

Policy on Bursary

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Foreword by the MEC for Health

The Government has set the Department of Health, both nationally and provincially, major goals to achieve over the coming years. These goals include, among others, to provide strategic leadership and improve management; to accelerate the revitalisation of all health care infrastructure; to improve the quality of health services in preparation for the National Health Insurance (NHI), to accelerate the management of HIV/AIDS, STIs, TB and other communicable diseases; and to promote mass mobilisation for better health for all.

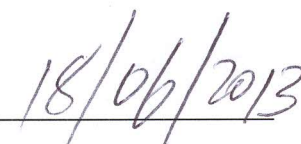
It is against this backdrop that the Northern Cape Department of Health is reviewing and updating all existing Policies and Procedures and, where needed, introducing new ones. These policies will ensure that staff knows what is expected from them as individuals and as employees of the Department, as well as informing the public and its representatives of what they can expect from the Department

The Bursary policy is critical to ensuring the development and training of staff is conducted in a fair, equitable and transparent way.

I commend this policy to you.



Mr Mxolisi Sokatsha
MEC for Health



Date

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Health Service Excellence for All

Mission

Working together, we are committed to provide quality health care services. We will promote a healthy society in which we care for one another and take responsibility for our own health. Our caring, multi-skilled professionals will integrate comprehensive services, using evidence-based care-strategies and partnerships to maximize efficiencies for the benefit of all.

Values

- Respect (towards colleagues and clients, rule of law and cultural diversity)
- Integrity (Honesty, Discipline, and Ethics)
- Excellence through effectiveness, efficiency, innovation and quality health care.
- Humanity (Caring Institution, Facility and Community)
- Empower our people(employees and community)

Policy Aim

1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the department has a framework and procedures on how to assist the employees, who want to further their studies or improve their qualifications.

Policy Scope

2. This policy applies to all permanent employees and prospective employees of the Northern Cape Department of Health for part-time or full time studies at a local or international institution.

Policy Statement

3. It is the policy of the Northern Cape Department of Health:

3.1. Bursaries

- 3.1.1. That a Bursary scheme is established to contribute to the vision and mission of the department, with emphasis on enhancing service delivery.
- 3.1.2. That a bursary is granted at the discretion of the Accounting Officer or his or delegate to permanent and prospective employees.

3.2. Contractual Obligations

- 3.2.1. The bursary holder must enter into a contract with the Department
- 3.2.2. A full time study bursar will serve the department after attaining the qualification on the basis of one year for each year of study or any part thereof plus additional years of extension as approved by the Accounting Officer in situations where the holder could not complete his/her studies within the required period.
- 3.2.3. A part time bursar will redeem the bursary by serving the Department for at least one year after attaining the qualification.
- 3.2.4. An employee who fails to complete the relevant qualification will redeem his/her obligation in terms of the contract either through service or repayment

of the bursary amount, plus interest at a rate determined by the Minister of Finance¹.

3.2.5. In the case of an employee who studies or undergoes training for short periods, the Accounting Officer may, as a precondition for providing assistance, require the employee to enter into a contract with the Department in terms of which the employee will serve the department for a commensurable period.

3.3. Take-over of study debts

3.3.1. The contract for the take-over of bursary obligations by the department for employees from private organizations will only take effect with the relevant official when the necessary funds are available.

3.3.2. The take-over of outstanding debts (excluding interest) in respect of study loans incurred by officials from private organizations shall be based on the following:

3.3.2.1. The course, for which the loan is approved, must be relevant to the requirements of the post in which the official has been appointed.

3.3.2.2. The official must not be a State bursary holder for the same period for which the loan is approved.

3.3.3. No financial settlements will take place between Departments when officials are transferred between Departments².

3.4. Bursary Amounts

3.4.1. Subject to the availability of funds, bursaries may be granted for the following:

3.4.1.1. Actual study fees, viz registration, tuition, examination fees (and where applicable residence fees) based on the authentic quotation from a registered institution of higher learning.

¹ Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 Section 80(1)(b)

² Public Service Act 1994 (Schedule 1 and 2)

- 3.4.1. The bursary or financial assistance may include reasonable cost of books which shall be paid to the institutions bank account.
- 3.4.2. The amendment of bursary amounts shall be reviewed annually in consultation with institutions of learning.
- 3.4.3. Payment of tuition due to the institution will be done so directly to the banking account of such educational institution and not to the bursary holder and only upon enrolment. Where a bursar paid money to the institution, it will be refunded on receipt of an authorized invoice and proof of payment.
- 3.4.4. Tuition credit on the account of a student as a result of bursary paid by the department will remain as a resource of the department and must be disclosed by bursars and refunded to the Department It will be regarded as fraudulent exercise should bursars attempt to claim this credit for their own benefit.

3.5. Withdrawal And Recovery Of Financial Assistance or Bursaries

- 3.5.1. Financial assistance given to the employee will be withdrawn:
 - 3.5.1.1. If the bursar is excluded or expelled from the institution or discontinues his /her studies on his/her own accord.
 - 3.5.1.2. The employee fails to submit results.
 - 3.5.1.3. The employee fails to complete the studies in record time and has not applied for extension.
 - 3.5.1.4. There is failure to make reasonable/acceptable progress.
 - 3.5.1.5. Resigns from the Department before he/she has fulfilled his/her contractual obligation.
 - 3.5.1.6. Dismissed due to misconduct.
- 3.5.2. The bursary shall be cancelled forthwith and the bursar shall have to repay the Department at an interest rate applicable from time to time to debts due to the state as determined by the Minister of Finance³.

³ Public Finance Management Act 1 Of 1999 (80)(1)(b)

3.5.3. The amount owed shall be deducted from his /her salary on an instalment basis over a period to be agreed to by the Accounting Officer and the bursar.

3.5.4. The employee authorising the Department to effect such deductions must complete an Acknowledgement of Debt Form. This shall be effected a month following cancellation.

3.6. Granting Of Extension For Bursaries

3.6.1. As soon as the employee realizes that he/she cannot complete his/her studies within the minimum duration of the course, a well-motivated application for extension, with examination results must be submitted to Provincial Office not later than February of the next year of study. Failure to adhere to the requirements may result in the cancellation of the Bursary/Studies.

3.6.2. A motivation and recommendation from the Human Resource Development Sub-directorate must accompany applications for the extension of the duration of the study and approval should be sought from the Accounting Officer.

3.6.3. Work pressure may not be accepted as a valid reason for not fulfilling bursary obligations unless a fully motivated application recommended by the Manager is submitted to the Director for Human Resource Management.

3.6.4. With regard to the period for which extension may be granted, each case must be considered on merit with a maximum period of 2 years as a guideline for extension purposes.

3.7. Qualification Recognition

3.7.1. The Bursary holder will be required to submit proof of qualification after completion of studies to the Bursary office.

3.7.2. A congratulatory letter will be issued out to the officer after receipt of written proof or a certified copy of the Certificate, Diploma, Degree or Post-graduate qualification is received from the institution.

3.7.3. Promotion will not be automatic after obtaining a higher qualification. Bursary holders must apply for available posts when advertised.

3.8. Termination– Bursary Funds

- 3.8.1. In a case of termination of service by a bursar, allowance must be made for the possible existence of other agreements entered into by the Bursar, which also gives rise to service obligations.
- 3.8.2. Study debt will be repayable in full or pro-rata depending on the time outstanding before resignation. If the amount payable is insufficient the balance will be recovered from the employee's pension. If the mentioned is insufficient, the official will be held liable to pay the amount out of own sources before departure from the Department
- 3.8.3. In case of death or the bursar being incapacitated by any mental or physical disability, any liability for the refund of any moneys that may be owed to the Department must be communicated to the Accounting Officer to obtain authority to write off the debt.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 4. The **Accounting Officer** or his or her delegate is responsible:
 - 4.1. For approving the granting of a bursary for any study, training, research or general, further and higher education and other training interventions⁴ where:
 - 4.1.1. The Accounting Officer or his/her delegate has requested an employee to undertake the study, research or training.
 - 4.1.2. The employee or prospective employee has requested such assistance.
 - 4.2. For authorising the payment of genuine expenses associated with study, research or training be covered but need not cover the full expenses.
 - 4.3. For authorising that employees retain their salaries, which shall count as part of financial assistance during any study, research or training.
 - 4.4. To waive the whole or part of the study debts subject to Treasury Regulations.

⁴ Training Interventions refer to short courses, congresses, symposia, seminars, conferences, workshops, lectures and study tours

5. The **line manager** is responsible for, after considering the needs of his or her unit, recommending the granting of a bursary to the Bursary Committee who shall in turn make recommendations to the Accounting Officer for approval of the bursary.
6. Employees, students and prospective employees are responsible to submit applications for bursaries to the bursary officer on the prescribed application form.

Review and Distribution

7. The Director for Human Resources is the responsible manager for this Policy and for ensuring it is reviewed and updated.
8. This policy will be reviewed after 12 months but before 18 months of the last publication 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).
9. The Director for Policy & Planning will distribute updated versions to:
 - Member of the Executive Council for Health
 - Accounting Officer of Health
 - All Chief Directors, Directors and Deputy Directors (who will in turn distribute to their staff as appropriate.)

Acknowledgements and Sources

10. This policy draws upon the following legislation:
 - Public Service Regulations, 2001
 - Skills Development Act, 1998
 - Skill Development Levies Act, 1999
 - Health Training and Development Act
 - PSC Resolution 1 of 2012
 - Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999