



## COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

### POLICY INFORMATION AND LOG

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## ABBREVIATIONS

SDIP	Service Delivery Improvement Programme
BP	Batho – Pele Principles
HOD/AC	Head of Department/ Accounting Officer
GM	General Managers
SMS	Senior Management Services
COO	Chief Operations Officer
DCSR	Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation
OTP	Office of the Premier

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation is committed to service excellence in how it deliver services to citizens of Mpumalanga. It is not an additional task to its daily tasks, but the manner in how it approach delivering services professionally, and in a courteous, efficient and consistent manner, which ensures predictable affordable services to all citizens of Mpumalanga, all the time, within the service standards promised to citizens.

However, when numerous challenges arise, and citizens expectations are not met in a timely manner, citizens need to be given avenues to communicate with the Department so as to resolve their complaints and dissatisfaction with any of the departmental services so that the Department can redress and also improve on service delivery processes and systems. Citizens also need to be given an opportunity to compliment the Department/Officials when they have experienced outstanding service delivery from the Department/Officials.

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

To provide an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for resolving service delivery complaints and receiving compliments in accordance with the principles of natural justice and ensure that the Department's process of handling complaints and complements is transparent and responsive to the needs of clients.

### **1.2 SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This policy is applicable to all internal and external clients of the Department who are dissatisfied with the services offered and or suggesting improvements on service delivery and or complimenting the Department for good service delivery.

This policy must also be used in conjunction with other relevant policy prescripts.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES**

- To provide a procedure for the Department and its clients for lodging and resolving complaints
- To improve service delivery, transparency and accountability
- To provide redress where it is found that a client has been unfairly treated
- To make certain that action is taken to prevent a recurrence of identified problems
- To provide data to assist Department in the decision-making process
- To ensure that Department provides effective, timely, low-cost and accessible system for complaints
- To strengthen good governance in the Department

## 2. LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

The development of this Complaints and Compliments Management policy is done within the parameters of the Constitutional and Legislative frameworks including:

- 2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996
- 2.2 White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995
- 2.3 White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997
- 2.4 Labour Relations Act no: 66 of 1995
- 2.5 Public Service Act no: 103 of 1994
- 2.6 Public Service Regulations 2001
- 2.7 Employment Equity Act no: 55 of 1998
- 2.6 Basic Condition of Employment Act no:75 of 1997
- 2.7 Promotion of Administration Justice Act no:3 of 2000
- 2.8 Promotion of Access to information Act no: 2 of 2000
- 2.9 National Development Plan 2030
- 2.10 Batho-Pele principles

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Complaint** - An expression of dissatisfaction by a client or a group of clients about the level and quality of service (including issues of accessibility) or lack thereof, by the Department /Official
- 3.2. **Compliment** – An expression of praise, commendation or admiration by a client or a group of clients about the level and quality of service received from the Department/Official
- 3.3. **Client** – any person who accesses Departmental Services
- 3.4. **Complainant** - any person who has lodged a complaint against the Department
- 3.5. **Employee** - means a person appointed in terms of the Public Service Act 1994
- 3.6. **Department** - means the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation
- 3.7. **Accounting Officer** - a head of a provincial component, and includes any employee acting in such post.
- 3.8. **General Managers/Senior Managers** - means a member of the General/Senior Management Services (SMS) who is tasked with championing the complaints management programme within the Public Service workplace.



**3.9. SDIP Committee** - is a committee that is established by the HOD to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaints management system

**3.10. Batho-Pele Coordinator** - is an employee tasked with the responsibility to coordinate and ensure the implementation of Batho-Pele principles in the Department

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

**4.1 The Department is committed to respect the rights of Culture, Sport, Library and Information services beneficiaries through the implementation of the following Batho- Pele Principles:**

- a. **Consultation**- We will consult our service beneficiaries on the level and quality of the service and provide possible alternatives where necessary
- b. **Service Standards**- We will inform citizens about the level and quality of the service they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect
- c. **Access**- Our services will be equally accessible to all people including people with disabilities
- d. **Courtesy**- We will treat our service beneficiaries with courtesy, respect, consideration and dignity
- e. **Information** - We will provide full accurate information about the public service to which they are entitled to.
- f. **Openness and transparency** - We will be transparent and open at all times on how the Department functions, reveal information as tabled in the Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plans and Annual Reports.
- g. **Redress** - Where we have committed a mistake, we will take responsibility and correct it and provide a positive response
- h. **Value for money** - We will provide public services cost effectively and efficiently in order to give service beneficiaries the best value for money
- i. **Customer Impact** - We will involve the wider community in discussion about future development of public services using Batho Pele principles in all initiatives

- j. **Encouraging innovation and rewarding excellence** - We will provide excellent services and reward efforts of staff that perform excellently in providing customer services ,we shall always try and find innovative “Smart” ways of improving services
- k. **Integrated and Coordinated Approach** - We will involve all relevant stakeholders within and outside government to ensure a well-focused, coordinated and integrated public service

**4.2. This complaints and complements management policy must be guided and demonstrated on the following principles:**

- a. **Accessibility**- must be well publicized and should be easy to use, including accessible formats for people with disabilities and those who are illiterate.
- b. **Speed**- must provide opportunities for a quick response. When a response cannot be given within the expected time, the complainant should be kept informed of the progress and told when an outcome can be expected.
- c. **Fairness**- complaints must be fairly and impartially handled. If a complainant is still dissatisfied with the first response, the system must provide for an independent review.
- d. **Confidentiality** - the complainant's confidentiality must be protected. This will make the citizens feel that they will be protected to even lodge future complaints.
- e. **Responsiveness** - the response to a complaint must take full account of the complainant's concerns and feelings. Where a mistake has been made regarding the provision of a service, an apology with the full explanation and assurance that the occurrence will not be repeated, shall be given to a complainant.
- f. **Review** – must incorporate a system for review of complaints and for feedback suggestions for change to departments, so that mistakes and failures do not recur.
- g. **Training** – must be publicized within the Department and staff be trained so that they know what cation to take a complaint is lodged.



## 5. MECHANISMS FOR LODGING COMPLAINTS

Complaints against the Department may be lodged in a variety of ways or through mechanisms/platforms such as:

- 5.1 A verbal expression after the deficient act / action with respect to the service rendered
- 5.2 A complaints/ suggestion boxes
- 5.3 A walk- in by the complainant
- 5.4 A telephone to a call centre or office
- 5.5 A fax to a call centre or office
- 5.6 A letter or e-mail to the call centre or office;
- 5.7 A web based complaints lodging system

## 6. PROCESS FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The Department must deal with complaints in terms of the following stages which should be completed within **21 working** days from the time a complaint is lodged.

### 6.1. FIRST STAGE (IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND RESOLUTION)

This stage plays a critical role in terms of ensuring that complaints are resolved at the first level of contact. Resolving complaints on first contact saves money and time by eliminating unnecessary additional contacts and builds confidence in the Department.

- 6.1.1. All initial complaints must be submitted to the **Registry** for recording and submission to Communication Unit
- 6.1.2. Communication unit/ assigned personnel in the **Regions** must immediately acknowledge the complaint within 24 hours and attempt to resolve accordingly
- 6.1.3. If not resolved, a verbal complaint becomes a written complaint which must be referred to the second stage.

### 6.2. SECOND STAGE (LOCAL INVESTIGATION - MAXIMUM 10 DAYS)

This stage takes place if there is still dissatisfaction after stage 1 and referred to the General Manager:

- 6.2.1. The General Manager must acknowledge the complaint in writing within 3 working days (Acknowledging receipt and notifying complainant of the 21 days timeline, Letter signed by Regional Head/ COO)
- 6.2.2. Investigate the complaint
- 6.2.3. Take a decision within the 10 days timeline



- 6.2.4. Notify the Complainant in writing of the decision (Letter signed by COO/Regional Head)
- 6.2.5. If more time is needed to resolve the complaint, the manager must write to the complainant explaining why and when a response can be expected (Letter signed by COO/Regional Head, a copy of such a letter must be sent to the Accounting Officer and Communication Unit for noting and recording in the Department's complaints management system)
- 6.2.6. If the complaint is still not resolved at this stage, it must be escalated to third stage for internal review.

### **6.3. THIRD STAGE (INTERNAL REVIEW – MAXIMUM 10 WORKING DAYS)**

This stage takes place only if there is still dissatisfaction after stage 2 and referred to the Accounting Officer

- 6.3.1. The Accounting Officer must carry out further investigations and reviews or nominate an appropriate Officer to investigate and report back
- 6.3.2. The Accounting Officer must develop and implement a solution to the problem
- 6.3.3. Notify the complainant in writing of the outcome within the stipulated timeframe and advise the complainant of his/her right to refer the complaint for independent review, should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome.

### **6.4. INDEPENDENT REVIEW (TIME TO BE DETERMINED BY REVIEW BODY)**

If the complainant is not satisfied after stage 3, the complainant may approach the Executive Authority

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1. Accounting Officer**

- 7.1.1. Establish and sustain a Service Delivery Improvement Programme of the Department including complaints and compliments management mechanism or system
- 7.1.2. Report publicly on complaints management in the Department's annual report in promoting transparency and accountability
- 7.1.3. Receive regular internal reports on the quality and timeliness of complaints management system
- 7.1.4. Use complaints management data in the review of the Department's programmes performance information, continuous improvement initiatives and to enhance service delivery

## **7.2. General Managers and Regional Heads**

- 7.2.1. Properly manage the complaints and complements system of the Department
- 7.2.2. Provide regular reports to the other platforms within the Department (including decision-making platforms) on issues pertaining to complaints management
- 7.2.3. Provide comprehensive training to staff on complaints and compliments management process and systems

## **7.3. Communication and Frontline staff**

- 7.3.1. Behave professionally when dealing with citizens
- 7.3.2. Know complaint management processes/procedures and systems well
- 7.3.3. Comply with internal policies
- 7.3.4. Be informed about the Department's work, programmes and services and developments thereof.
- 7.3.5. Maintain interest regarding the best practice in the management of complaints
- 7.3.6. Keep statistics of complaints received and resolved
- 7.3.7. Compile monthly reports

## **7.4. Employees/Officials**

- 7.4.1. Behave professionally with citizens
- 7.4.2. Know complaint management processes/procedures and systems well
- 7.4.3. Help the public understand the Department's business/ mandate and how to gain access to the Department's complaints process
- 7.4.4. Support complaints management team to resolve problems or complaints faster

## **7.5. Batho –Pele Coordinators/SDIP Committee**

- 7.5.1. Compile monthly reports on complaints received and resolved
- 7.5.2. Monitor and ensure the application of the procedural process
- 7.5.3. Review outcomes/decisions taken to ensure proper implementation of the Batho-Pele principles
- 7.5.4. Analyse data and information regarding complaints to inform Department's programmes, continuous improvement initiatives and to enhance service delivery
- 7.5.5. Monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaints management system
- 7.5.6. Review the Department's complaints and complements management system

## 8. REVIEW

The Policy must be reviewed as and when there are new developments or after every three years

## 9. POLICY AMENDMENT

No amendment(s) may be made to any section of this policy without such amendment(s) duly approved and signed by the responsible authority or delegated official as per the HR's Delegation of Authority.

## 10. POLICY APPROVAL

SIGNED at Mbombela on the 09 day of MAY-----2016



MR SW MNISI

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT