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DIRECTORATE: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

POLICY TITLE : OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

POLICY Ref. No. : S1/P/OHS

1. PREAMBLE

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993, requires the employer to bring about and maintain, as far as reasonable, a work environment that is safe and without risk to the health of the worker. Through this policy the department will ensure that the workplace is free from hazardous substances such as chemicals, micro organisms, articles, equipments, processes, or any whatsoever that may cause injury, damage or cause a disease. However, where the above is not possible, the North West Department of Public Works and Roads will inform its employees/Workers through training and workshops of the dangers that may affect their health and safety.

The training workshops that will be applied will also make sure that it equips the workforce on how risks and hazards may be prevented and how to work safely, and provide measures and procedures for a safe working environment.

2. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for maintaining a healthy and safe working environment within the premises of the Department through measures and procedures for health and safety of the workforce as outlined by the OHASA, 85 of 1993.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** To provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practicable, a workplace that is safe and without risk to the health and safety of the workforce.
- 3.2** To provide information, instructions, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, to the health and safety at work for the workforce.
- 3.3** To fostering of co-operation between the Employer, employees on health and safety matters.

4. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 4.1** The policy shall apply respectively to the employer and employees and clients that are within the premises of Department of Public Works and Roads, North West.
- 4.2** This policy should be read in conjunction with OHASA, 85 of 1993 and OHS regulations that are promulgated by the Department of Labour.

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1** Department: The department of Public Works and Roads
- 5.2** Employer : Subject to the provision of subsection (2) in the OHS Act 85, 1993 any person who employs or provide work for any person and remunerates that person.
- 5.3** Employee : Any person who is employed by for the Department of Public Works and Roads.
- 5.4** Hazard : A source of or exposure to danger
- 5.5** Health and Safety Committee: A committee established under section 19 of OHS Act 85 of 1993.
- 5.6** Health and Safety Representative: A person designated in terms of section 17(1) of OHS Act 85 of 1993.
- 5.7** Occupational Health: Includes occupational medicine, hygiene, biological monitoring of OHS Act 85 of 1993.
- 5.8** Danger : It means anything which may cause injury or damage to persons or property.
- 5.9** Clients : Any person who provides or access services of the department.
- 5.10** Premises : Any building or vehicle prescribed by the OHS Act 85 of 1993
- 5.11** Accidents : An accident arising out of and in the course of an

employee's employment and resulting in a personal injury, illness or the death of the employee.

5.12 Risks : A probability of injury or damage will occur.

5.13 Work place: Any premises or place where a person performs work in the course of his employment

5.13 Work : Work as an employee or as a self employed person and for such purpose an employee is deemed to be at work during the time that he is in the course of his employment.

5.14 All the definitions according to OHASA 85 of 1993 shall apply.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy should be read in conjunction with the OHASA, 85 OF 1993, OHS regulation that are promulgated by the Department of Labour as well as the following legislation sources:

6.1 RSA Constitution Act 108 of 1996

6.2 Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995

6.3 Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993

6.4 Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 130 of 1993

6.5 Basic Condition of Employment Act, 75 of 1997

6.6 OHS General Safety Regulation promulgated by the Department of Labour

6.7 Leave administration policy

7. POLICY PROVISIONS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Provision of OHASA 85 of 1993 towards the role of the Employer:

In this case the Employer shall be represented by Head of the Department who is the Accounting Officer and

- i. Shall be accountable for the maintenance of the health and safety within his/her department who may further delegate the responsibility to any person under his/her control has a duty in terms of the Act to provide, amongst others, the following information on safety rules:
 - Proper guidance on the importance of safety in the workplace

- Training
- Supervision
- Ensuring compliance of the OHASA 85 of 1993.
- ii. Set up information and control systems for health and safety in the workplace, so that health and safety provided can be monitored and corrective action must be taken
- iii. Provide supervisors with requisite help, guidance and training.
- iv. Delegated personnel in terms of the Department protocol to keep a constant watch and reveal potentially unsafe practices or conditions in the work environment.

7.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Head of Department

- i. The employer on a reasonable basis has to ensure that every employee be made conversant with the hazard to his or her safety attached to any work that supposed to be performed, and also about the precautionary measure that should be taken.
- ii. The employer shall inform the Health and Safety representatives about any investigations or formal inquiries that might be conducted by the health inspector in accordance with section, 31 of OHS Act, 85 of 1993.
- iii. Inform Health and Safety representatives on a reasonable basis about any incident or occurrences of an accident in the workplace.
- iv. Employer shall provide and maintain as far as reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of his employees.

b. The Employee

- i. Takes reasonable care for the health and safety of him or her or other fellow employees.
- ii. Carries out any lawful order given to him or her and obey the health and safety rules and procedures laid by the employer or any one authorized thereto.

- iii. Reports any situation that can be hazardous or pose any risk to the health and safety of him or her and fellow employees to the employer, or health and safety representative.
- iv. Reports any accident, which may have happened in the work place to the employer or anyone authorized thereto by the employer, or the health and safety representative.
- v. The reporting of the incident by the employee should be in line with what is being prescribed in the act, section 15(e) of OHASA that "an incident be reported not later than the end of the shift during which the incident occurred unless the circumstances were such that the reporting of the incident was not possible, in which case he shall report the incident as soon as practicable thereafter.
- vi. Comply with all safety procedures.

c. Health and Safety Representatives.

- i. The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993 makes provision for the Health and Safety representatives in the workplace.
- ii. The Health and Safety representatives are elected members of the work force for a specific period in each and every work-station.
- iii. The representatives have to perform the following functions in accordance with the OHASA, 85 of 1993:
 - Health and safety audits.
 - Identify potential hazards and measure incidents at the workplace.
 - Investigate complaints by any employee relating to that employee's health or safety at work.
 - Make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health or safety of employees at the workplace.
 - **Inspections:**
 - Receive information from inspectors as contemplated in section 36 of the OHASA 85 of 1993.
 - Attend Health and Safety Committee meetings.

d. Health and Safety Committees

- i.** The Health and Safety Representatives elected in terms of Section 19.2 (c) shall be represented in Health and Safety Committee as contemplated in Section 19 of the Occupational and Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993.
- ii.** Health and Safety Committee shall be established in the department where more than 2 (two) Health and Safety Representatives have been designated. Furthermore, where there are more than two health and safety representatives, a chairperson will be elected with the scribe to facilitate the place and frequency of the meetings of the committee.

8. COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1** There shall be a Departmental Health and Safety Committee comprising of one representative from a directorate or region who is a Health and Safety Representative.
- 8.2** The Health and Safety committee will be coordinated from the Human Resource Management as assigned this duty by the Chief Executive office/Head of Department to handle matters of Occupational Health and Safety.
- 8.3** The Human Resource Management through the Integrated Employee Health and Wellness Unit (OHS programme manager) shall act as the Secretariat of the broader Committee of the Department. Likewise in the Regional Offices, the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinators shall act as the secretariat of the Regional committee. The broader Health and Safety committee shall consist of Occupational Health and Safety Regional Coordinators and the elected officials from different directorate to form part of the Departmental committee.

9. FUNCTIONS OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

- i.** To make recommendations to the employer regarding any matter affecting the health and safety of persons at the work place. Where recommendations fail to be resolved, to refer the matter to an inspector of the department of Labour.
- ii.** Shall discuss any incident at the workplace or section thereof in which or in consequence of which any person was injured, became ill or died.

- iii. A Health and safety committee or a member thereof shall not incur any civil liability by reason of the fact, only that it (safety committee) or a member failed to do in terms of this act.
- iv. An employer shall take the prescribed steps to ensure that a health and safety committee comply with the provisions of section 19 (4) and performs the duties assigned to it by subsections (1) (2)

10. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMMES

- a. Occupational Health Safety Coordinators shall develop the Programme of Health and Safety which will be the guide for a particular financial year as to determine:
 - i. Training,
 - ii. Inspections,
 - iii. Awareness Campaigns and
 - iv. Compliance to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993.

11. GUIDANCE IN MAINTAINING SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AT WORK

- i. Safety devices, such as fire extinguishers, should be installed where required, and should be maintained on a regular basis.
- ii. Buildings, structures, roads, paths etc. should be maintained and kept in a good condition, free of any defect likely to present hazards.
- iii. Electrical plant and equipment should be tested for safety at regular intervals.
- iv. The employer should order equipment that will best minimize the accident rates or use equipment that minimize operator's fatigue.
- v. Employees should be provided with SABS standardized protective clothing/equipment such as gloves, safety glasses or noise mufflers.
- vi. Employees should be inducted to "think safety", that is, exhibit easily recognizable signs that proclaim safety slogans or even place articles regarding accident prevention in organizational news letters or bulletins.

- vii. First aid boxes must be provided and maintained for minor injuries/emergencies. The contents thereof must meet the minimum requirements as prescribed in the General Safety Regulations 3 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993.
- viii. The use of information signs on Health and Safety precautions must be in place for accident prevention.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS:

- a. The departmental procedure arrangements in maintaining health and safety include amongst others the following:
 - i. Reporting accidents, illness, health and safety hazards.
 - ii. Accidents must be reported immediately to OHS coordinators and the Department of Labour after the occurrence.
 - iii. It is the responsibility of every employee to report any incident that may cause harm, or hazardous or be of risk in the working environment to his or her immediate supervisor or, and health and safety representative on or before the end of the shift.
 - iv. An incident form should be completed.
 - v. Investigations have to be done (immediately after the accident) by the supervisor together with the Health and Safety Representatives as well as the OHS coordinator.
 - vi. The investigations will determine the seriousness of injury which should be reported to the Human Resource Management: OHS unit for further investigations.

13. MONITORING AND MAINTAINING OF QUALITY HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

- a. The employer in collaboration with the Health and Safety Committee will ensure that the compliance to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 1993 is maintained through regular reports on compliance.
- b. Risk assessment forms has to be completed as a remedy to identify the hazard, assess risk and measures to be taken for control.

14. TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES IN HEALTH AND SAFETY METHODS

- a.** The employer in collaboration with the Health and Safety Committee will arrange the necessary training for employees for knowledge on health and safety matters and methods to avoid any hazardous situation that may affect the working environment.
- b.** Maintenance of the equipment and, provision of proper inspection and testing arrangements.
- c.** General rules on safe working habits should be applied.
- d.** The provision of personal protective equipment and rules for its use.
- e.** Good housekeeping requirements covering storage facilities, adequate space for machinery and plant.

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Health and Safety training may include many specific individual requirements, but as a minimum it should cover the following:

- i.** The primary causes of accidents at work and their avoidance / prevention,
- ii.** Health and Safety audits,
- iii.** The keeping of safety records
- iv.** First aid
- v.** Fire fighting
- vi.** SHERQ
- vii.** Any other relevant OHS courses

16. SICK LEAVE RELATING TO INJURY ON DUTY

- i.** Leave policy of the Department will apply in this regard as stipulated in section 3.2 and 3.3 of the Departmental leave Administration policy.
- ii.** An employee who is absent from duty owing to an injury sustained in an accident arising out of and in the course of her or his duties or owing to a disease contracted in the course of and as a result of her or his duties may be granted special sick leave with full pay, as

prescribed, for the period she or he is incapacitated for her or his normal duties.

- iii. This provision will however not be applicable if the Head of Department is of the opinion that the accident is attributable to the serious and willful misconduct of the employee or gross negligence.
- iv. The Employer shall ensure that she or he receive, where appropriate, a copy of a medical certificate issued by the medical practitioner in order that proper medical follow up may be implemented when necessary to do so. Failure to comply with section 3.2 (3.2.3) of leave administration policy of the department shall apply.

17. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Records shall be kept indicating the number and nature of incidents of injury, illness and death resulting from official duty or work environment with a view to assist in compiling the annual report.

18. AMENDMENTS

If and when this policy or any provision thereof is amended, the amended policy or provision thereof will supersede the previous one.

APPROVED



MR M.S THOBAKGALE
ADMINISTRATOR

05/03/2019

DATE