

**MSUKALIGWA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
EMPLOYEES EMPLOYEE BURSARY**

**POLICY
2021-2022**



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EMPLOYEE BURSARY POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

This policy sets out the parameters in accordance with which the Msukaliqwa Local Municipality may grant financial assistance to employees who wish to acquire the necessary qualifications, to perform specific occupational tasks, administrative tasks and technical skills to ensure effective and efficient service delivery.

Corporate Services Department involves a dynamic partnership between Council, Management and staff, which in return the employee that was afforded the resources to acquire new skills, improving their competency must when given opportunity contribute to improve of delivery of services.

The return for investment needs to be demonstrated by the employees through a consistently high work performance and meaningful contribution to the realization of the goals and mandates of Msukaliqwa Local Municipality.

It should be pointed out that each application for Bursary assistance shall be judged on its own merit and preference shall be given to those applicants who wish to study in those fields where difficulty is being experienced in the recruitment of suitably qualified staff. The guidelines set out below are based on the principle regarding the granting of Bursary assistance to serving employees. These guidelines are applicable to all bursaries and shall be adhered to in order to ensure consistency within the Msukaliqwa Local Municipality.

2. INTRODUCTION

This scheme is adopted to provide employees the opportunity to acquire further qualifications to enable them to provide efficient, effective and professional Municipal Services.

3. OBJECTIVES AND APPLICABILITY

3.1. Objectives

3.1.1. The objectives of this policy document is to create a pool of adequately trained and skilled personnel within the Municipality, thereby enhancing the organization's ability to adopt and use technology, skills to enhance the organization's competitive position and improves service delivery.

3.1.2. To ensure a uniform, fair and transparent procedure for granting financial assistance to all qualifying employees of Msukaliqwa Local Municipality.

3.1.3. To afford employees the opportunity to further their studies, improve their qualification acquire relevant skills at registered institution.

3.1.4. Priority will be on studies or skills relevant to Municipal Service Delivery objectives.

3.1.5. Financial assistance shall also be granted only to permanent employees of Council.

3.1.6. Post Graduate qualifications from Masters Degree will be considered depending on strategic objectives of Council or skills required and funding thereof will be restricted to 10% of bursary approved budget.

3.1.7. Non-South African citizens will not be eligible for funding.

3.2. Applicability

This policy shall apply only to permanent employees of Council.

4. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the Bursary assistance scheme is to provide transparent and effective financial assistance to qualifying permanent Staff to acquire relevant qualifications or skills.

5. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall be applicable for the interpretation of these policy:

5.1 **ABET STUDIES** – shall mean studies as defined by the Department of Basic Education

5.2 **PRIMARY EDUCATION STUDIES** – shall mean studies as defined by the Department of basic education from Grade R to Grade 12.

5.3 **SKILLS TRAINING** – shall mean specialize training /certification for a specific skills as provided by accredited institution.

5.4 **TERTIARY QUALIFICATION**- shall mean any qualification obtained from a registered institution of higher learning.

5.5. **NON SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZEN**- shall include the following Asylum, Refugees, and refugees, naturalize citizen, permanent residence.

5.6 **OBJECTIVES OF THE MUNICIPALITY** - shall mean objectives of local government as defined in the constitution of the republic of South Africa.

5.7 **MUNICIPAL SERVICES** – shall mean the constitutional mandates of local government including delegated functions by the member of the executive committee of the province.

5.8 **PREFERENCES** – shall mean consideration will be given first to qualifying applicants in line with this policy.

5.9 **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** - shall mean full or partial funding of qualifying applicants from the approved budget per financial year.

5.10 **WINDOW PERIOD** – shall mean a period where an employee may not be eligible to apply or be given financial assistance in line with this policy.

5.11 **CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT** –shall mean a legal binding agreement signed between a permanent employee of council and the Municipal Manager on behalf of Council, stating financial assistance for the purposes of studies or acquiring skills and the conditions thereof.

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The following legislative framework shall apply in the conditions and interpretation of this policy:

- 1) The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa
- 2) Municipal Structures Act
- 3) Municipal System Act
- 4) Municipal Financial Management Act
- 5) Skills Development Act
- 6) Employment Equity Act
- 7) Occupational Health and safety
- 8) SAQA
- 9) NQF

7. PROCEDURE

The following shall be the procedure to be followed by the qualifying applicant:

- 7.1 The applicant shall request the relevant application form the Human Resources Management Section during annual window period that all employees will be notify of.
- 7.2 The applicant prior to completing the application form consults with his/ her manager to align the preferred training/ studies to the objectives of the Municipality and priorities of Council.
- 7.3 The manager must provide inputs in supporting or declining the application by the applicant for studies with justifiable reasons or motivations.

- 7.4 The applicant will then submit to the head of Department for recommendation to the Bursary Committee or declining support for the application.
- 7.5 The applicant if recommended shall submit fully completed application forms with supporting documents to the Secretariat of the Bursary Committee.
- 7.6 In case the Director does not support or recommend an application for financial assistance to be considered by the Bursary Committee the applicant shall have the right to submit an objection in line with SALGA dispute resolution procedures.
- Bursary Committee Procedures:
- 7.7 The committee secretariat shall receive a consolidated / categories list of applicants from the HR Section.
- 7.8 The notice and agenda for the meeting of the committee shall be given to the committee members 7 days prior to the meeting.
- 7.9 The members of the Bursary committee shall be in line with the Terms of Reference of the Bursary Committee with the discretion of the Accounting Officer.
- 7.10 The committee shall consider only applications referred to it by the Secretariat and submitted only during the window period.
- 7.11 The committee consideration of applications must be in line with this policy.
- 7.12 The committees shall in its recommendation strive to achieve the following;
- a) Equal distribution of funding between the Departments.
 - b) Equal and fair treatment of employees.
 - c) Supporting implementation of the equity target.
 - d) Immediate implementation of acquired skills or training to provide municipal services.
- 7.13 The Committee after consideration of the applications received and inputs from HR Section shall make recommendations to the Accounting Officer after the CFO has confirmed availability of funding for the recommended applicants only.
- 7.14 The Secretariat after approval by the Accounting Officer in consultation with the Legal Services ensures that all contracts are signed by relevant parties.
- 7.15 The Secretariat will formally notify finance department of the financial obligations and payments schedules for the relevant institution.
- 7.16 The Finance Department shall ensure payment for studies/ training as stipulated by the relevant training institution.

8. SERVICE OBLIGATION

Any employee that has been awarded a study bursary funded by the Municipality after completion of the qualification or obtaining the relevant skills will have the following obligations to Council:

- 8.1 Must serve council for the equivalent period or number of years as was funded for the qualification or skills acquire.
- 8.2 Shall avail him/herself for mentoring programmes or on job training without compensation from time to time without contradicting the acting policy.
- 8.3 Must comply with all the requirements of the Institution that he/ she registered at
- 8.4 Shall always make prior arrangements with immediate Supervisor if she/he is going not be available for work due to study requirement.
- 8.5 Must submit results within 72 hours of release to the HR Section.
- 8.6 If the beneficiary has failed the registered modules they must within 30 days after receiving results make written arrangement with finance for the repayment of the Bursary awarded for those modules the amount owing will be re-claimed from his/her salary or pension money, failing which an "out of service" debt must be set up. In certain instances, which are covered in the bursary contract, a portion of the debt may be redeemed by service obligation.
- 8.7 If the beneficiary resign or dismissed from the employment of Council he/ she shall be liable for a full reimbursement of the Bursary awarded if such employee did not complete the equivalent years of training including time off the amount owing will be re-claimed from his/her salary or pension money, failing which an "out of service" debt must be set up. In certain instances, which are covered in the bursary contract, a portion of the debt may be redeemed by service obligation.
- 8.8 The employee awarded the bursary and has made special arrangement that was approved by the Director or Municipal Manager must honour the agreement to work back the additional hours that were taken over and above those given in terms of the Bargaining Council.
- 8.9 The employer may on reasonable ground or operational reasons request the employee not to attend classes or write exam and it will be at the cost of the employer and the employee will not be penalized in terms of receiving further awards.
- 8.10 If the obligations cannot be fulfilled owing to death or incapacity due to any mental or physical disability, any liability for the refund of any moneys which may be due in terms of the undertaking shall lapse.

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9. Special/ Sabbatical leave/ Practicals/ Block Releases/ Attending of Classes.

An employee awarded a Bursary shall be entitled to special leave as prescribed in the Collective Bargaining agreement:

- 9.1 An employee who studies require practical or block classes shall be entitled to be given time off for attending classes or doing practical over and above as provided in the Collective agreement.
- 9.2 Special time off can be arranged with the HOD if the employee require addition time off due to the nature of their studies or for consultation which shall be worked back or the employee takes annual leave.

10. AUTHORIZATION

- 10.1 In terms of the delegations, the authority to approve Bursary assistance scheme rests with the Municipal Manager.

11. RELEASE FROM DUTY TO STUDY FULL-TIME: PERMANENT EMPLOYEES.

The employer recognized that due to the rules and regulations of the Institutions that provide training or by nature of some studies or qualifications the students may be required to attend on a full time basis. The employer also recognize that its employees have different levels of intellectual capacity or different circumstances may require them to attend full time in order to complete their studies the following conditions will apply:

- 11.1 Employees may apply for sabbatical leave without salary payment
- 11.2 If the nature of the study requires full time attendance the provisions of 13.1 shall not apply.

12. CHANGE IN STUDY DIRECTION OR INSTITUTION

Any employee awarded a Bursary may not be allowed to change the study direction from that which was awarded. The employee is allowed to change the Institution of learning to further their studies on the same field of study as awarded.

- 12.1 The authority may be granted for the change of Institution by the Director Corporate Services provided that the conditions for the awarded bursary does not change.
- 12.2 The applicant must provide motivations and reasons for changing the Institution of learning to the Director of Corporate Services for consideration.
- 12.3 Only registered institution of learning will be recognized in this process.

13. GENERAL

- 13.1 Double registrations for different courses and/or registration at other institutions shall not be covered by this scheme.
- 13.2 Completion of diploma/degree/certificate shall not automatically lead to expectation of promotion or any kind of incentive by Council, such consideration or application must be considered in line with approved promotion and demotion policy.
- 13.3 Council shall not pay for re-marking of papers.
- 13.4 The employee shall not be entitled to time off as provided in the Collective Bargaining Council for supplementary exams or training.
- 13.5 The employee that has successfully completed their study or training shall have a cooling period of 1 financial year after been awarded a bursary before making another application to allow Council to consider other applicants due to financial limitation.
- 13.6 Council shall consider annually making provision for the Bursary scheme to the minimum amount equal to the skills levy.
- 13.7 If there is any contradiction between the provision of this policy with any other policy or law the provisions of all labour related labour law or Regulations shall apply

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14. REPEAL / AMENDMENTS

14.1 The Policy may be repealed by resolution of Council

14.2 The Policy may be reviewed or amended annually as and when the need arise through the policy and by-law Committee of Council.

Annexure A;	Application Form.
Annexure B;	Committee Reporting Template.
Annexure C;	Bursary Contract / Agreement.
Annexure D;	Request to Change Institution.
Annexure E;	Special time off.
Annexure F;	Cancellation of Studies due to operational reasons.

15. AUTHORITY



SI MALAZA
ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER

2021.07.26

DATE

