

POLICY – SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

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Objectives

- (1) Skills development must-

support the achievement of the municipality's goals set out in the Integrated Development Plan by providing critical skills that ensure the delivery of quality services;

promote the development and retention of competent municipal staff, including the development of technical, professional and specialist staff who have the required qualifications and skills;

support the employment equity objectives of a municipality;

be based on high quality provision and effective workplace learning and development practices, including coaching, mentoring, on-the-job learning and opportunities for the practical application of skills in the workplace;

seek to continuously improve its results and the returns on learning investments, by defining measures of success, conducting regular evaluations and improving the impact of learning, training and development; and

be designed to support and reinforce other capacity-building programmes in municipalities.

A staff member must take responsibility for his or her development and own career growth.

A municipality must support its staff members by-

clarifying the skills required for jobs, identifying relevant skills needs and developing opportunities to satisfy the skills needs;

identifying new skills and knowledge required by staff to support their career growth and progression;

creating learning opportunities which will allow their staff to develop the skills and expertise to enable them to compete effectively for placement in new or vacant posts; and

ensuring that skills development is a KPA in senior managers and supervisors performance agreements. This is aimed at promoting career development through consultations with staff members.

The skills development process involves planning, skills assessment, implementation and review.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

1. Alignment to strategic planning cycles

The determination of municipal skills needs, priorities and budgets must be—

developed once every five years at the commencement of the Integrated Development Planning process and may be reviewed annually thereafter; and
aligned to the strategic planning cycles associated with the-
integrated development plan;
municipal budget;
human resource planning; and
performance management cycle.

2. Determination of skills needs

Skills needs in municipalities must be determined by conducting—

skills needs analysis, in which the municipality must identify skills needs at municipal and department levels based on critical roles, job categories and associated competencies; and

a staff skills audit, which must identify skills needs for each staff member based on specific competency needs associated with current roles and future career aspirations.

3. Skills needs analysis

- (1) Every municipality must conduct a skills needs analysis that analyses the municipality's skills needs and assesses the skills constraints on service delivery in the municipality as a whole and in each department or function.

The skills needs analysis must identify the priority skills needs, which if effectively developed, will have a marked impact on the municipality's performance.

The process of identifying the skills needs must—

be guided by the critical and scarce skills lists for the sector published by the Minister for Higher Education and Training and the Local Government: Competency Framework for Occupational Streams as contained in Annexure A.

take into account the related institutional capacity needs and workplace skills plan of the municipality; and

cover all major roles in the municipality, including-
management and leadership;
technical, specialist, professional and administrative roles; and
specified priority skills needs.

The skills needs analysis must be based on—

a strategic evaluation of skills needs that have constrained the service delivery and performance of the municipality and each of its departments or functions in the current year;

a review of community feedback information and an assessment as to whether a lack of skills has contributed to the shortcomings in respect of service delivery;

a review of the effectiveness of the implementation of previous priority skills development programmes and interventions; and

an analysis of individual staff member personal development plans to identify common skills needs across job categories.

4. Staff skills audit

- (1) A municipality must conduct a skills analysis using programmes or systems determined by the Minister to ascertain the skills needs of staff members in respect of their current roles.

Skills audit may comprise-

- biographical audits, which includes information on the educational qualifications and experience of the staff member;

- perception based assessments; and

- evidence based assessments, including assessments using psychometric instruments.

Skills audit must be conducted once every five-years within 24 months from the election of the new council of a municipality.

5. Recognition of prior learning assessment

- (1) A recognition of prior learning assessment determines a staff member's skills and knowledge acquired through formal or informal training conducted by industry or educational institutions, work experience and on-the-job training.

Recognition of prior learning assessment must be conducted—

- by service providers that are accredited by the relevant Education and Training Quality Assurance Body; and

- in line with the provisions of the National Qualifications Framework established in terms of the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No.67 of 2008).

6. Personal development plans

- (1) Every staff member must have a personal development plan that sets out the strategies to-

- address the staff member's development needs and specific skills to be developed for their current roles arising from the skills audit, as well as the learning interventions required to build these skills; and

- develop new skills and provide exposure to new areas of work, which are aligned to the municipality's strategic objectives.

The personal development plan must take into account the skills audit and the requirements of the performance management system.

A staff member may only undergo training that is --

- (a) contained in personal development plan or
- (b) approved by the Municipal Manager or his or her delegate

7. Workplace skills plan

- (1) A municipality must, develop a workplace skills plan arising from the outcomes of institutional skills needs analysis and the individual skills audits.

The workplace skills plan must include-

The priority skills needs for the municipality and each department or function;
the associated interventions that the municipality intends conducting; and
an aggregation of the learning and development initiatives from staff personal development plans.

The workplace skills plan must be included in the municipality's integrated development plan.
A municipality must submit a completed workplace skills plan to the LGSETA on 30 April of each year.

8. Budgeting for skills development

- (1) A municipality must establish a skills development budget that provides funding for training and development identified in the workplace skills plan.

Funding for training and development of staff will derive from-
a municipality's own training budget;

the skills development levies as prescribed in terms of Skills Development Levies Act, 9 (Act No 9 of 1999);

discretionary and mandatory grants received from LGSETA; and

provincial and national government capacity building grants.

PART C

IMPLEMENTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Types of skills development programmes

A municipality must focus on developing priority skills through—

structured learning programmes, which may include learnerships, apprenticeships, technicians-in-training programmes and graduates-in-training programmes;

structured on-the-job learning and development, which may include-
professional coaching of staff members by an external or internal expert coach, where such capacity exists;

coaching of staff by supervisors, including guiding a staff member to develop new skills;

mentoring staff to acquire technical, professional or specialist skills, which may include structured mentorship programmes;

the creation of work exposure opportunities that may accelerate learning and or skills development, including-

- (aa) allocating staff members to a specific project;
- (bb) seconding a staff member to another department or work area to increase the staff member's exposure to other work processes and systems;

- (cc) increasing the responsibilities allocated to a staff member;
- (dd) rotating staff through the full range of activities of a particular process or department; and
- (ee) work shadowing, where a staff member is given the opportunity to observe a more senior professional or manager at work, enabling the staff member to understand more complex and challenging roles in a structured and secure manner; and professional development programmes.

Obligations of municipality

- (1) Supervisors must ensure the development of employees through re-allocation, rotation and secondment of staff members across functions within a municipality with due regard to service delivery requirements, where applicable.

A municipality must ensure the effective management of the quality of learning delivery, especially that which is provided by the external training providers.

Supervisors must be encouraged to gain coaching skills, and should actively coach and support the development of staff members who report to them.

A municipality should prioritise the appointment of staff mentors who are experts in their fields to support structured skills transfers in order to achieve the required specialist and technical skills in respect of priority roles.

PART D

REVIEWING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Evaluating skills development quality and impact

- (1) A municipality must-
- conduct regular evaluations of the workplace skills plan and personal development plans as well as their implementation; and

adjust its learning programmes to improve its effectiveness, including the impact on reducing the skills constraint on service delivery.

A municipality must ensure that-

every supervisor annually report on progress on implementing staff personal development plans and the other programmes contained in the workplace skills plan;

the effect of implementing personal development plans for staff is evaluated;

evaluations, using standard benchmarks determined by the Minister, respond to priority learning programmes and contribute to the development of skills which result in improved performance and service delivery; and

regular skills development reports and evaluation results are-integrated into the wider capacity building initiatives within the municipality; and

reported to the relevant provincial and national capacity building structures.

PART E

PAYMENT FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Conditions of payment

- (1) A municipality may agree to pay the full amount for, or part of, a staff member's learning programme and for reasonable travel and accommodation expenses on receipt of official proof of the structured learning programme as per the municipal training policy.

A municipality which agrees to pay for a learning programme must require the staff member to work for the municipality for a reasonable period after the completion of the programme, failing which the staff member must pay back the costs, or part of the costs, associated with the programme.

Despite sub-regulation (1), if a staff member fails to attend or fails a learning programme, the municipality must recover the costs associated with the programme after complying with section 34 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.