

MOLEMOLE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



EMPLOYEMENT ASSISTANT PROGRAMME POLICY

1 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANT PROGRAMME (EAP)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Molemole Local Municipality takes into cognisance the reality that surrounding circumstances impacts various persons differently, further that the workplace is not immune from influences emanating from the environmental and personal circumstances.

1.1.2.1.1 Further that the creation of a conducive working environment that is a prerequisite for seamless efficient, effective and sustainable quality service delivery requires that the employer supports as possible employees and their families on circumstances that may directly or indirectly impact on the organisation.

1.1.3 Molemole Local Municipality cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of personal problems can disrupt their personal and work lives. Serious personal or family problems are usually amenable to treatment and rehabilitation. For instance, alcoholism is a treatable disease which has devastating effects on one's personal health, family and work life. Drugs, gambling, family problems and emotional distress can have similar effects.

1.1.2 Most people solve their problems either on their own or with the advice of family and friends, however sometimes people need professional advice, Molemole Local Municipality through its EAP, provides access to professional counselling services for its employees and those in need of professional assistance are encouraged to use the programme.

1.2 PURPOSE

1.2.1 An employee Assistant Programme (EAP) is a work organization's intervention programme designed to enhance employees and workplace effectiveness through prevention, early identification and/or resolution of both work and personal problems that may adversely affect employees job performance and their families social functioning. These problems include, but not limited to health, family, marital relationships, financial, substance abuse, absenteeism or poor interpersonal relationships.

1.2.2 To render confidential preventative, supportive, uplifting and rehabilitative services and programmes to employees who experience psychosocial problems or employees who have the potential to be adversely affected by personal problems.

1.2.3 To monitor, evaluate and co-ordinate the process and outcomes of the various employee's assistant programmes (EAP). Effectiveness, efficiency and qualitative standards, must be ensured and maintained throughout.

1.2.4 To establish qualitative and quantitative data enabling the Municipality to reliably project the patterns that possess a risk to the Municipality and establish treatment plans for such risks.

1.3 POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

1.3.1 The Molemole Local Municipality is committed to EAP aimed at providing assistance to employees with any psychosocial or personal problems by means of preventative, supportive uplifting and rehabilitative services and programmes.

1.3.2 Appropriately qualified, registered and skilled people may be used for EAP support

1.3.3 Early intervention is desirable in dealing with any personal or family problems

1.3.4 In formal referrals, the employer's concern with employee's problems is limited to efforts to address deteriorating work performance. The supervisor or manager is responsible for identifying with the employee when job performance is below standard. The supervisor is not responsible for diagnosing the nature of a personal problem and the EAP is not designed to interfere with an employee's private and social.

1.3.5 Confidentiality will be strictly observed. Employee's access to the programme is voluntary and will not be conditional on consent to release information to management. Information is not released to anyone without the employee's written consent. Legally, "Confidentially" refers to the obligation to refrain from the willingly disclosing information that has been received in confidence and not to situations in which a court or statute compels a person to disclose information.

1.3.6 Employees are encouraged to seek voluntary (self-referral), confidential assistance by utilising EAP services. The EAP is strictly voluntary: mandatory referral is not used

1.3.7 On no account shall participation in the EAP jeopardise promotional opportunities or job security or result in penalisation by supervisors as a result of such participation

1.3.8 The EAP does not negate contractual rights and obligations nor is it intended to replace disciplinary procedures.

1.3.9 Management and unions working cooperatively through the EAP can help employees deal with personal problems

1.3.10 The EAP does not alter management's responsibility to maintain discipline or the right to take disciplinary measures within the framework of the agreement, nor does it alter the union's prerogatives.

1.3.11 EAP recognises the need for granting of leave for the purpose of counselling and or treatment: existing agreements covering employee health will be used.

1.3.12 EAP is not designed to assist in conflict resolution between employees and/or managers. These matters should be resolved through established administrative procedures or collective agreements. EAP can help the employees deal with personal consequences of conflicts which may be work related

1.4 ACCESS TO EAP

- Molemole Local Municipality employees
- Family Members, restricted to spouses and dependent children, as defined under the benefits plan
- Casual workers with over six (06) month accumulated services
- Retirees

1.5 AREAS OF ASSISTANCE

EAP provides assistance with the broad range of personal concerns, including, but not limited:

- Marital, family and relationship problems
- Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, prescription medication and other addictive behaviours such as gambling)
- HIV/AIDS counselling
- Workplace Violence and Trauma Counselling
- Personal debt and financial management problems
- Stress (family, social, job)
- Family Violence
- Psychological problems
- Sexual Harassment
- Work related conflicts

1.6 PROGRAMME OPERATION

1.6.1 Any official who require EAP shall report to his/her immediate line manager. The line manager shall then report the matter to HR office so that the referral to the professional shall be facilitated.

1.6.2 EAP acts as an intake and referral system, using agencies and services in the community to provide ongoing assistance as appropriate and required. Early recognition of a problem is an important objective, to enable an employee to receive help before crisis develops. Whenever possible, public community services will be used initially.

1.6.3 Participation in the EAP is not an alternative to discipline nor is it to be used by management as a disciplinary.

1.6.4 Any employee can consult, on a confidential basis, with the responsible HR Official concerning access to the programme or to ask general information.

1.6.5 There is not cost for employees to consult on EAP matters. If further counselling is necessary, the EAP Officer will coordinate services available. The

employer will try where necessary to facilitate the consultation at no cost using recognized EAP centres.

1.7 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY

1.7.1 Preamble

- Maintenance of acceptable job performance is a shared responsibility. Performance goals must be set by the manager along with the employee and achievements measured against these goals. The employee, coached by the manager, responds by accepting responsibility for maintaining satisfactory job performance
- Declining job performance should be addressed from a number of perspectives. The organization must have policies and procedures in place for setting standards and measuring performances as well as documented procedures consistently respond to the results, both positively and negatively. The organization acknowledgement exemplary performance by recognition of individuals and groups of employees for this type of performance.

1.7.2 Employee Rights and Responsibilities

- Information concerning employee participation in the Employee Assistance Programme is maintained in a confidential in a confidential manner. No information related to an employee's participation in the programme is entered personnel file. Access is limited to Employee Assistance Programme staff. An employee may review the Employee Assistance Programme file if destroyed after seven years following closure of the case.
- Review established policy to ensure agreement and understanding of procedures and practices
- Develop and recommend changes in programme policy are necessary after receiving input from interested parties
- Develop strategies in conjunction with the HR Office to ensure that the employees are aware of the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Oversee an evaluation of the programme
- Prepare a report on the activities of the committee as deemed necessary or required

1.8 ACCESS, REFERRAL AND OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE

- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme can either be self-initiated or employer-initiated. The decision to seek assistance through the Employee Assistance Programme is always voluntary. When an offer of assistance is made by the employer, it is not mandatory for the employee to accept the offer.
- The contact details of the Employee Assistance Programme Officer (s) outside the Municipality may be obtained from the divisional Head Human Resources.

1.8.1 Self-Initiated

- An employee recognizes that a problem exists and seeks assistance and seeks assistance by calling the Employee Assistant Programme Officer directly. This may have resulted from a process of self-realisation or from a family member, friend, co-worker or supervisor sharing concern for the employee and informally suggesting the use of the Employee Assistant Programme.
- These self-referrals are treated with strictly confidentiality. The employee's supervisor will not be informed of the nature of the problem unless the employee requests this to happen. The employee is responsible for obtaining approval for any required time off associated with the use of the Employee Assistant Programme.

1.8.2 Employer Initiated

- The manager is responsible to address concerns regarding employee deteriorating work performance and provide guidance to help the employee to improve work performance. An employee accepts responsibility for keeping job performance at a pre-established acceptance level.

If job performance does not improve or shows continuing deteriorating, then the manager may initiate a formal offer of assistance; it is not mandatory for the employee to accept this offer. Prior to initiating a formal offer of assistance, the supervisor should consult with the HR Office concerning the appropriateness of the offer.

1.8.2.1 Informal

- The supervisor will ensure that the employee receive an informal offer assistance prior to initiating a formal offer of assistance. Such offers will be documented. Certain workplace behaviour could result in an employer-initiated formal offer of assistance without there being previous informal offers

1.8.2.2 Formal

- The formal employer-initiated offer of assistance is to be in writing on the prescribed form that is Annexure. The employee has the right to refuse the offer. A formal offer of assistance is to be delivered confidentially to the employee, with a confidential copy to the Employee Assistant Programme Officer and a copy retained in confidential department master personnel file.

1.8.3 Referral by the HR Official

1.8.3.1 Assessment

- The employee is responsible to make contact with the responsible HR Official. During the initial contact, the responsible HR Official will explain the Employee Programme, including confidentiality of the programme and the exceptions, the employee's rights and responsibilities and full information about participation in the programme.
- The responsible HR Official will then conduct a preliminary assessment of the problem. The officer will provide information and, if appropriate, encourage

the employee to accept referral for counselling and treatment. Upon completion of the preliminary assessment, the officer and the employee will discuss the options which appear to be most realistic and attainable for the employee in resolving the problem. The employee will choose the treatment service and a referral will be facilitated.

1.8.3.2 Referral

- The affected employee will be referred to the Employee Assistant Professional who will be knowledgeable about the appropriate services in the community and will assist the employee with making other necessary referral arrangements.

1.8.3.3 Coordination and follow-up

- The responsible HR Official will maintain an informal but planned follow-up procedure. The Employee Assistance Professional will work with the employee to ensure appropriate services are received in a timely manner. Contact with any treatment agency or the employer, will only be at the request of the employee.

1.9 CONFIDENTIALLY

1.9.1 A primary principle of Employee Assistance Programme is to maintain confidentiality throughout every level of the programme. An employee accessing the Employee Assistance Programme needs confidence in the privacy of this relationship.

1.9.2 Legally, "Confidentiality" refers to the obligation to refrain from willingly disclosing information that has been received in confidence and not to situations in which a court or statute compels a person to disclose information.

1.9.3 An employee Assistance Programme worker would not be in breach of confidentiality obligations by complying with the mandatory reporting provisions of the provincial child abuse legislation or the obligation to warn the intended victims of violence.

1.9.4 The Employee Assistance Programme staff will maintain the minimum amount of information required to assist the employee. Files will be available for review by the employee at any reasonable time. Employee Assistance Programme files shall be destroyed after years following closure of the case.

1.9.5 In many cases, the employee contacting the Employee Assistance Programme Officer will wish to remain anonymous. Personal identifying information will not be required to carry out preliminary assessment and referral to a helping resource in the community.

1.9.6 All persons employed within the Employee Assistance Programme are bound by

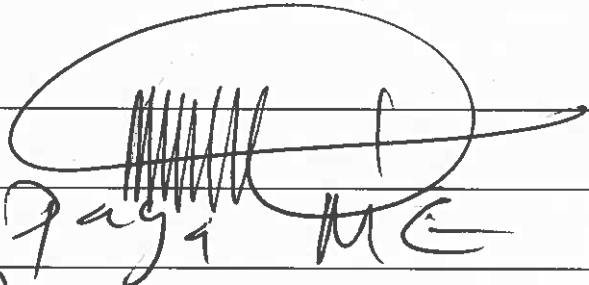
conditions of strict confidentiality

1.10 SUMMARY

1.10.1 The Employee Assistance Programme can benefit everyone. Employees obtain help with the personal problems which may be affecting their well-being family life or work performance. The employer benefits by retaining employees with valuable skills and knowledge. Early use of the programme can contribute to the prevention of serious problems for the individual employee, family and employer.

1.11 POLICY REVIEW.

1.11.1 The policy shall be reviewed annually and as when it becomes necessary to do so.

Signature:	
Initials and Surname:	Paga MC
Designation:	Mayor
Council Resolution Number:	OC/30/04/2024-4-2-8
Council Date:	30/04/2024

ANNEXURE4. FORMAL OFFER OF ASSISTANCE

CONFIDENTIAL FORMAL OFFER OF ASSISTANCE

TO: _____

DATE: _____

On _____ we discussed your job performance and the opportunities available with the EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME.

If you decide to accept this offer, and appointment is scheduled for you at _____ (time) on _____ (date).

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Read and understood

Signature of Employee

This is not a mandatory referral and the employee is not obliged to attend. A copy of this form is to be delivered to the department master personnel file maintained in a separate, confidential manner by the Divisional Head: Human Resources.