



**agriculture &
rural development**

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Organisation	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Programme	HRD
Policy	Bereavement Policy
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Approved by Head Department	of <u><i>[Signature]</i></u>
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1. PREAMBLE

Family responsibility for bereavement is one of the rights of the employee that is recognised in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. This provides a continuing basis for a healthy work environment and workforce in instances where the unexpected is experienced.

Challenges concerning such a right have to be addressed unanimously by the stakeholders without prejudice. Examples are religious and cultural diversities. Proper implementation and monitoring

taking into cognisance the challenges faced with the bereavement policy, applying fair, unbiased equitable mechanisms should be practiced.

2. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

HRM:	Human Resource Management
HRD:	Human Resource Development
PSCBC:	Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council
Adopt:	To legally take another one's child and bring it up as one's own
Counsellor:	A person trained to give guidance on personal, social and psychological problems
Employee:	An employee includes all employees of the Department employed in terms of the Public Service Act of 1994 as amended which includes contract workers, participants in the developmental programme
Foster Care:	Bring up a child that is not your own by birth
Guardian:	A person having legal custody of a child
Immediate Family Member:	Employee's biological parents, spouse, child, adopted child, foster child
Induction:	Formal introduction into a new job
Leave:	Concession of absence from work provided for in the DPSA Leave directive
Memorial Service:	Service held to pay last respect in honour of the deceased in the workplace

Spouse:	A husband or wife
Bereavement:	The state of loss of a relative/family member
Funeral:	A ceremony usually a religious or cultural, for burying or cremation a deceased person.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The policy is developed to ensure that the organisation standardise the procedure for allowing personnel time to mourn and grief their loved ones without jeopardising their job.
- 3.2 It provides guidelines to deal with bereavement in the workplace.
- 3.3 It ensures consistency in treating staff members who have passed on or those who have lost their loved ones.
- 3.4 It is aiming at supporting employees during bereavement.

4. PRINCIPLES

The Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- a. Promotion of emotional and mental well-being of employees with elimination of unfair disputes as far as possible.
- b. Progressive realization of constitutional rights as an indication of care and concern by the employer.
- c. Adopting and maintaining a passionate environment of solidarity in the workplace with observation of individual norms, values, religions and cultural diversities.

5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 5.1. Labour Relations Act, 66, 1995.
- 5.2. Public Service Act, 1994.
- 5.3. Public Service Commission Act of 1997.
- 5.4. Public Service Regulations, 2016
- 5.5. Public Service Coordination Bargaining (Resolution 7 of 2002).
- 5.6. Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997.

6. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 6.1. This policy is applicable equally to all employees in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and their immediate family members, and no exceptions shall be granted under any circumstance, nor shall any asset/s or resources not mentioned in this policy be implemented in the context of this policy irrespective of the standing of the official in the department.
- 6.2. Former employees who die within three (3) months of resigning or termination of employment due to pension or disability are also included.

7. POLICY STATEMENT

All employees shall be allowed to attend their immediate families' funerals provided they are within the legislated procedures by DPSA. Employees will not be discriminated against irrespective of their culture.

8. PROCEDURE

In case of bereavement, the employee should do the following:

- 8.1. Inform the Head of the Directorate/Component who will in turn inform the Employee Health and Wellness Sub-directorate through the Director: Human Resource Development; as well as the Director: Communications and Director: Human Resource Management.

9. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE

- 9.1 Employees be granted five (5) days leave per annual leave cycle for utilisation if:
 - 8.1.1 The employee's child, spouse, or immediate family dies.
- 9.2 The number of family responsibility leave days taken according to 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 shall not exceed five days in an annual leave cycle, unless special circumstances warrant further leave at the discretion of the Head of Department.
- 9.3 Immediate family member for purposes of this provision means the employee's biological parent, spouse, child, adopted child, foster child and in-laws. The granting of family

responsibility leave must be taken with due consideration of the employee's cultural responsibilities.

- 9.4 Employees who have used all their family responsibility leave may, subject to the approval of the Head of Department, apply to:
- 8.4.1 Use available annual leave, or
 - 8.4.2 Use up to 184 calendar days of unpaid leave.

10. EMOTIONAL (PSYCHO-SOCIAL) SUPPORT

- 10.1 An appointed EAP counsellor from Employee Health and Wellness Unit will be allocated to the bereaved family members per employee's request, acceptance or approval.
- 10.2 In the case of death of an employee counselling and support should be extended to the immediate family members per family's request, acceptance or approval.

11. DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- 11.1 Colleagues in the bereaved employee's unit/component are encouraged to support the bereaved by making contributions as may be agreed within the component.
- 11.2 Colleagues in the members unit should assign a responsible person to collect contributions for the family.
- 11.3 Contributions will be given to the bereaved family by a representative from bereaved employee's component.
- 11.4 A record should be kept for all the contributions.

12. THE EMPLOYER'S ROLE

12.1. Memorial Service

- 12.1.1. In the event of the death of an employee, the employer must ensure that a memorial service is arranged three (3) days before the funeral at the workplace in consultation with the family.
- 12.1.2. Each Directorate shall be responsible for arrangement and preparation of memorial service in respect of death that occurred in their respective Directorate.

12.2. **Funeral Attendance**

All employees are encouraged to attend departmental memorials and funerals.

12.3. **Departmental Representation**

- 11.3.1. A representative who is delegated by the Head of Department shall represent the employer at memorial and the funeral services.
- 11.3.2. The deceased/bereaved employee's Directorate in the Department shall be responsible to purchase a wreath /flowers for the family of the deceased employee to the value of not less than R300 in time for the funeral from the budget of the deceased/bereaved unit.
- 11.3.3. In a case of a staff member who resides outside South Africa, donations shall be collected in support of the staff member.

12.4 **Utilization/Provision for State Owned Transport**

In the event of death of an employee, state vehicle can however be utilised under the following conditions:

- 12.4.1. One state vehicle (sedan) may be released to assist with funeral arrangement and errands in respect of the employee of the department who has died.
- 12.4.2. For the purpose of attending memorial and funeral services, a request for transport which must include the trip authorization reflected with all the names of the individual making use of that mode of transport must be made.
- 12.4.3. Provisioning of bus or any vehicle in excess of normal sedan will need to be approved by the Head of Department or his/her delegate where necessary.
- 12.4.4. A vehicle may also be released for the purpose of passing on condolences to family members on behalf of the Department and on condition that the Head of the Department or delegated authority approves the Trip authorization form.
- 12.4.5. The permitted official(s) in the deceased's component who is/are in possession of subsidised motor vehicles (in case of none SMS/MMS member) will be allowed to utilize their vehicles officially to perform all memorial and funeral functions as set out above

and all trips incurred will be regarded as official trips subject to this need to be authorisation by responsible manager.

12.4.6. In the case of MMS/SMS member, only one member from that component will be allowed to use their vehicles to travel to the memorial service or funeral service of the deceased or both if the SMS is delegated by the Head of Department to represent the department.

12.4.7. The measures stated above shall apply irrespective of the proximity of the deceased home from their workstation, i.e. the measures shall apply to Head Office, District or any of the LAOs of the department.

13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1. Human Resource Management will provide advice on appropriate leave to be utilized during bereavement and advise the employee accordingly.

13.2. A leave form with proof confirming leave of absence should be submitted by the staff member.

13.3. Colleagues in the members unit as well as a representative from Quality or Work Life Management Sub Directorate must offer bereavement support to the bereaved.

13.4. Memorial services must be organised by representatives from the bereaved employee's unit with support of the Employee Health and Wellness Unit.

13.5. Communications Directorate will inform all employees about Deaths and Memorial services of deceased employees and the deceased employee's immediate family members as stipulated in the leave policy directive.

13.6. Communications Directorate will assist with the design and crafting of Memorial Programs.

13.7. Security Services will assist with collection and return of working tools i.e. departmental assets such as lap tops, cell phones immediately after announcement of death.

13.8. Human Resource Management Directorate will assist with regard to pension payments procedures after the funeral.

13.9. Compensation for injury on duty Office within Human Resource Directorate will assist with injury on duty claim procedures in an event where the deceased died in line of duty.

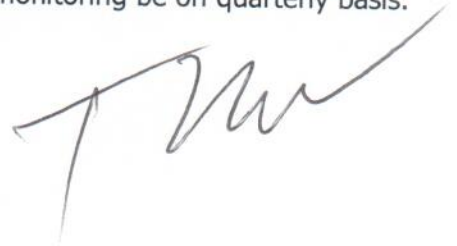
14. IMPLEMENTATION

The Employee Health and Wellness Sub-directorate will monitor the implementation of the policy in all instances.

15. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

15.1. Implementation of this policy shall be monitored by the Employee Health and Wellness Sub-directorate together with the Policy Unit.

15.2. The policy shall be reviewed after every five (5) years and monitoring be on quarterly basis.

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