



health

Department of Health
NORTHERN CAPE

Bereavement Policy

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Approved by the

Head of Department :

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Ms GE Matlaopane

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Policy Aim

1. The purpose of this policy is to regulate the support for a bereaved employee in case of death in his or her family and to determine the extent of support provided to the family of the employee in the event an employee is deceased.

Policy Scope

2. This policy applies to all employees of the Northern Cape Department of Health.

Policy Statement

3. It is the policy of the Northern Cape Department of Health to provide emotional support, practical and uniform measures to interact with families of employees who have passed on as well as employees who have lost their loved ones.

3.1. Death of an Employee

- 3.1.1. In the event of the death of an employee, the programme manager / immediate supervisor shall:
- 3.1.2. Inform the Head of Department about the death of an employee.
- 3.1.3. Visit the deceased family and shall thus serve as a link between the Northern Cape Department of Health and the bereaved family within the province.
- 3.1.4. Send notification to inform employees about the prayer sessions or memorial service or funeral of their colleague, including the residential address, date and time of the sessions for funeral or memorial service.
- 3.1.5. Send a wreath and card to the bereaved family on or before the day of the funeral together with contributions collected from employees.
- 3.1.6. At all times take the different cultural and religious practices into consideration when interacting with families.

3.1.7. It is the responsibility of the relevant unit manager to ensure that an official is available to speak at the funeral of the deceased employee on behalf of the department, subject to the religious and cultural preferences of the deceased and or the family.

3.2. Transport

3.2.1. The Northern Cape Department of Health will arrange transport for an official nominated to represent the department at the memorial service or funeral. State vehicle may be utilised for this, persons not authorised to use state vehicles will use alternative means of travelling approved by the Accounting Officer or his/her delegate.

3.2.2. Nominated officials who are in possession of subsidized motor vehicles may utilize their vehicles to perform all memorial and funeral functions, provided they represent the department and all trips will be regarded as official trips.

3.2.3. No state vehicle must be used for funeral arrangements for the bereaved family. Any unit head or employee of the Northern Cape Department of Health who is found to have permitted such use of government vehicles will be charged with misconduct. Unless an exception by the Head of Department has been done in writing to permit the use of such a vehicle for the said purpose.

3.3 Accommodation

3.3.1. Accommodation costs for officials representing the Northern Department of Health at a funeral of an employee must be approved by the Head of Department before time.

3.3.2. The relevant directorate shall pay for the attendance of a funeral or memorial service for nominated employees. Such costs must be borne with due regard to efficiency and cost effectiveness. Other officials not nominated will bear the costs.

3.4. Memorial Service

3.4.1. The Northern Cape Department of Health shall arrange a memorial service for employees of the department to attend. This shall be done in consultation with the bereaved family.

3.5. Death of Immediate Family of an Employee

3.5.1. In case of the death of an immediate family¹ member of an employee, the Unit Manager shall:

3.5.1.1. Ensure that a message of condolence is sent to the employee and his or her family within a day after receiving the news.

3.5.1.2. Send out notification to inform staff members about the bereavement of their colleague, including the residential address and also the arrangements regarding paying of respects (if practically possible).

3.5.1.3. Take responsibility for any voluntary contributions from the office and ensure that such donations are handed over to the bereaved family or the employee on or before the date of the funeral as a sign of compassion.

3.5.1.4. No accommodation and transport arrangements will be made for employees attending a memorial service or funeral of a family member of an employee.

3.5.1.5. Official arrangement for attending a memorial service or paying respect to the colleague and his/her family during work hours, can only be done if the house of the deceased is located within a radius of 30 (thirty) kilometres from the work station of an employee. This does not prohibit any employee from following normal leave procedures in order to be able to attend either a memorial or funeral service in support of a bereaved colleague.

¹ Immediate family refers to a spouse or co-habiting partner, including same sex relationships, biological children/step children/legal adopted children/ a child through foster care, Mother/step mother/ legal guardian, Father / step father/legal guardian, siblings (sister and brother).

3.6. Establishment of Bereavement Committee

- 3.6.1. A bereavement committee will be established and will consist of at least one (1) representative of each chief directorate.
- 3.6.2. The committee will appoint the chairperson, secretary and treasurer to perform normal functions attached to such portfolios.
- 3.6.3. If a committee member ceases to be a committee member, through natural attribution, resignation, or any other reason, the member shall be replaced by a representative from member's chief directorate.

Roles and Responsibilities

4. This policy is having the following role players:

4.1. The **Senior Manager of the Programme** shall:

- 4.1.1. Inform the Head of the Department of the passing of the employee.
- 4.1.2. Write the memo to the Head of Department to request approval to arrange transport to attend the funeral or memorial service and accommodation.
- 4.1.3. Facilitate authorisation of HOD who will use her/his discretion on the number of employees as well as accommodation if the distance between work station and funeral dictates so.
- 4.1.4. Inform the human resource management unit in writing so as to ensure that all HR procedures and processes are followed accordingly.

4.2. The **Bereavement Committee** shall:

- 4.2.1. Inform the colleagues / departmental employees of the passing on of an employee as well as funeral and or memorial service details.
- 4.2.2. Draft and circulate voluntary donation list.
- 4.2.3. Ensure that a wreath is sent to the bereaved family.

4.3. The Employee:

- 4.3.1. Follow the relevant process of leave to take time off from work to attend a memorial service or funeral.

Review and Distribution

5. The Provincial Communications Manager is the responsible manager for this policy and for ensuring it is reviewed and updated.
6. This policy will be reviewed after 3 years but no later than 5 years from the publishing date. If necessary an updated version will be issued, if not a formal cover letter will be issued to supplement the cover of this Policy (identifying a revised publication date).
7. The Director for Policy & Planning will distribute updated versions to:
 - Member of the Executive Council for Health
 - Head of Department of Health
 - All Chief Directors, Directors and Deputy Directors (who will in turn distribute to their staff as appropriate.)

Acknowledgements and Sources

8. Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended
9. Office of the Premier (Northern Cape) Bereavement Policy