



FINAL INDIGENT BURIAL POLICY / ASSISTANCE TO DESTITUTE FAMILIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The municipality has the constitutional obligation to promote a Safe and Healthy Environment and Social & Economic Development. Municipalities must strive within its financial and administrative capacity to achieve the above objectives.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The cost-s of burial pose a challenge to the number of inhabitants of Okhahlamba simply because of high rate of unemployment and child headed households due to the number of reason. Okhahlamba Local Municipality has an indigent policy which is implemented through the indigent programme which assists qualifying inhabitants to receive basic services. As part of broadening support to those qualifying inhabitants defined as “indigent” Okhahlamba Local Municipality has crafted a policy that will be implemented in supporting its communities that are for some reasons unable to fund funeral expenses.

3. PURPOSE

- To assist Okhahlamba Municipality indigent families to bury their loved ones in a dignified manner.
- To ensure that the deceased are buried within a reasonable time to prevent possible health risks.

4. DEFINITIONS

PAUPER

A pauper within the above constitutional mandate will be an unknown body that has been found within the municipal jurisdiction.

INDIGENT

A person whose entire household income is based on a Social grant and has no financial income to cater for a decent burial as a result of a disaster or death in a child headed household.

- **All-inclusive:** means inclusive of coffins, graves, collection (transport), storage costs, burial / funeral costs.
- **Approved cemetery:** means any piece of land duly set aside by the Council within the Municipal area for the purpose of a public cemetery.
- **Approved funeral undertaker:** - means a funeral undertaker’s premises in respect of which certificate of competence has been issued

by an Environment Health Practitioner of Council in terms of the Funeral Undertakers Bylaws.

- **Certified:** means a signed affidavit by ward Councillor of the Council specifying that a family member / relative is known is or are known to her / him and specify that he, she / they are destitute
- **Council:** means Okhahlamba Municipality,
- **“Indigent”** means any household or category of households, including a child headed household, earning less than a combined gross income, as determined by the municipality during the compilation of annual budget in terms of a social and economic analysis of its area, as vested in the municipal policy, which qualifies for rebate or remissions, support or a services subsidy, provided that child support grant is not included when calculating such household income, means resident without any income or financial means
- **“Municipal area”** means the area placed under the control or jurisdiction of council.
- **“Peri- urban areas”** means areas often formed as result of settlement on the boundary of formal urban areas but not necessarily enjoying the benefits / levels of services that are available in the adjoining urban areas. A further consideration would be that such areas have a higher population / household density than rural areas.
- **“Policy”** means Indigent Burial Assistance Policy
- **Rural areas:** means an area outside of an urban and/ or peri –urban area that has a lower population / household density as well as a more basic level of services.
- **State Property:** means any property owned, occupied or managed by National, Provincial Department of government i.e Hospitals, prisons, police stations.

5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This framework is designed and implemented within the contexts, but not limited to other prescripts:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- The Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003);
- The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 of 2000);
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000);
- The Property Rate Act, 2004 (Act No. 6 of 2004);
- The Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No. 6 of 2004);
- The Municipal Structure Acts 2000, (Act No. of 2000);
- The Local Government Municipal System Act 2003 (Act No. 32 of 2003);

- The Free basic Alternative Energy Policy 2007;
- The Free basic Electricity Policy 2003;
- The Free Basic Water Implementation Guideline for local authorities 2002;
- The Free Basic Water Implementation Strategy 2007: Consolidating and maintaining;
- The National Policy for the Provision of Basic Refuse Removal Service to Indigent Households 2011;
- The Local Government Equitable Share Municipal Demonstration Spreadsheet for 5 years (2013/14 to 2017/18) financial year.

6. INDIGENT BURIAL SERVICES/BENEFITS

The policy covers the following costs:

- The provision of a coffin, mortuary services and transport not exceeding the value of one thousand one hundred rands (R1,600) per household
- Grocery provision, tents and other services not mentioned above are not catered for/ will not be provided unless the death is a result of a disaster involving more than two members of the same family; the official, Councillor , or assessor can prove that there is no other means viable to cater for burial services from the side of the family.
- The predetermined amount of R1100 can only be exceeded under the following circumstance:
 - Transport to collect the deceased either in Estcourt or Ladysmith which shall not exceed R800
 - In case the deceased is obessed and cannot fit in the normal coffin.

The above benefits are however, subject to budget availability.

7. INFORMATION VERIFICATION

- **The Okhahlamba Municipality reserves the right to verify any information related to the applicant**
- **The Municipality shall institute a criminal charge against a recipient if such a recipient if such a recipient has knowingly supplied incorrect information in order to receive this benefit. Furthermore,**

8. QUALIFYING CRETERIA/CONDITIONS FOR INDIGENT BURIAL

- Only community members (indigent) which are proven to reside within the municipal area of jurisdiction

- A beneficial / household must be enlisted in the municipal indigent register.
- Only newly certified copies will be considered for further processing of the indigent burial
- No gravestones, tents, will be funded on the indigent burial
- The amount of one thousand one hundred rands (R1 600) agreed by the Council for indigent will be paid directly to the funeral parlour or to the approved services provider based on an invoice
- The deceased and his / her family must be indigent.
- Only deceased residents of Okhahlamba Municipality will qualify through this policy.
- The body should be kept at an approved, registered funeral undertaker.
- Funds will be allocated for the indigent person that died within the boundaries of the Municipality.
- No assistance will be provided for repatriation of the body.
- Funds will be allocated even though the indigent person died at a Government institution i.e Hospital or prisons
- Pauper Burial will involve SAPS since they have an obligation to try and find the family members of the unknown and until after three months that body can be declared as Pauper when the municipality has to carry the cost of the burial. As such the function of Uthukela District, and the Local Municipality shall submit claim for every expenses incurred.
- Indigent pauper burial transport shall be provided only if its within the district boundaries.

Okhahlamba Local Municipality shall institute a criminal charge against recipient if such a recipient has knowingly supplied incorrect information in order to receive indigent burial benefits. Furthermore, the municipality reserves the right to verify any information related to the applicants.

9. PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES TO ACCESS THE SERVICE FOR THE DESTITUTE FAMILIES AND INDIGENT BURIAL

9.1 THE ROLE OF THE MUNICIPALITY

- To allocate suitable amount for Indigent Burial in each financial year.
- To make sure that all community members (indigent) within Okhahlamba area of jurisdiction are receiving equal and fair treatment
- To consider and approve the revised budget when necessary
- Approve and amend Policy where necessary

9.2 ROLE OF WARD COUNCILLORS

- To assess and analyse the situation of that particular family to warrant the provision of such assistance
- To submit a letter stating the above in his / her own hand writing and stamped – ward stamp to give proof to the administrator/ Chief Financial Officer or HOD concern
- To give approval to the identified family within his / her ward jurisdiction with the correct documentation as proof e.g. certified copy of death certificate, affidavit to confirm indigent or letter from the ward councillor or tribal court
- The family should be accompanied by a Ward councillor/Ward Committee member throughout the processes to give support
- It is the responsibility of the Ward Councillor to inform the relevant Department prior to the coming in of the family

9.3 THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF FINANACIAL OFFICER (CFO)

- Firstly, to send the official to verify whatever information submitted by Ward Councillor and to make his/her recommendations
- To firstly verify the authority of the funeral parlour's invoice and the attached documents
- If the documents submitted are not meeting the requirements of this policy, inform the Municipal Manager and the Municipal Manager will turn down the application and it will be returned back to Ward Councillor
- To make sure that the amount contained in the invoice is less or equal to the Council agreed amount.
- Authorize payment for the Finance Section to proceed with the payments

9.4 THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES OFFICE/SECTION

- To assess and evaluate the submitted invoices
- To advice the Municipal Manager on the authenticity of the documents submitted

9.5 THE ROLE OF ADMIN. OFFICER

- To receive indigent Burial funeral parlour invoices with the attached correct documents received from ward councillors
- Submit the received indigent Burial documents to the Dir. Finance within 48 hours
- Record all the received indigent Burial documents on the indigent Burial register.

9.6 THE ROLE OF DIRECTOR SOCIAL & ECONOMIC SERVICES

- To submit quarterly reports to council an expenditure
- To recommend to municipal manager for authorisation of pauper burial and payments thereof.

INDIGENT BURIAL SUPPORT AND PROCEDURES

- The following procedures should be followed during the implementation of the policy
- All applications for indigent assistance burials be submitted to Finance Department for investigation and approval
- Deceased residents of Okhahlamba Municipality will only qualify through this policy.
- An affidavit from the South African Police Service (SAPS) indicating the financial circumstances of the deceased and family members.
- Letter of support from the Ward Councillor (verifying death).
- Certified copy of Identity Document of the deceased (affidavit if no ID available)
- Certified copy Death Certificate.
- Burial Order (Original)
- Certified copy of applicant's identity document.
- Certified copy of the Notice of Death BI 1663 (issued by Doctors)
- **The family should bury the body within 14 days from the date of approval by the Okhahlamba Municipality**
- Payment will not be made to individuals or family members of the deceased, but only to the service provider who would have provided the service.

Financial assistance in terms of this policy will be subject to the allocated budget for the financial year.