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Department:
Rural Development & Agrarian Reform
PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

POLICY ON HIV, TB AND STIs MANAGEMENT

2024

The purpose of this policy is to give guidelines on the management of HIV, TB and STIs in the workplace towards creating a supportive environment, grounded on human rights for the infected and affected employees.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EHWP	Employee Health and Wellness Program
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EH&WSF	Employee Health and Wellness Strategic Framework
HPM	Health and Productivity Management
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSP	National Strategic Framework on HIV, TB & STIs
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SANS	South African National Standards
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infection
TB	Tuberculosis
WHO	World Health Organization
PLHIV	Person living with HIV



TERMS AND DEFINITION

WORD/TERM	DEFINITIONS
Employee Health and Wellness Practitioner	An employee tasked with the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of HIV, TB & STIs programs. The Health and Wellness Practitioner can be professionally trained to perform therapeutic interventions, if not trained, such cases should be referred.
Health and Wellness Committee	A committee that is established by the HOD to initiate, develop, promote, maintain, and review measures to ensure the health and safety of employees at the workplace. Such committee shall be constituted by the employer and Labor unions. This Committee serves as a vehicle for coordination, communication, collaboration, and consultation of the EH&W programs at the Head Office and district level.
HIV	HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS. It is a blood-borne virus transmitted among human beings. HIV attacks the immune system and once it has rendered it incompetent, a person could develop various illnesses because the body will be too weak to defend itself.
TB	TUBERCULOSIS. It is an infection caused by an organism called Mycobacterium Tuberculosis, characterized by fever, loss of weight, night sweats, and fatigue. When the infection is in the lungs the person presents with a prolonged cough of more than two weeks.
TB disease	An infectious disease that most often affects the lungs.
Head of Department	A head of a provincial department and includes any employee acting in such post.
Designated Senior Manager	A member of the Senior Management Service in line with the provisions of the Public Service Act of 1994, who is tasked with championing the HIV, TB and STIs management program within the workplace.
Employee	A person appointed in terms of the Public Service Act



1. INTRODUCTION

The National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV, TB, and STIs 2023-2028 is South Africa's fifth plan. It builds on the significant progress achieved to date, addresses gaps identified during the past five years, and seeks to scale up best practices to ensure that quality and innovation underpin service provision.

Whilst the country has made significant progress in responding to the epidemics of HIV, TB, and STIs, more still needs to be accelerated to achieve the global health community goal by 2030.

The Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform is also committed to implementing HIV, TB, and STIs programs through the development of the policy which aims at mitigating the impact of the HIV epidemic to reduce the number of infections amongst employees and their dependents.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to guide the department to:

- 2.1. Reduce the rate of new HIV and TB infections using the combination of prevention methods.
- 2.2. Sustain health and wellness in the workplace.
- 2.3. Promote protection of human rights and improve access to Justice for infected and affected employees.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No 106 of 1996.
- 3.2. Occupational Health and Safety Act, No 85 of 1993.
- 3.3. Compensation for Occupational Diseases and Injuries Act No 130 of 1993.
- 3.4. Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, No. 4 of 2000.
- 3.5. Labour Relations Act No 66 of 1996.
- 3.6. Employment Equity Act No, 55 of 1998, as amended.
- 3.7. National Strategic Plan on HIV, TB, and STIs 2023-2028.
- 3.8. National TB Infection Control Guidelines.
- 3.9. Policy Guidelines on Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis in South Africa.
- 3.10. National Strategic Framework on Stigma and Discrimination.
- 3.11. National Occupational Health and Safety Policy.
- 3.12. Public Service Handbook on Reasonable Accommodation.

4. PRINCIPLES

The HIV, TB, and STIs Management programme is underpinned by the following principles:

4.1. Respect for human rights and dignity.

The rights and dignity of employees infected and affected by HIV, TB, and STIs should be respected and upheld.



4.2. **Healthy and safe work environment.**

Healthy and safe work environments should be established as much as practicably possible to prevent occupational exposure and transmission of HIV and TB.

4.3. **Recognition that HIV, TB, and STIs is a workplace issue.**

HIV, TB, and STIs are workplace issues and should be treated like any other serious condition in the workplace.

4.4. **Gender equality**

The gender dimensions of those infected and affected with HIV and TB should be recognized.

4.5. **Confidentiality and protection of workers' personal data**

Access to personal data relating to an employee's HIV status shall be bound by the rules of confidentiality.

4.6. **Non-discriminatory workplace practices**

Employees and job applicants should not be exposed to HIV and TB testing for exclusion from employment or work processes.

4.7. **Reasonable accommodation**

An employee with HIV-related illnesses, like any other illnesses, will continue to work for as long as he/she is medically fit in an available, appropriate work and facility.

4.8. **Appropriateness and Cultural Sensitivity**

Prevention of all means of transmission will be through various appropriate and culturally sensitive prevention strategies.

4.9. **Access to information and education**

Change in attitudes and behavior should be attained through the provision of information, education, and addressing socioeconomic factors.

4.10. **Equal access to all health entitlements**

Access to affordable healthcare services for employees and their dependents will be promoted.

4.11. **Continuity of care and partnerships**

Continuity of care for people infected and affected by HIV and TB shall be promoted, including linkages with other health centers and well-established referral resources.

4.12. Social dialogue

Successful implementation of this policy requires cooperation and mutual trust between employer, employees, and their representatives with an active involvement of employees infected and affected by HIV, TB, and STIs.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

5.1. The policy will apply to all the employees of the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform.

6. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The implementation procedure of the policy is guided by three strategic objectives as reflected in the NSP 2023-2028. Each objective has been operationalized with related activities to achieve intended deliverables and outcomes for the desired impact. The implementation of this policy requires the department to develop an efficient and effective M&E system to monitor and review progress.

The implementation procedures are outlined below:

6.1. Reduce the rate of new HIV and TB infections using the combination of prevention methods.

6.1.1. Policy Measures:

- a) Reduce vulnerability to HIV and TB infection by educating employees.
- b) Reducing transmission of HIV, TB, and STIs through the provision of protective equipment.
- c) Maximizing opportunities during departmental events to ensure that employees test voluntarily for HIV and are screened for TB for early detection.
- d) Promote behavior change through health education and mainstreaming of HIV, TB, and STIs prevention programs.

6.2. Sustain health and wellness in the workplace.

6.2.1. Policy Measures:

- a) Provide voluntary counseling to all employees infected and affected with HIV and TB.
- b) Promote positive living through wellness interventions.
- c) Provision of care and support for PLHIV and those with latent TB to delay progression to active TB.
- d) Educate employees on Anti-Retroviral Therapy Programme (ART) and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- e) Provide treatment adherence counseling and Employee and Family Assistance Programme
- f) Promote private and public health HIV and TB disease management Programs.



6.3. Promote protection of human rights and improve access to Justice for infected and affected employees.

6.3.1. Policy Measures:

- a) Ensure adherence to legislation relating to the Policy, by role players.
- b) Organize infected and affected employees by establishing structures to mitigate stigma and discrimination.
- c) Promote the human rights of women to address gender-based discrimination.
- d) Promote visible organizational leadership on human rights advocacy for infected and affected employees.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy involves the following role players and functions:

7.1. The Head of Department shall:

- 7.1.1. Take cognizance of the reality that HIV and TB are challenges facing South Africa today and encourage a policy with a mainstream response to the challenge of HIV and TB.
- 7.1.2. Ensure effective implementation of prevention programs, treatment care, and support.
- 7.1.3. Ensure that the initiatives and interventions included in the policy assist in the realization of goals and objectives as set out in national policy prescripts.
- 7.1.4. Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment for employees of the department through:
 - a) Identifying units or employees within the department that, due to the nature of their work, are at high risk of contracting communicable diseases, and take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of occupational exposure to HIV, TB, and other diseases.
 - b) Taking reasonable steps to facilitate timely access to voluntary counseling and testing and post-exposure prophylaxis in line with prevailing guidelines and protocols for employees who have been exposed to HIV as a result of an occupational incident.
 - c) If testing referred to in paragraph (b) indicates that an employee has become HIV positive as a result of an occupational incident, ensure that an employee is assisted in applying for compensation in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act.
- 7.1.5. HIV testing:
 - a) Encourages voluntary counseling and testing for HIV, TB, and other related health conditions and, wherever possible facilitates access to such services for employees in the department; and
 - b) Ensuring that no employee or prospective employee of the department is required to take an HIV (TB or other diseases) test unless the labour court has declared such testing as justifiable in terms of the Employment Equity Act.
- 7.1.6. Non-discrimination:



- a) Ensures that no employee or prospective employee is unfairly discriminated against based on her or his HIV (TB or any other disease) status, or perceived HIV status, in any employment policy or practice; and
 - b) Take appropriate measures to actively promote non-discrimination and to protect HIV-positive employees and employees perceived to be HIV-positive from discrimination.
- 7.1.7. Confidentiality and disclosure:
- a) Creates an environment wherein all employees treat the information on an employee's HIV or TB status as confidential and shall not disclose that information to any other person without the employee's written consent.
 - b) Ensures that the employees utilizing the EH&W programme are assured of confidentiality, except in cases of risk to self and others or in terms of legislation.
- 7.1.8. Ethical Behavior:
- a) EH&W/ EAP professionals who are registered with their respective professional bodies will have to adhere to the codes of conduct of such bodies as well as the code of conduct of the departments.
 - b) As far as possible the generic principles of respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and distributive justice will guide the actions of policymakers, programme managers, researchers, and all professionals working in the field of employee health and wellness.
- 7.1.9. Designate a member of the SMS with adequate skills, seniority, and support to:
- a) Implement the provisions contained in Part 3, chapter 4 of the Public Service Regulations, 2016 as amended in the department.
 - b) Allocate adequate human and financial resources to implement the provisions in the Public Service Regulations.
 - c) Establish an Employee Health and Wellness committee in the department with adequate representation and support from all relevant stakeholders.
- 7.2. The Designated Senior Manager shall:**
- 7.2.1. Promote capacity development initiatives to:
- a) promote competence development of practitioners, management, labour unions and supervisors.
 - b) assist with HIV, TB and STIs prevention at organizational level
- 7.2.2. Establish organizational support initiatives:
- a) establish an appropriate management system.
 - b) ensure human resource planning and management.
 - c) develop an integrated information management system.
 - d) mobilize physical resources.
 - e) ensure financial planning and budgeting.
- 7.2.3. Develop governance and institutional development initiatives:
- a) establish Employee Health and Wellness Steering Committee
 - b) obtain Stakeholder commitment.
 - c) Develop and implement ethical framework for HIV, TB and STIs Management



- d) Develop and implement management standards for HIV, TB and STIs.
- e) Develop and maintain an effective communication system.
- 7.2.4. Manage HIV, TB, and STIs strategies and policies.
- 7.2.5. Align and interface HIV, TB, and STIs management policy with other relevant policies and procedures.
- 7.2.6. Manage implementation of interventions based on risk and needs analysis.
- 7.2.7. Put in place appropriate measures for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of HIV, TB, and STIs management programs.

7.3. The Health and Wellness Practitioner shall:

- 7.3.1. Coordinate the planning and implementation of HIV, TB, and STIs management programs.
- 7.3.2. Manage and monitor the implementation of HIV, TB, and STIs management in line with the policies and budgetary guidelines.
- 7.3.3. Make provision for counseling to individual employees and their immediate family members.
- 7.3.4. Analyze and evaluate data and communicate information, statistics, and results to various stakeholders and management.
- 7.3.5. Promote work-life balance for employees.
- 7.3.6. Provide information regarding nutrition.

7.4. The Health and Wellness Steering Committee shall:

- 7.4.1. Establish harmonized communication of the HIV, TB, and STIs Management policy at provincial and district levels.
- 7.4.2. Create avenues through which collaborative initiatives can be forged.
- 7.4.3. Oversee the implementation of the HIV, TB, and STIs policies and programs in the workplace.

7.5. The Employee should:

- 7.5.1. Take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and other persons who may be affected by his/ her acts or omissions.
- 7.5.2. Obey precautions as laid down by his/her employer or any authorized person in the interest of the prevention of HIV, TB, and STIs.
- 7.5.3. Report as soon as practicable any unhealthy situation that comes to his/her attention to the employer or the HIV, TB, and STI management practitioners for the workplace or section thereof.
- 7.5.4. If involved in any incident which may affect his/her health or which has caused injury to him/herself, report such incident to his/her employer as soon as practicable.
- 7.5.5. Support effective HIV and TB prevention.
- 7.5.6. Contribute to the mitigation of the impact of HIV, TB and STIs.
- 7.5.7. Contribute to the enabling social environment in the workplace for sustainable health and wellness.

8. MONITORING & EVALUATION

- 8.1. The monitoring and evaluation have a significant role to play in interventions on HIV, TB, and STIs as it assists in assessing whether the programme is appropriate, cost-effective, and meets the set objectives.
- 8.2. The monitoring and evaluation will be ongoing and through quarter reporting.

9. COMMENCEMENT

This policy takes effect from the date of approval.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed 5 years from its effective date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. It can be assessed before that time as necessary to reflect substantial organizational changes in the department or any change required by law.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVAL

The policy on the management of HIV, TB, and STIs is recommended and approved by the management of the department.

*Approved / Not Approved -
Comments:*

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MR. B DAYIMANI
ACTING HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT: DRDAR
Date: 28/03/2024