



## EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

### BEREAVEMENT POLICY

Date Adopted :

Date Revised :

Date of Implementation :

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Definitions.....	3
2. Scope of application.....	3
3. Legal framework.....	3
4. Purpose.....	3
5. Bereavement committee.....	4
6. Responsibilities of the Bereavement Coordinating Committee.....	4
7. Death of a staff member.....	5
8. Bereavement counseling.....	5
9. Municipal delegation to the bereaved family.....	5
10. Condolences.....	6
11. Memorial service.....	6
12. Funeral.....	7
13. Death of an immediate family member of an employee.....	7
14. Leave Arrangements.....	8
15. Payment of Benefits.....	8



## 1. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following definitions shall apply:

**“Bereavement”** means the loss of an employee and immediate family member by death.

**“Committee”** means the Bereavement Committee established in terms of this policy.

**“Constitution”** refers to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.

**“Employee”** refers to a member of staff including interns, learners, and other contract workers within the municipality who pay condolences in the event of another member’s death.

**“Immediate family member”** means the spouse(s) or life partner(s), the children, parents and siblings of the employee.

## 2. Scope of application

2.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Emalahleni Municipality, including interns, learners, and other contract workers within the municipality.

2.2 This policy does not apply to consultants or contractors.

## 3. Legal framework

3.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act

3.2 Compensation of Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act

## 4. Purpose

4.1 To ensure a uniform, fair, and consistent approach in dealing with the:

- (a) Death of a staff member; and
- (b) Death of the immediate family member of staff.

4.2 To create a supportive and caring environment for employees and their families

4.2.1 To ensure the following principles are adhered to: Equality, Fairness, Respect and Compliance.

## **5. Bereavement committee**

- 5.1 The Human Resources Unit will facilitate the establishment of the Bereavement Coordinating Committee on an annual basis.
- 5.2 Representatives will be nominated annually in a staff meeting and be approved by the Director for Corporate Services.
- 5.3 The Chairperson of the Bereavement Coordinating Committee will be elected by committee members.

## **6. Responsibilities of the Bereavement Coordinating Committee**

- 6.1 The responsibilities of the committee will include, but not limited, to the following:
  - 6.1.1 Establish the authenticity of the notice of death and formally notify the applicable Director within 24 hours of the death;
  - 6.1.2 Ensure timely and formal notification of death to the family and all employees if the employee dies while on duty;
  - 6.1.3 Ensure effective communication of the notice of death in a controlled environment and arrange counseling support where necessary;
  - 6.1.4 Ensure an early visit (within 48 hours) to the bereaved family to establish funeral arrangements and provide advice to the family for the effective processing of documentation for the relevant benefits claim;
  - 6.1.5 Ensure constant contact and support to the family in the process of funeral arrangements;
  - 6.1.6 Create a condolence book, collect condolences and deliver condolences to the bereaved family;
  - 6.1.5 Arrange a Memorial Service in consultation with the family and arrange transport for the family where necessary;
  - 6.1.6 If agreed with the family, arrange for comfort prayer visit to the family, prior to the funeral service where possible;
  - 6.1.7 Coordinate transport arrangements for employees attending the funeral of an employee; and
  - 6.1.8 Arrange a card and a bouquet of flowers within reasonable limits in the case of the municipal employee.



## **7. Death of a staff member**

### **7.1 Notification of death**

- 7.1 The affected unit will notify the Bereavement Coordinating Committee and the applicable Director;
- 7.2 The authenticity of the report should be verified by the BCC;
- 7.3 The notification of death to employees should be communicated with care and sensitivity to manage the possible impact on the working environment.

## **8. Bereavement counseling**

- 8.1 The Human Resources Unit and the BCC may organise counseling support for employees during the week of notification of death;
- 8.2 Additional support of affordable counseling service providers will be acquired in the case where extra capacity is required;
- 8.3 Approval of such services must be sought from the Municipal Manager and/or applicable Director;
- 8.4 The Human Resources Unit will facilitate counseling support to family members, limited to three sessions, should this type of support be required by the family.

## **9. Municipal delegation to the bereaved family**

- 9.1 The BCC will nominate an official delegation of a maximum of 5 members to pay a home visit to the bereaved family within 48 hours of receipt of the notification of death;
- 9.2 The delegation should include relevant people who will assist the family with the information on procedure on claiming of benefits;
- 9.3 Transport and accommodation will be provided to the municipal delegation for visit to the bereaved family and funeral, if the family leaves further than 300 km away from the deceased employee's place of work.

## **10. Condolences**

- 10.1 The BCC will keep a condolence book for effective control, accountability, fairness and consistency;
- 10.2 Each employee will make a standard contribution of no less than R50.00 in case of death of an employee, subject to annual review;
- 10.3 A condolence book will be arranged for effective coordination of support and comforting messages will be sent to the family as a memento;
- 10.4 The BBC will be responsible for the purchasing of a card and a wreath, limited to R500.00 through normal procurement process.

## **11. Memorial service**

- 11.1 A memorial service will be arranged by the BCC in collaboration with the affected Directorate and the bereaved family;
- 11.2 Constant contact and communication should be maintained with the family to ensure the success of the Memorial Service;
- 11.3 All preparations and arrangements of the memorial service should be at reasonable costs to the municipality;
- 11.4 The arrangements will include venue for memorial service, timely invitations, programme, refreshments and transport for a maximum of 6 family members;
- 11.5 A representative from the Municipality will be appointed by the Director to deliver a condolence message during the memorial message;
- 11.6 Refreshments should be limited to the bereaved family, BCC members and official Directorate Representatives;
- 11.7 The costs for the Memorial Service will be the responsibility of the affected Directorate;
- 11.8 Transport to the Memorial Service by employees from various Directorates will be limited to one official vehicle;
- 11.9 Attendance of Memorial Services must be coordinated, controlled and authorised to minimise the disruption of service delivery.



## **12. Funeral**

- 12.1 A Directorate delegation, limited to 5 people, will be selected and approved by the applicable Directorate;
- 12.2 The Director or his or her designate will identify and authorise a person on speak on behalf of the Municipality at the funeral;
- 12.3 Transport and accommodation costs of the Municipal Representative should be at reasonable costs to the Municipality;
- 12.4 The attendance of employees will be coordinated and authorised by the Municipal Manager in the case of the funeral outside Emalahleni Municipality;
- 12.5 The BCC will ensure that transport is coordinated, limited to one vehicle per Unit.
- 12.6 Other employees that want to attend the funeral, will do so at own cost;
- 12.7 Employees who enlisted their names will be compelled to compensate the Municipality where their withdrawal caused the Municipality to incur fruitless and wasteful expenditure;
- 12.8 The Municipality will only be responsible for transport costs and employees will make their own accommodation

## **13. Death of an immediate family member of an employee**

### **13.1 Notification of death**

- 13.1.1 The affected Directorate will notify the Bereavement Coordination Committee and the applicable Director;
- 13.1.2 The authenticity of the report will be verified by the BCC.

### **13.2 Visit to bereaved staff member**

- 13.2.1 The BCC and the affected Directorate will arrange an official delegation to the home of the staff member with the approval of the Municipal Manager or the applicable Director;
- 13.2.2 Visit of other members if staff must be coordinated to minimise impact on service delivery.

### **13.3 Condolences**

- 13.3.1 The condolence fee will be determined within the affordable limits of all employees within the Municipality and will be collected and delivered by the BCC.

### **13.4 Funeral**

- 13.4.1 The Municipal Manager or his or her delegate will identify and authorise a municipal delegation, limited to 5 people, to attend the funeral;
- 13.4.2 Other staff members will attend the funeral at their own costs.

### **13.5 Bereavement counseling**

- 13.5.1 The Human Resources Unit will ensure effective counseling and support to the employee during and immediately after the funeral of the immediate family member.

## **14. Leave Arrangements**

- 14.1 Prior approval must be sought before leaving the work place of work for any bereavement related matters;
- 14.2 Family responsibility leave will be granted in terms of the municipal leave of absence policy;
- 14.3 The undertaking of official visits to the bereaved family will be effectively controlled and will be considered to be official duty;
- 14.4 Attendance of funerals by other employees besides the delegated municipal representatives will be regarded annual leave.

## **15. Payment of Benefits**

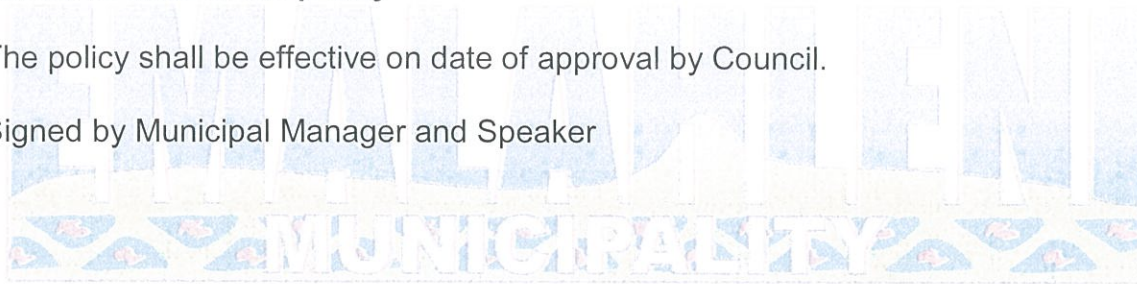
- 15.1 All compensation payments will be done in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act;
- 15.2 The Human Resources Unit will ensure that payments of the following benefits are dealt with as soon as possible:
- 15.2.1 Funeral benefit; and
- 15.2.2 Leave gratuity to the beneficiary of the deceased employee.



### Effective date of the policy

The policy shall be effective on date of approval by Council.

Signed by Municipal Manager and Speaker



  
DR SW VATALA  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

30/06/2017  
Date

  
CLR DS KALO  
HON. SPEAKER