



VICTOR KHANYE

LOCAL MUNICIPALITY – PLAASLIKE MUNISIPALITEIT

BURSARY SCHEME POLICY

Policy Number: BSP - 01	Approved by Council: 01 August 2013
Resolution No:35/07/2013	Review Date:

BURSARY SCHEME POLICY

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The Bursary Scheme Policy is intended to assist the municipality in securing adequately qualified personnel for its service by providing financial assistance to employees to enable them to qualify themselves educationally for the municipality's service and to enhance their level of competence to perform the duties assigned to them.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Policy statement

The Victor Khanye Local Municipality (VKLM) creates medium and long-term financial opportunities for employees to acquire skills and knowledge through structured training and development programmes, in line with organisational development needs.

1.2 Relevant legislation and documents

The following legislation and documents are relevant to the application of this Policy:

- (a) The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998).
- (b) The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997).
- (c) The Municipal Systems Act, 2000
- (d) The Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995.)
- (e) The White Paper on Affirmative Action, 1998.
- (f) The Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998).
- (g) The Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003).

- (h) The South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995).

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the Policy are to—

- (a) Create an enabling environment for VKLM employees to grow and improve their educational qualifications and skills in their career related fields, with the aim of helping them to contribute productively to VKLM objectives;
- (b) provide financial support towards targeted skills areas to address the VKLM's training and development priorities;
- (c) ensure that educational assistance is granted in respect of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) accredited qualifications, and that the educational assistance contributes to the improved performance of the employee within his or her current position;
- (d) regulate the provision of financial assistance and support given to VKLM employees in line with VKLM Training and Development policy and VKLM strategic objectives, and
- (e) give effect to the spirit and intent of the labour legislation in so far as training and development is concerned.

1.4 Scope

This Policy applies to all permanent employees in the VKLM.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

2.1 Any VKLM employee is eligible to apply for—

- (a) a full time bursary (only in exceptional cases and subject to approval by the delegated forum), or
- (b) a part time bursary.

2.2 Criteria for awarding bursaries

Certain factors must be considered when considering awarding a bursary. These factors include—

- (a) the availability of funds;
- (b) the financial circumstances of the applicant, especially in the case of applications for full time bursaries;
- (c) the promotion of representivity in respect of race and gender in the VKLM (in line with the Employment Equity imperatives);
- (d) the academic performance or record of the applicant;
- (e) the relevance of study to the VKLM strategic objectives;
- (f) the relevance of study to the existing job of the applicant;
- (g) the relevance of study to improving the performance and retaining the service of identified skilled employees;
- (h) the priority of a particular function and the availability of similarly qualified people in the labour market;
- (i) the present as well as future vacancies for employment in the VKLM linked to VKLM recruitment plans; and
- (j) the recommendation of the relevant Department.

3. BURSARY COMMITTEE

- Executive Director: Corporate Services
- Executive Director: Financial Services (FCO)
- 1 IMATU Rep
- 1 SAMWU Rep

4. FULL TIME BURSARIES

- 4.1 Full time bursaries are used as a vehicle to identify and recruit new staff with the kind of potential that adds value to the VKLM. Courses for which full time bursaries are awarded must be identified annually by the various managers and advertised in the national press.
- 4.2 Where there is lack of critical skills, especially in terms of representivity, headhunting of promising students at recognised academic institutions may be considered. The intention is to employ successful candidates on completion of their studies.
- 4.3 At the discretion of the MM and on the recommendation of the Training Forum, a full-time current employee may be granted a full-time bursary in exceptional circumstances.

5. PART TIME BURSARIES

- 5.1 Part-time bursaries are granted to employees to further their studies in line with career planning and personal development plans.
- 5.2 Employees who are employed on a permanent basis qualify for part time bursaries. Employees on fixed term contracts may be considered at the discretion of the Training Forum.
- 5.3 The granting of bursaries is decided according to criteria set by the relevant Training Forum and after a recommendation by the relevant Department.
- 5.4 The Training Forum must consider all educational assistance applications once a year and in line with the allocated budget.

6. CONDITIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- 6.1 Applicants whose probation has not been confirmed do not qualify for financial assistance.
- 6.2 A written contract must be signed by the employer and the employee, setting out the rights and obligations of both parties in respect of the financial assistance.

- 6.3 Study may be done over a minimum period of six months and a maximum of not more than three years longer than the normal duration as prescribed by the various institutions.
- 6.4 A part time learner must serve the VKLM for a year after completion of his or her courses/programmes. A full time learner must work for the VKLM for the same period of time he or she has studied i.e. four-years of study equals four years of service.
- 6.5 Recipients of financial assistance, who terminate their contract before completing their service obligations (5.4 above) must pay the VKLM the outstanding amount in lieu of the service period.
- 6.6 Recipients of financial assistance who wish to change academic courses must re-apply to the VKLM for bursaries and these applications must be treated as new applications. These recipients must repay the VKLM the amount paid towards the previous registered courses of study.
- 6.7 An employee who does not fulfil the requirements of his or her courses/programmes and who repeats a year of study or a course or module, must pay the additional costs.
- 6.8 Any travelling expenses incurred by the employee for examinations, study groups, lectures, seminars must be paid by the employee. The VKLM will not pay additional costs resulting from supplementary examination or re-enrolments, or levies.
- 6.9 The VKLM will only give educational assistance for studies at recognised institutions. All institutions, including campuses that claim to be extensions of overseas campuses, need to prove compliance with SAQA Senior Certificate.
- 6.10 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and matriculation will be given priority. The VKLM will cover 100% of the total costs of such programmes.
- 6.11 Financial assistance is awarded according to an academic year, not a financial year, and is based on the modules the student registers for. The VKLM will not pay for modules taken for non-degree or non-diploma purposes.

- 6.12 The contractual commitments of part time students must be fully met before the student is considered for further financial assistance, unless fully motivated and specifically recommended by the Training Forum.
- 6.13 An employee receiving financial assistance must use the bursary only for the approved direction of study. Full time recipients are required to work in the VKLM at an acceptable stipend for not less than three weeks per year (for in service training, development and continuity in the event of full-time employment).
- 6.14 The Training Forum may make recommendations on the awarding of bursaries to employees who join the VKLM from other organisations and have existing financial assistance contracts.
- 6.15 No recipient may receive any financial assistance before he or she submits his or her results and/or proof of registration and course outline. An original statement from the relevant educational institution outlining the cost per subject, registration and examination fees (breakdown account) must be provided before the VKLM can make a payment.
- 6.16 If a bursary application was unsuccessful, the VKLM cannot be held liable for the costs incurred in connection with studies.
- 6.17 All applications for the extension of financial assistance must be considered by the Training Forum.
- 6.18 The VKLM is not liable for interest accrued because of a failure to submit statements of accounts in good time.

7. BREACH OF CONTRACT

- 7.1 Breach of contract may lead to the financial assistance being revoked and applies, among others, if the recipient—
- (a) does not pass 75% of the modules/courses registered for the academic year;

- (b) fails to submit the required reports or documents;
 - (c) states in writing that he or she intends terminating his or her studies;
 - (d) with a bursary obligation resigns;
 - (e) does not report for duty within one month after receiving a written offer of employment from the VKLM;
 - (f) changes institutions or study direction without prior approval from the relevant department and the Training Forum;
 - (g) is dismissed from the VKLM due to misconduct.
- 7.2 Where breach of contract occurs, the recipient must pay any outstanding debts incurred plus interests calculated at prime rate plus 2% , either in terms of actual funds paid and/or time owing.
- 7.3 Arrangements can be made with the Department of Finance and Treasury, to have the necessary amount deducted from the salary or pension funds.
- 7.4 Paragraph 6.3. will take effect, should a bursary holder fails to make appropriate arrangement.

8. ADMINISTRATION OF SCHEME

The Municipal Manager shall delegate or assign a person to be responsible for the administration and implementation of the scheme and he/she, or his/her assignee shall have the power to conclude contract in terms of the scheme.

9. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The financial assistance shall be given to an employee in respect of expenses to be incurred to enable him/her to obtain qualifications approved by the Municipality.

Financial assistance which shall include registration, tuition and examination fees shall be paid directly to the institution upon receipt of proof of registration for the qualification.

10. STUDY LEAVE

An employee who is a part-time or distance learning student and who is studying for an approved qualification, shall be granted examination, study leave as follows:

- Examination leave for the date or dates on which he/she is required to present himself/herself as a candidate for such examination.
- Study leave, one day per examination paper, solely for the purpose of preparing for an examination prescribed by the registered educational institution where the employee is registered.
- The employee may be granted study leave on full pay to attend lectures or to undertake practical work or to attend practical demonstration in cases where he/she establishes to the satisfaction of the Municipal Manager or his/her assignee that such leave is essential for the fulfilment of the contract entered into in terms of the scheme.
- The study leave benefits shall not apply to an employee who wishes to repeat a qualifying course of study which was previously written by him/her for which examination leave was taken and which he/she failed. If an employee was unsuccessful in an exam, the study leave should be converted to annual leave.

11. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

This policy will be implemented and effective once recommended by the Local Labour Forum and approved by Council.

12. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to all municipal employees using the full range of communication methods available to the municipality.

13. POLICY REVIEW

Notwithstanding the review date herein, this policy shall remain effective until such time approved otherwise by Council and may be reviewed on an earlier date if necessary.

14. BUDGET AND RESOURCES

The financial and resource implication/s related to the implementation of this policy should be qualified and quantified.

15. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Municipal Manager or his/her delegate assignee accepts overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

16. PENALTIES

Non compliance of any of the stipulations contained in the policy will be regarded as misconduct and will be dealt with in terms of the municipality's Disciplinary Code.

17. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute arising from this policy due to ambiguous wording or phrasing must be referred to the Local Labour Forum for adjudication. Resolutions from the Local Labour Forum must be incorporated into the policy.