the event of death of the employee/colleague counselling and support should be extended to the immediate family members and colleagues.

## **8.2 Establishment of the Employee Wellness Services Committee**

- (a) An appointed Chaplaincy.
- (b) A member from EWS
- (c) A member from the affected Directorate
- (d) Events Management Unit to ensure readiness.

## **8.3 Receiving information on the passing of an employee/colleague.**

- Manager from the relevant Directorate must inform other staff members through internal communications.
- Must inform the EWS Directorate within the first day of receiving the news.
- Manager should establish a link between the family and the Department.
- EWS Committee should arrange for prayer sessions and funeral.

## **8.4 Prayer Sessions**

### **a) Departmental prayer session.**

- The Committee must organise a prayer session for all employees.
- Events Management Unit to ensure readiness.

### **b) Family Prayer**

- The Manager must co-ordinate and arrange with the family for a day of prayer with the family.
- The Committee to arrange accordingly

## **9 INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR AN EMPLOYEE/S**

9.11 Voluntary donations per Directorate are encouraged.

9.12 Colleagues in the member's unit should assign a responsible person to collect contributions and liaise with the Committee.

9.13 A register to be developed for all donations/flowers/cards to be sent to the family.

9.14 A record should be kept of all contributions taken

## **10 THE EMPLOYER'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

### **10.1 Memorial Service**

- (a) The Committee must co-ordinate the memorial service.
- (b) All logistical arrangements should be done by the Unit responsible.
- (c) Head of Department/Designated Official should attend ALL Memorial Services and speak on behalf of the Department.
- (d) Officials who will represent the Department at the memorial service, submitting donations to the bereaved family, and delivering speeches on behalf of the Department must be nominated.
- (e) The family should be informed about the date, venue and time of the memorial service.
- (f) The relevant Directorate must be responsible for transporting the family members to the memorial service.



## **10.2 Departmental Representative/s to attend the Funeral**

- (a) Colleagues within the members' Directorate and other Directorates are encouraged to attend the funeral.
- (b) The Manager/Designated Official of the relevant Directorate should attend the funeral and represent the Department.
- (c) The Committee should arrange transport for a maximum of five(5) officials who shall represent the Management and officials from the affected Directorate in the funeral.
- (d) Nominated officials who are in possession of subsidized motor vehicles will utilize their vehicles officially to perform all funeral functions and all the trips shall be authorized by the Head of the Department or his/her Designated Official.

## **10.3 Utilization of own transport**

- (a) The Department shall not be responsible in cases where employees/officials use their private transports to attend the memorial service or funeral of the employee of the department.
- (b) Officials, who are in possession of subsidized motor vehicles not nominated to represent the Department to attend the memorial service or funeral of the employee of the department, shall not be reimbursed for kilometers on the same whilst using their motor vehicles.

## **10.4 Departmental Representation**

The Head of Department/delegate should attend the Funeral Service of an employee.

## **11. BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING**

### **Affected Officials in the Directorate**

- EWS Directorate is responsible for providing crisis intervention, trauma debriefing and counselling to the staff members and their immediate family members/dependents when incidents of this nature occur.
- It is the responsibility of the affected Manager to indicate to the EWS Directorate what transpired if the unit is not aware for it to assist with necessary counselling or assistance.

- This has to be communicated as soon as possible so that the unit can assist in preventing problems that may include acute stress disorder (ASD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, panic attacks, complicated bereavement, anger and general psychological distress.

## 12. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Employee Wellness Services Directorate is responsible for communicating the provisions of this document within the Department. All Managers and Supervisors are responsible for the implementation thereof.

## 13. POLICY AMENDMENT

This policy shall be amended as and when a need arises to ensure that it is aligned to the prevailing legislations and conditions of employment.

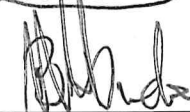
## 14. RELATED POLICIES

Effective implementation of this policy requires that it be read together with Provincial and other Departmental Policies.

## 15. EFFECTIVE DATE

The review date for this policy shall be effective from the date upon which it has been approved and signed off by the Accounting Officer.

**APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED**



**Dr N Mbude**

**SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL**

21/06/2021  
**DATE**