**EMPLOYEE WELNESS POLICY**

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**PURPOSE:**

A healthy workforce results in a more productive workforce with less absenteeism, fewer accidents, lower health care demands, and greater overall savings by reducing the incidence of disease and disability. Employees are encouraged to participate in education classes and disease screenings that help identify and reduce health risks before serious health problems occur and/or allow better management of existing conditions.

Through the Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) and partnerships with community organisations and health care providers, employees will be able to access classes, screenings, and follow up assistance to identify and manage health issues and preventable illness.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all employees of the company.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSONS:**

1. Human Resources/Line Manager - Implementation and facilitation.
2. Human Resources/Lind Managers - Administration, monitoring and

 enforcement of this policy.

1. Employees - Adherence to this policy and

procedures outlined in this policy.

**POLICY DEFINITION:**

For purposes of this policy, wellness is defined as those activities identified by the Wellness Committee that contribute to the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of employees, including educational awareness, behavioural and lifestyle changes and supportive environments.

**POLICY:**

**The role of the Wellness Committee**

The Wellness Committee will support and oversee the implementation of an integrated Employee Wellness Programme, combining the elements of HIV and Aids prevention, treatment, care and support; EAP (Employee Assistance Pragrammes) and SHE (Safety, Health, Environment, Risk and Quality). The Wellness Committee will provide advice and recommendations to the Senior Management Team on wellness issues. The Committee may also raise funds to support and promote sanctioned activities.

Membership in the Wellness Committee consists of the Human Resources Manager as the sponsor, a chairperson, one or more co-chair-persons, and will include representatives from head office,, regional and outlying offices. Participation on the committee is voluntary.

The Wellness Committee shall determine its operating procedures, including the content and frequency of meetings, its decision-making process and priorities.

Employee Wellness programmes should provide clinical, educational, and consultative services of the highest professional standard, concentrating on confidentiality, cost-effectiveness, and professional excellence, and should furthermore include:

• The creation of a conducive environment that addresses relevant legislation, core values, infrastructure, and capacity building to ensure transfer of skills and a sustainable, dynamic service delivery environment

• Information management and control with respect to absenteeism, sick leave, injuries on duty, staff turnover, medical expenses, and risk management

• Managed Wellness care that is reflective of evidence-based practice, Risk management, Outcomes management and Impact analysis.

• To provide integrated preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative wellness services to all employees, guided by the Employee Wellness policy;

• To maintain high productivity through the empowerment of employees and employer towards the holistic management of employees’ health and wellness needs.

• To integrate the programmes into the Human Resources policies, procedures and practises of the organization, so as to ensure nondiscriminatory practices, and to minimise the impact of ill-health/injury on both the employer and the employee.

The Employee Wellness Programmes shall, at least, encompass the following key functional areas:

(i) Occupational Health, Safety and Risk

(ii) Health management

(iii) Wellness Management

**Occupational Health and Safety**

Occupational Health and Safety includes but is not limited to:

Occupational Safety: Protection of the workforce from occupational injury, diseases, stressors, and hazards through proactive measures of risk reduction.

Occupational Hygiene: Involves the recognition, evaluation, and control of physical, ergonomic, psychological, and biological factors in the workplace which may affect the wellness of employees.

Environmental Management: Refers to environmental conservation such as waste management, environmental impact assessment use and control of hazardous materials inside and outside the workplace.

Disaster Management: Preventing, planning for, and managing disasters through disaster preparedness, rapid response, recovery and rehabilitation, so as to minimise loss of life, injury, and damage to property.

**Health Management**

This refers to preventive and promotive health care, aimed at all non-communicable, communicable, and chronic diseases, including HIV & AIDS, both within and, with certain limitations, outside of the workplace. It involves a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary

approach to managing diseases effectively, and includes health risk profiling, disease prevention and management protocols, and rehabilitative activities.

The Employee Wellness Programme can play a pivotal role in conducting health promotion activities, early identification of wellness problems, referral to inside or outside wellness services, support to employees affected by ill-health, facilitating adherence to protocols, and liaison within the department to ease the employee’s rehabilitation.

**Wellness Management**

This encompasses human wellness, guided by risk assessment, and promoting individual and organisational wellness. The components of wellness management facilitate fulfilment of employees’ needs, such as:

**Spiritual needs**:

To promote set guiding beliefs, principles or values that help give direction to life e.g. *Intra*-personal skills, value clarification, religious activities and etc.

**Emotional needs**:

To promote emotional intelligence, self-esteem, optimism, sense of coherence, and resilience of employees, e.g. fear management skills, stress management, trauma counseling, critical incident management and etc.

**Social needs**:

To promote the ability of employees to interact successfully and to live up to the expectations and demands of personal roles, by learning good communication and financial skills, creating support networks with colleagues, friends and family, and showing respect for others and self.

**Physiological needs**:

To promote healthy behaviours, awareness, and behavioural regulation towards healthy life styles e.g. fitness, nutrition, weight control, work-based sport activities, healthy cooking methods etc.

**Intellectual needs**:

To promote the ability to make sound decisions, to think critically, to be open to new ideas, to master new skills, to be creative and curious. e.g. role clarity, participation in decision-making surrounding their immediate job content and procedures, growth opportunities and etc.

**Types of Programmes within the Employee Wellness Programm**

· Availability of flextime work schedules

· No smoking policy

· Drug use policy and testing

· The use of protective/safety equipment

· Sexual harassment policy and non-discrimination policy

· Family leave initiatives

· Consistent and frequent awards and recognition of employee work efforts

· Promoting wellness programmes through the Company’s website and Employee Wellness Weeks.

· Encouraging the inclusion of healthy food options at meetings and special events.

· Supporting the availability of healthy food options in vending machines and cafeterias operating at the workplace.

· Encouraging employees to utilise breaks for walking, stretching or other physical activity.

Providing educational resources/classes that promote exercise,

**RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Employer**

With respect to Employee Wellness, the employer has the responsibility of ensuring that:

• A healthy and safe environment that is conducive for optimum productivity / service delivery is created and maintained in the workplace

• the basic wellness services are made accessible to employees, and are conducted in an ethical manner

• the working environment and working conditions of employees are conducive to wellness;

• employees' rights to confidentiality, autonomy, sensitivity, timeous intervention, equality, openness and transparency and confidentiality are protected;

• employees are informed of conditions in the workplace that may be harmful to their health and wellness;

• Employees are not arbitrarily and unfairly discriminated against

**The Employees**

Employees have the right to expect that:

• the environment in which they work is healthy and safe

• the basic wellness services will be made accessible to them, conducted in an ethical manner

• their working environment and working conditions will be conducive to wellness;

• their rights to confidentiality, autonomy, sensitivity, timeous intervention, equality,

openness and transparency will be protected;

• they will not be arbitrarily and unfairly discriminated against

• their privacy is maintained and respected

**Employees have the responsibility to:**

• conduct their work in a manner that advances sustainable, high-quality service delivery, and that protects their health and wellness ;

• Report and/or take action to correct conditions in the workplace that may be harmful to their own health and wellness and that of other employees;

• Inform themselves of ways in which they can protect their health and wellness, both within and outside the workplace;

• take an initiative to seek professional intervention

**The Line Manager**

• Implement the employee wellness policy and strategy in their department

• Communicate and maintain links with the employee wellness committee.

• Provide feedback to employees about wellness status of the department

• Ensure that staff is sufficiently trained in order to be able to discharge their duties

• Create meaningful developmental opportunities for staff

• Manage job demands (monitor workloads) in order to prevent work overload

• Create an environment that is conducive to the referral of employees, namely, that referral is a corrective measure and not a punitive measure.

• Encourage employee participation in employee wellness programme

• Support employees in times of need.

• Provide necessary support to all employee wellness initiatives

**Human Resources**

• Provide for a human resource strategy and operational plan that includes employee health and wellness

• Ensure appropriate reporting on the employee health and wellness policy

• Facilitate training requirements

• Provide continuous support in aspects of employees

• Monitor the effectiveness of employee wellness interventions

• Facilitate continuous support to managers and employees in aspects of employee and wellness;

• Promote the employee wellness programme

**CONFIDENTIALITY & BREACH THERE-OF**

Confidential information generally pertains to private personal information and may include an employee’s financial and marital circumstances, criminal record or **health status**, but not to the exclusion of other types of information. The constitution of the Republic guarantees every person’s right to privacy. Its application in the workplace therefore determines that an employer may not disclose an employee’s confidential information to the requesting party.

This right, however, may be limited by legislation (e.g. section 16 of the Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995 and Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000) and or court orders that warrant the disclosure of information. The collection and maintenance of confidential information should be kept securely and only those entitled to officially engage therewith may be allowed controlled access.

An employee should be afforded an opportunity of verifying the accuracy, to rectify and to update confidential information, particularly in circumstances of employment equity.

Breach of the code of Confidentiality is a dismissible offence.

**EMPLOYEE POLICY CONFIRMATION:**

***I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (employee name and surname), declare that;***

1. Ihave been familiarised with and informed of the Employee Wellness Policy
2. I understand and agree to the contents of this policy and that;
* it may be amended from time to time,
* it forms part of my employment conditions,
* the implementation and contents of this policy are mutually agreed upon with the employer,
* I have been given the opportunity to question this policy and that my questions were satisfactorily answered
1. I agree to strictly adhere to this policy.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (place) on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [YEAR].

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Signature Employee

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Signature Manager