

# EMPLOYEE WELLNESS POLICY



**Sundays River Valley**  
**Municipality**

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<b>EMPLOYEE WELLNESS POLICY PROGRAM</b>	
Policy Number	1
Policy Name	Employee Wellness program Policy
Policy Status	Approved 08 July 2022
Date of First Implementation	After the date of approval
Date of last Amended	New
Date of Next Review	Every financial year
Policy Custodian	Director Corporate Service
Policy Statement/Preamble	See policy
Policy Definition/description	See policy
Policy Purpose	See policy
Aims and Objectives	See policy
Application and scope	See policy
Legislation and policy framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act 32 of 2000</li> <li>• Municipal structure Act</li> <li>• Local government: Municipal Systems Act No.117 of 1998 &amp; Act 32 of 2000</li> <li>• Employee Equity Act 55 of 1998</li> <li>• South Africa</li> <li>• Labour relations Act, Act No.66 of 1995 amended</li> <li>• Occupational Health and Safety 85 of 1993</li> <li>• Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Act No.75 of 1997</li> <li>• Medical scheme Act 131 of 1998</li> <li>• Mental Health care Act 17 of 1998</li> <li>• Collective agreement of 2014</li> </ul>
Approving Authority	Council
Applicability	This policy applies to all permanent and contract municipal Employees
Policy Benchmark and references	SALGABC Conditions of Services
Stakeholder Consultation	Shared only with HR section heads and LLF

## **CONTENT**

- Preamble /statement
- Definition/Description of Employee Wellness Policy
- Purpose of the policy
- Application and scope
- Legislation framework/guiding principles
- Roles of different stakeholders
- Consultation with stakeholders
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- Approval of the policy
- Review of the policy

### **Employee Wellness Policy Sundays River Valley Municipality**

#### **1.Preamble /Statement**

Sundays River Valley Municipality values all employees and is committed in assisting its employees to maintain a high level of well-being ,and achieve both employers and personal goals .As part of this commitment ,Sundays River Valley Municipality recognises the need to provide adequate support for employees experiencing personal disorder or work related difficulties .The provision of an Employee Wellness Programme (EWP)will facilitate the early intervention and referral of employees whose work performance is affected by personal difficulties

#### **2.Difnition /description of Employee Wellness Policy**

- Employee Wellness Programme is an effective method to promote health and wellness amongst the members of staff
- EWP can be explained as counselling service for employees and their family who need help with personal and work-related problems.
- It is employment -based or outsourced programme which helps employees with psych-social problems which are affecting their work performance.
- It is intervention strategy based in the workplace to help employees contend with life challenges that may impact negatively on their work performance

#### **3.Policy purpose**

- Sunday River Valley Municipality is concern with the health and safety, welfare, and job satisfaction of employees
- It is recognized that most human problems can be treated or resolved if each is identified in its early stages. This is applicable whether the problem is one of physical illness, HIV/AIDS counselling and treatment, mental illness or family conflicts/violence, sexual harassment, injury, chemical dependency, personal debt and financial management problems, or any other

concerns. These are serious problems, which may have profound impact upon the lives of those employees affected, their families, fellow employees, and their job performance.

- The intent of EWP is there for to ensure the well-being of the employee and appropriate job performance, not termination of employment.

#### **4.Application and scope**

- Provide constructive assistance to employees and their immediate family members who are experiencing any form of personal problem such as physical illness, mental and emotional illness, family distress, personal debt financial, alcoholism, drug dependency, legal or others.
- Render confidential service aimed at assisting employees to improve their efficiency and quality of life by means of preventative and remedial activities.
- Timeously identify, assess, and refer trouble employees/under-achievers to special treatment (internal/external service provider) for successful re-integration into the work environment.
- Prevent decline of performance from employees with normal satisfying job performance and potential.
- Establish and maintain a holistic approach to remedy personal, social, and emotional problems.
- Increase level of interpersonal skills amongst other employees in the workplace.
- Enhance quality of life of all employees.
- Provide employees with a fulfilling, safe and healthy working environment.

#### **4.1 Referral Procedure**

In terms of Sundays River Valley municipality policies, an employee can access EWP in three ways, and these can be implemented in different forms, namely self- referral, informal referral, and formal referral by the supervisor.

#### **4.2 Self -referral**

- Employees experiencing personal or social difficulties can approach the EWP directly and may subject themselves to the EWP counselling services at any time. Employees who voluntarily seek EWP counselling but who do not want their supervisor to have knowledge of their attendance are allowed to arrange these appointments outside their normal working hours.

#### **4.3 Informal Referral**

- When an employee experience personal or social and advice of other people (e.g., colleague, supervisor, friend, family member, etc) seeks assistance from the EWP this process is referred as an informal referral.

#### **4.4 Formal referral**

- An employee may be referred to the EWP for or counselling assessment by his or supervisor wherever the supervisor is about decline in employee job performance, attitude, or behaviour

concern. The supervisor is then required to complete the referral report, without mentioning the nature of the personal difficulty. In addition to in house process employer must establish links with the external service providers with a view in ensuring that:

- The supervisor shall not be responsible for diagnosing the nature of the personal problem and the Employees private and social life.
- Through this service employees have access to legal and financial counsellors who can assist with appropriate advice for legal, financial, and general life management difficulties.
- Employees are entitled to eight counselling sessions per person per year at a place close to his/her residence or work.

## **5.Guiding principles**

### **5.1 Confidentiality on consultation and record keeping**

The municipality shall ensure confidentiality of information /details revealed by employees during consultation and record keeping. Also, the municipality shall neither victimize nor dismiss an employee based on information revealed during consultation or receiving treatment.

### **5.2 Neutrality**

The municipality shall ensure that EWP remains outside of the tradition conflict areas between management and employee organizations, in other words, it may not be drawn to testify or witnessing in any labour disciplinary proceeding shall not be used as a disciplinary tool for management.

### **5.3 Volunteerism**

The municipality acknowledge that voluntarism is the most effective referral to the programme since it achieves the earliest intervention possible. On the other hand, at no stage can the municipality force the employee to use EWP.

### **5.4 Constructive coercion/persuading**

After everything else has been done, that is training intervention, then the managers/supervisors can persuade the trouble employees to consult wellness Practitioner for assistance.

### **5.6 Accessibility**

The municipality shall ensure that the programme is accessible to all employees regardless of their positions. The municipality commits itself to develop a system of resources relevant and accessibility to employees and their families, for assistance and counselling.

The municipality must further ensure that consultation rooms are accessible and conducive.

## **6.Roles and responsibility of stakeholders**

### **6.1 Permanency**

The municipality shall ensure the survival and sustainability of the of the EWP by providing visible support. The municipality shall ensure thorough advocacy through consultation with all relevant stakeholders including labour component /organizations.

6.2 responsibilities to build a healthier workplace it is important that everyone is working towards a common goal. The wellness programme needs to be supported by all levels of the organization. Employers' commitment is critical for success. Here are some key role players who need to support the programme.

### **6.3 Management**

The management must:

Buy into the programme, and their support must be visible.

- Respond to the issues identify development by employees.
- Support the of a comprehensive workplace wellness strategy; that is, promote activities that create awareness, build skills, and create supportive environment.
- Provide appropriate resources, staff must be given time within their workday, to participate in the planning and implementation of activities.
- The programme must also be supported with the appropriate resources such as private consultation room, people, material, and money. This time resources allowance will not only help boost program participation rates but will illustrate to staff management commitment to the program.
- Attend training sessions and the well-versed with EWP.

### **6.4 Employee Association**

Unions must also buy into the concept of wellness and the benefit of a wellness program for its members. It is very important to involve employee group as active partners in the process from the very start.

### **6.5 Supervisor**

Supervisor must:

Alert and observe the performance of their employees to identify the change of behaviour and the decline in performance.



Document evidence in relation to deterioration job performance, that must keep records of absenteeism, late coming, and failure to meet deadlines, physical appearance, or any other visible behaviour change.

Inform their employees about the value of EWP.

After everything has been done that is means to develop the employee refer the troubled employee to EWP Practitioner if there is no improvement on the job performance.

## **6.6 Employee**

It is the employee responsibility to:

Note his/her behaviour change and take initiative of utilizing EWP services.

Ensure 100%co-operation in respect of the appointment for consultation, treatment and avoiding relapse.

Attend information sessions and the well versed with EWP.

## **6.7 Wellness Practitioner**

EWP practitioner is responsible for the following:

Advocating the Employee Wellness Programme through the municipality employees.

Ensuring links with other referral institutions and stakeholders.

Conduct counselling sessions and workshop.

Safe keeping confidential records in respect of interviews and referrals.

Monitor and evaluation of the effectiveness of EWP.

Identify training of EWP coordinators.

## **6.8 Employees rights and responsibility pertaining to EWP**

- Personal information concerning participation in the EWP is maintained in a confidential manner.
- Participation in the EWP shall not jeopardize an employee any opportunity for promotion or advancement.
- Leave and time -off shall be granted in accordance with the municipality's standard policies and procedures for professional assessment, counselling, and treatment.
- Employees must take full responsibility for their own health and fully participate in the programme.
- It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain satisfactory job performance.

- Policies define criteria for additional treatment emanating from the application of EWP.
- These criteria take into consideration whether an employee has medical aid or not and the affordability of additional treatment.

## **7. Confidentiality**

All the municipality policies and practices on the EWP emphasize the issue of the confidentiality.

This is intended to ensure that employee confidentiality to an appropriate person without these issues being made known except with their explicit consent.

Furthermore, these policies state that the status of the EWP Coordinator should be that of an impartial professional advisor, concern primarily with safeguarding and improving the well-being of employee. The EWP practitioner should be also task to consider any situation from both Employer and the Employees point of view and strive to ensure that neither is put at risk. This means EWP policies strictly emphasizes that the fact the service is confidential and anonymous and that employees who seek employee assistance will not jeopardize their job security, compensation, promotion, opportunities and/or reputation.

## **8. Conflict of interest**

**An Employee Wellness Practitioner must:**

- Remain within scope of the program
- Resist exploiting of the professional relationship with the Employees to further any social political economic.
- Refer the employee to another resource when the practitioner, for a personal reason, cannot provide service to the personal reason, cannot provide service to the employee.
- Inform concerned parties of possible or actual conflicts of interest
- Initiate step that precipitates a reasonable solution without causing undue harm
- Remain neutral in conflict between the employee, the union, or management

## **9. Consultation with stakeholders**

It is still draft and has been presented to other departments, labour component and HR section heads


## **10. Approved as per Council resolution**

The policy shall be implemented after council has approved and adopted.



## **11. POLICY APPROVAL:**

Policy was approved by Council on 8 July 2022



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S H RUME  
MAYOR

08 JULY 2022