DR AB XUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME STRATEGY

2026/27

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTIONAND BACKGROUND.....3
EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO THE PROGRAMME.....6
SERVICES AND SUBJECTS THAT CAN BE OFFERED BY A EWP.....7
PARTNERS IN EWP.....8
IMPLEMENTATION OF WELLNESS PROGRAMME.....9
STRUCTURES OF EWP AND THEIR ROLES.....10
Implementation and Monitoring of the Wellness Program.....12
POLICY ADOPTION.....13
POLICY REVIEW.....13

1. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996): Guarantees the right to fair labor practices, bodily integrity, and a safe environment.

Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995): Promotes fair labor practices and handles dispute resolutions regarding workplace grievances and health-related dismissals.

Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997): Regulates working hours, leave, and fair conditions to prevent fatigue and burnout.

Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993): Requires employers to provide a safe workplace free from physical and psychological hazards.

Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (Act 130 of 1993): Provides compensation for disablement or illness acquired in the workplace.

Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998): Prevents unfair discrimination and promotes medical and psychological support accommodations.

Mental Health Care Act (Act 17 of 2002): Protects the rights of workers with mental health conditions and guides supportive workplace policies.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Even with the advent of technology, human beings are still by far the most valuable assets of most workplaces. Employees in a municipality, often work under tremendous conditions, interfacing with the community, whilst confronted by their own personal challenges. Therefore, the municipality as the employer offers support and assistance to employees on a humanitarian and moral ground.

Most adults spend more of their waking hours at work than anywhere else, making it a prime venue for promoting healthful habits.

The workplace organizational culture and environment are powerful influences on behaviour and these need to be put to use as a means of assisting employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

2.1 **What is an Employee Health and Wellness Programme?**

An employee wellness programme can be defined as:

a set of organized activities and systematic interventions, offered by an employer to primarily provide health education, identify modifiable health risks, and influence lifestyle changes to achieve optimum wellbeing;

or alternatively

as a work site based programme aimed at assisting in the identification and resolution of performance and behavioural problems resulting from personal and work related problems affecting employees

2.2 **Objectives of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme**

To promote the physical and psycho-social wellbeing of individual employees

To promote Work-Life Balance through flexible policies in the workplace to accommodate work, personal and family needs

To improve the quality of life of all employees and inadvertently improve the quality and level of service delivery to communities

2.3 **Guiding principles of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme**

The employee health and wellness programme is underpinned by the following principles

2.4 **Confidentiality and protection of employee's personal data**

Current employees and job applicants shall not be compelled to divulge their health status. Access to personal information relating to health of the employee shall be dealt with in terms of confidentiality regulations. Such information shall under no circumstances be disclosed without the written consent of the employee except in case where the employee`s health status imposes risk to them and fellow employees.

2.5 **Respect for Human Rights and Dignity**

The programme will be guided by recognition of employee`s rights and dignity. The programme shall be implemented in such a way that no rights of any affected employee shall be violated.

2.6 **Non- discriminatory workplace practices**

No employee shall be discriminated against solely on the basis of their health status. No medical testing shall be performed on employee or job applicants with purpose of excluding them from work processes, such as promotion or employment.

2.7 **Reasonable accommodation**

The municipality will ensure that employees who suffer from any sicknesses will be allowed to continue to work for as long as they are still medically fit. The municipality will create reasonable accommodation and easy access for all employees including those with disabilities.

2.8 **Cultural sensitivity**

All interventions shall acknowledge cultural diversity of employees.

2.9 **Continuity and partnerships**

Every effort shall be made to ensure that continuous care to employees is promoted, which will include cooperation with other health care centres and established referral mechanisms

2.10 **The Dimensions of the Wellness**

In order to achieve a state of wellness for employees or try to guide them to it, due diligence needs to be paid to each of the dimensions

2.11 **Spiritual Wellness**

provides us with a great opportunity to practice living life in perfect balance within our body, mind and spirit.

2.12 **Occupational Wellness**

is the ability to achieve a balance between work and leisure time, addressing workplace stress and building relationships with co-workers. It focuses on an employee`s search for a calling and involves exploring various career options and finding where they actually fit.

2.13 **Environmental well-being**

includes trying to live in harmony with the nature by understanding the impact of one`s interaction with nature and your personal environment, and taking action to protect the world around you. Protecting yourself from environmental hazards and minimizing the negative impact of your behaviour on the environment is also very vital.

2.14 **Intellectual wellness**

is engaging the individual in creative and stimulating mental activities to expand their knowledge and skills and help them discover the potential for sharing their gifts with others. This also relates to a situation where an employee is afforded an opportunity to display their innovative ability, by presenting new ideas and proposals

2.15 **Social Wellness**

refers to one's ability to interact with people around them. It involves using good communications skills, having meaningful relationships, respecting oneself and others, contributing to the common welfare of colleagues, community and creating a support system that includes family members and friends.

2.16 **Emotional wellness**

is more than just handling stress. It also involves being attentive to your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, whether positive or negative, forming interdependent relationships with others based upon a foundation of mutual commitment, trust and respect.

2.17 **Physical wellness**

Involves aspects of life that are necessary to keep yourself in top condition. Optimal physical wellness is developed through the combination of beneficial physical activity/exercise and healthy eating habits. Physical wellness is also concerned with developing personal responsibility for your own health care and activities.

3. EMPLOYEE ACCESS TO THE PROGRAMME

The municipality has established an Employee Health and Wellness Unit, whose main objective is to coordinate and facilitate programmes and activities that are associated with Employee Health and Wellness.

The unit is tasked with the following responsibilities

a. To ensure a safe and healthy environment for employees
b. Ensure education, advocacy and awareness of health and wellness programmes
c. Promote voluntary participation in health and wellness programmes
d. Facilitate creation of partnership with relevant stakeholders

There are three ways in which an employee can access EWP

3.1 Self-Referral

Where an employee is worried about their personal or work problems they can seek help directly through their EWP i.e. they do not have to seek permission from the employer to access the Programme.

3.2 Formal Manager Referral

This instance refers to when an employee is referred to the EWP programme by a manager. In most cases this type of referral is linked to a performance or behavioural issue that is being managed by the employer. Where feedback is required both the employee and the employer will complete a Disclosure of Information Form.

3.3 Suggested or Informal Referral

Where an employee seeks help through the EWP at the suggestion of a co-worker, Human Resources representative, employee representative, manager or team leader or the Health and Safety representative.

4. SERVICES AND SUBJECTS THAT CAN BE OFFERED BY A EWP

4.1 **Services**

Given the range of problems confronting employees in a workplace, areas typically managed by Employee Wellness Programme include:

4.1.1 Professional and confidential counselling;

4.1.2 Three counselling models: face-to-face, telephone and e-counselling;

4.1.1.1. Offering a 24/7 toll free phone service to employee that is manned by a professional who is readily capable of dealing with diverse issues;

4.1.1.2. The health risk assessment is central to health promotion programs. It can help companies of all sizes identify their workforce's problems and establish targets for improvement e.g. the current HIV and AIDS interventions already in existence in municipalities.

4.1.1.3. A 24/7 Critical Incident and Trauma Support Network; (A Critical Incident is any event that is unexpected, acute, stressful and that may exceed the normal coping capacities of those involved in the event).

4.1.1.4. Reporting, intended to assist organisations with their employee development programmes by identifying trends and patterns in EWP usage and presenting issues, allowing for prompt management attention as required. This reporting should not disclose names of employees to ensure maintenance of confidentiality.

4.1.3. HIV/AIDS and chronic disease and lifestyle related disease management.

4.2 **Subject areas**

The range of areas typically managed by an EWP provider include:

4.2.1. Personal issues

4.2.2. Job stress

4.2.3. Conflicts and relationship issues

4.2.4. Eldercare, childcare, parenting issues

4.2.5. Harassment

4.2.6. Addictions and substance abuse

4.2.7. Separation and loss

4.2.8. Balancing work and family

4.2.9. Financial or legal

4.2.10. Family violence

4.2.11. Team building

4.2.12. Chronic illnesses eg HIV/AIDS

4.3 **PARTNERS IN EWP**

In order to achieve proper implementation of EWP, the municipality will forge partnership with the below mentioned organisations. The organisations are chosen on the basis of their expertise in identified employee problems and also to adopt an integrated approach to deal with all the problems that are faced by employees.

Department of Social Development: as a referral point for counselling and psychological and support services

a) **Department of Health**: as a referral point for provision of medical services and a

AIDS TRAINING INFORMATION CENTRE : training and awareness programmes especially for HIV/AIDS

b) **Non-Governmental Organisation`s** : referral for provision of advice in their fields of specialisation. Also to assist in research programmes with the objective of overcoming a specific social ill.

c) **Community Based Organisations**: assist in the establishment and operation of support groups

d) **South African Police Services**: awareness programmes on substance and drug abuse and family violence

e) **Chris Hani District Municipality**: partners in sporting and any other relevant wellness programmes

f) **Private Financial Service Providers**: provide professional counselling and advice on investment, insurance and personal financial management

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF WELLNESS PROGRAMME

The table below illustrates actions to be undertaken by the employer in the event of occurrence of any of the above mentioned subjects

Subject area	**Action by employer**	**Desired outcome / impact**
Personal issues	Counselling	Ability to deal with issues
Job stress	Counselling and engagement in one on one sessions with manager	Ability to cope with amount of work
Conflicts and relationship issues	Conflict resolution programmes	Resolution of conflict
Eldercare, childcare, parenting issues	Professional counselling and referral to support groups	Ability to cope with stress related to the problem
Harassment	Counselling by a professional	Restraining order against the perpetrator
Addictions and substance abuse	Professional counselling, awareness campaigns and referral to rehabilitation centres	Abstinence from substance abuse
Separation and loss	Counselling	Ability to cope with situations
Balancing work and family	Counselling	Improved quality of work
Financial or legal	Counselling and referral to professional advice	Improved management of personal finances and reduced debts
Family violence	Counselling and legal advice and referral to support groups	Ability to cope with situations

Team building	Organise team building events for departments	Improved team work and relations between employees
Chronic illnesses	Provide sick leave, Referral to medical facilities Conduct awareness campaigns	Improved health condition and reduction in actions that cause the sickness and problems

6. STRUCTURES OF EWP AND THEIR ROLES

6.1 Council

6.1.1. To develop and adopt policies and strategies

6.1.2. To receive ,analyse and accept reports on the implementation of EWP

6.1.3. To approve budget for EWP

6.2 Management

6.2.1 First referral and observation point

6.2.2 To identify employees with behavioural and performance related problems and refer them for professional assistance

6.2.3 Through a manager designated for EWP, can arrange professional assistance for identified employees.

6.3 Wellness Committee

6.3.1 Meets on a quarterly basis to discuss wellness issues

6.3.2 Plans wellness programmes

6.3.3 Monitors and evaluates implementation of EWP and its impact

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR EWP

PROGRAMME	ACTION	TIME FRAME	PARTNERSHIP
No smoking day	Distribute pamphlets to employees advising on the dangers and health effects of smoking	May	Department of health
National day on alcohol and substance abuse	Awareness campaign on prevention and effects of substance abuse	June	Department of health, Social Development, SAPS, CBO`s
Municipal Sports Day	Organize sports day	September	Internal arrangement
	Invite financial advisers to make presentations on pension, Investments, insurance and general finance management	September	Financial Service Providers
16 Days of activism against violence on women and children	Joint programme with other relevant stakeholders	November	Department of health, Social Development, SAPS, CBO`s, Municipal Special Programs Unit
World Aids Day	Formal programme to be held	December	Internal arrangement

Prayer day for the Institution	Formal programme to be held	January	Local Council of Churches and or Ministers Fraternal
Condom week	• Awareness campaign on the prevention of HIV/AIDS epidemic • Condom week event and invite a speaker	February	Department of health
National TB day	Awareness campaign on prevention and treatment of TB	March	Department of health

7. Implementation and Monitoring of the Wellness Program

Implementation involves putting the plan into action and this is what the municipality will do:

Management and wellness committee will need to be part of the wellness program implementation.

Management should take the lead role in wellness by participating in activities like walking, eating better, participating in health screenings and any wellness activity.

Make arrangements with wellness vendors, recruiting health and wellness speakers, negotiating with health plans or health clubs, scheduling wellness activities and more

Will market, acquire resources and evaluate the success of the programme.

8. POLICY ADOPTION

The accounting officer will be the accountable custodian of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme Strategy policy and must ensure that this policy is submitted to the council for consideration and adoption.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy must be reviewed at least annually to ensure that it is adaptable to operational changes and it is aligned with the legislative environment.

When deemed necessary on ad hoc basis, the Accounting Officer must submit proposals of amendments of the policy to the Council for consideration and adoption.

SIGNATURES

MR K.L MULAUDZI 29/05/2026 **DATE**

MUNICPAL MANAGER

ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF DR AB XUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

CLLR S ZANGQA 29/05/2026 **DATE**

HON MAYOR

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 11/29/05/2026