



COST CONTAINMENT POLICY

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1. **DEFINITIONS**

“**Consultant**” means a professional person, individual partnership, corporation, or a company appointed to provide technical and specialist advice or to assist with a design and implementation of projects or to assist the municipality to achieve its objectives of local government in terms of section 152 of the Constitution.

“**cost containment**” the measures implemented to curtail spending in terms of this policy.

“**municipality**” Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality.

2. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to regulate spending and to implement cost containment measures at Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality.

3. **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- 3.1 To ensure that the resource of the municipality is used effectively, efficiently and economically;
- 3.2 To implement cost containment measures.

4. **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This Policy will apply to all:

- 4.1 Councillors’; and
- 4.2 Municipal employees.

5. **LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

This policy must be read in conjunction with the -

- 5.1 The Municipal Finance Management Act, Circular 82, published on 7 December 2016;
- 5.2 Municipal Cost Containment Regulations, 2019; and
- 5.3 Travelling and subsistence policy.

6. POLICY PRINCIPLES

6.1 This Policy will apply to the procurement of the following goods and/or services:

- (i) Use of consultants
- (ii) Vehicles used for political office-bearers
- (iii) Travel and subsistence
- (iv) Domestic accommodation
- (v) Credit cards
- (vi) Sponsorships, events and catering
- (vii) Communication
- (viii) Conferences, meetings and study tours
- (ix) Any other related expenditure items

7. USE OF CONSULTANTS

7.1 Consultants may only be appointed after an assessment of the needs and requirements has been conducted to support the requirement of the use of consultants.

7.2 The assessment referred to in 7.1 must confirm that the Municipality does not have requisite skills or resources in its full time employ to perform the function that the consultant will carry out.

7.3 An accounting officer must adopt a fair and reasonable remuneration framework for consultants taking into account the rates –

- (a) determined in the "Guideline on fees for audits undertaken on behalf of the Auditor - General of South Africa ", issued by the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants;
- (b) set out in the "Guide on Hourly Fee Rates for Consultants ", issued by the Department of Public Service and Administration; or (c) as prescribed by the body regulating the profession of the consultant.

7.4 The tender documentation for the appointment of consultants must include a clause that the remuneration rates will be subject to negotiation, not exceeding the applicable rates mentioned in sub -regulation (2).

7.5 When consultants are appointed, an accounting officer must: -

Appoint consultants on a time and cost basis with specific start and end dates;

(b) Appoint consultants on an output-specified basis, subject to specific deliverables and associated remuneration;

(c) Ensure that cost ceilings are included to specify the contract price as well travel and subsistence disbursements and whether the contract price is inclusive or exclusive of travel and subsistence; and

(d) a comprehensive plan indicating the procedure to ensure the transfer of skills by consultants to the relevant officials of the municipality;

(e) All engagements with consultants should be undertaken in accordance with the municipality's supply chain management policy.

7.6 Consultancy reduction plans should be developed to reduce the reliance on consultants.

7.7 All contracts with consultants must include a retention fee or a penalty clause for poor perform.

7.8 The specifications and performance of the service provider must be used as a monitoring tool for the work that is to be undertaken and performance must be appropriately recorded and monitored.

8. VEHICLES USED FOR POLITICAL OFFICE-BEARERS

8.1 The threshold limit for vehicle purchases relating to official use by political office-bearers may not exceed seven hundred thousand rand (R700 000) or 70% of the total annual remuneration package for the different grades, whichever is greater.

8.2 The procurement of vehicles must be undertaken using the national government transversal mechanism.

8.3 If any other procurement process is used, the cost may not exceed the threshold set out in 8.1.

8.4 Before deciding on another procurement process as in 8.2, the chief financial officer must provide the council with information relating to the following criteria that must be considered:

- (i) Status of current vehicles
- (ii) Affordability
- (iii) Extent of service delivery
- (iv) Terrain for effective usage of vehicle
- (v) Any other policy of council

8.5 Regardless of their usage, vehicles for official use by public office bearers may only be replaced after completion of 120 000 kilometres.

8.6 Notwithstanding 8.5, a municipality may replace vehicles for official use by public office bearers before the completion of 120 000 kilometres only in instances where the vehicle experiences serious mechanical problems and is in a poor condition, and subject to obtaining a detailed mechanical report by the vehicle manufacturer or approved dealer.

9. VEHICLES USED BY OFFICIALS

9.1 Only Senior Managers may use their own vehicles to perform Municipal duties. No other staff member may use their own vehicle to perform Municipal duty except with written approval from their relevant Senior Managers.

9.2 All trips to be done on private vehicles must be authorised by the Municipal Manager in the case of Senior Manager and relevant Senior Manager in the case of any other staff member where a need has been identified.

9.3 No trips must be done by staff on private vehicles without prior approval by the relevant Senior Manager/Manager reporting to the Senior Manager.

9.4 All claims for travelling shall be paid in terms of the rates as prescribed by the Department of Transport and any travel claims paid in terms of AA or any other rates shall be deemed fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

10. USE OF ACCOMMODATION AND TRAINING

10.1 An accounting officer must ensure that costs incurred for domestic accommodation and meals are in accordance with the maximum allowable rates for domestic accommodation and meals as communicated from time to time by the National Treasury through a notice.

10.2 Overnight accommodation may only be booked where the return trip exceeds 500 kilometres and starts 08h30am:

- Except in the case where an event will take more than one day and an official can only check-in on the first day of the event.
- An exception will be given only to officials attending evening events that end late.

10.3 The choice of hotel accommodation shall be such that it is of acceptable value and standard. While it is not the intention of Management to use dilapidated hotels for our staff, due care must be taken that we do not use expensive accommodation that will bleed the organisation dry.

10.4 Standard rooms at Grade 3 hotels must be used and government rates must be paid for food and drinks.

10.5 Training must be done at institutions available in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and only in exceptional cases where such training is not available in KZN, can it be done outside the province and in that case only the Municipal Manager shall have authority to approve staff attendance to such training. This means that NO EMPLOYEE shall undertake training outside KZN without the approval of the Municipal Manager.

10.6 All air travel must be in Economy Class and the most affordable airline must be used. Should a need arise for anyone to travel on Business Class, such shall need the approval of the Municipal Manager.

11. TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE

11.1 An accounting officer:

- i. May only approve the purchase of economy class tickets for officials where the flying time for a flight is five (5) hours or less; and

ii. For flights that exceed five (5) hours of flying time, may purchase business class tickets *only* for accounting officers, and persons reporting directly to accounting officers.

11.2 Notwithstanding 9.1, an accounting officer may approve the purchase business class tickets for officials with disabilities.

11.3 International travel to meetings or events will only be approved if it is considered critical to attend the meeting or event, and only the officials that are directly involved with the subject matter will be allowed to attend the meeting or event.

11.4 Officials of the municipality must:

- (i) Utilize the municipal fleet, where viable, before incurring costs to hire vehicles;
- (ii) Make use of a shuttle service if the cost of such a service provider is lower than:
 - ☐ the cost of hiring a vehicle;
 - ☐ the cost of kilometres claimable by the employee; and
 - ☐ the cost of parking.
- (iii) not hire vehicles from a category higher than Group B; and
- (iv) where a different class of vehicle is required for a particular terrain or to cater for the special needs of an official, seek the written approval of the accounting officer before hiring the vehicle.

11.5 The municipality must use the negotiated rates for flights and accommodation as communicated by National Treasury, from time to time, or any other cheaper flight or accommodation that is available.

12. DOMESTIC ACCOMMODATION

12.1 An accounting officer must ensure that costs incurred for domestic accommodation and meals are in accordance with the maximum allowable rates for domestic accommodation and meals, as communicated by National Treasury, from time to time, and the travel and subsistence policy of the municipality

13. TELEPHONE, CELLPHONE AND COMPUTER USAGE

- 13.1 The Telephone Management System must be implemented fully and staff must be given pin codes. All private calls above the allowance for private calls must be to the account of the employee concerned.
- 13.2 Cell phones and 3G cards must only be issued to staff whose duties require such devices and these must be used optimally. Municipal Cell phones and 3G cards are not a right but a privilege offered to staff to perform duties assigned to them
- 13.3 The Document Management System must be used instead of hard copies in order to reduce costs associated with printing.

14. CREDIT CARDS

- 14.1 An accounting officer must ensure that no credit card or debit card linked to a bank account of the municipality is issued to any official or public office-bearer.
- 14.2 Where officials or public office bearers incur expenditure in relation to official municipal activities, such officials and public office bearers must use their personal credit cards or cash, and will request reimbursement from the municipality in terms of the travel and subsistence policy and petty cash policy.

15. SPONSORSHIPS, EVENTS & CATERING

- 15.1 The municipality may not incur catering expenses for meetings that are only attended by persons in the employ of the municipality, unless prior written approval is obtained from the Accounting Officer.
- 15.2 Catering expenses may be incurred by the accounting officer for the following, if they exceed five (5) hours:
- a. Hosting of meetings;
 - b. Conferences;
 - c. Workshops;
 - d. Courses;
 - e. Forums;
 - f. Recruitment interviews; and
 - g. Council proceedings

15.3 Entertainment allowances of officials may not exceed two thousand rand (R2 000,00) per person per financial year, unless otherwise approved by the accounting officer.

15.4 Expenses may not be incurred on alcoholic beverages.

15.5 Social functions, team building exercises, year-end functions, sporting events, budget speech dinners and other functions that have a social element must not be financed from the municipal budget or by any supplier or sponsor such as but not limited to:

- ☐ staff year-end functions
- ☐ staff wellness functions
- ☐ attendance of sporting events by municipal officials

15.6 Expenditure may not be incurred on corporate branded items like clothing or goods for personal use of officials, other than uniforms, office supplies and tools of trade, unless the costs thereto are recovered from the affected officials.

15.7 Expenditure may be incurred to host farewell functions in recognition of officials who retire after serving the municipality for ten (10) or more years, or retire on grounds of ill health, the expenditure should not exceed the limits of the petty cash usage as per the petty cash policy of the municipality.

16. CATERING, WATER

16.1 Catering must only be provided to Executive Committee, Council, Audit Committee and other meetings with outsiders that will last 5 hours or more. No catering must be provided to Staff Meetings.

16.2 Tap water must be used to drink at meetings instead of distilled water that we buy from shops. As a Municipality we shouldn't be scared and shy to drink the same water that we supply to our people. If the water is not good enough for us to drink, then it must be like that also for the community.

17. COMMUNICATION

17.1 All municipal related events must, as far as possible, be advertised on the municipal website, instead of advertising in magazines or newspapers. Advertising in newspapers must only be done when prescribed by legislation or MFMA circulars.

17.2 Publications such as internal newsletters must be designed internally and be published quarterly in an electronic media format and on the municipal website/intranet.

17.3 Newspapers and other related publications for the use of officials must be discontinued on the expiry of existing contracts or supply orders.

17.4 The acquisition of mobile communication services must be done by using the transversal term contracts that have been arranged by the National Treasury.

17.5 Allowances for officials for private calls is limited to R50,00 per official (per month)

18. CONFERENCES, MEETINGS & STUDY TOURS

18.1 Appropriate benchmark costs must be considered prior to granting approval for an official to attend a conference or event within and outside the borders of South Africa.

18.2 The benchmark costs may not exceed an amount determined by National Treasury.

18.3 When considering applications from officials to conferences or events within and outside the borders of South Africa, the accounting officer must take the following into account:

- a. The official's role and responsibilities and the anticipated benefits of the conference or event;
 - (ii) Whether the conference or event will address the relevant concerns of the municipality;
 - (iii) The appropriate number of officials to attend the conference or event, not exceeding three officials; and
 - (iv) Availability of funds to meet expenses related to the conference or event.

18.4 The amount referred to in 14.2 above excludes costs related to travel, accommodation and related expenses, but includes:

- (i) Conference or event registration expenses; and
- (ii) Any other expense incurred in relation to the conference or event.

18.5 When considering the cost for conferences or events the following items must be excluded, laptops, tablets and other similar tokens that are built into the price of such conferences or events.

18.6 Meetings and planning sessions that entail the use of municipal funds must, as far as practically possible, be held in-house.

18.7 Municipal offices and facilities must be utilized for conferences, meetings and strategic planning sessions where an appropriate venue exists within the municipal jurisdiction.

18.8 The municipality must take advantage of early registration discounts by granting the required approvals to attend the conference, event or study tour, in advance.

19. OTHER RELATED EXPENDITURE ITEMS

19.1 All commodities, services and products covered by a transversal contract by the National Treasury must be procured through that transversal contract before approaching the market, in order to benefit from savings and lower prices or rates that have already been negotiated.

19.2 Municipal resources may not be used to fund elections, campaign activities, including the provision of food, clothing and other inducements as part of, or during the election periods.

20. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

20.1 Failure to implement or comply with this policy may result in any official of the municipality or political office bearer that has authorized or incurred any expenditure contrary to those stipulated herein being held liable for financial misconduct as set out in Chapter 15 of the MFMA.

21. DISCLOSURES OF COST CONTAINMENT MEASURES

21.1 Cost containment measures applied by the municipality must be included in the municipal in-year budget report and annual cost savings must be disclosed in the annual report.

21.2 The measures implemented and aggregate amounts saved per quarter, together with the regular reports on reprioritization of cost savings, on the implementation of the cost containment measures must be submitted to the municipal council for review and resolution. The municipal council can refer such reports to an appropriate council committee for further recommendations and actions.

21.3 Such reports must be copied to the National Treasury and relevant provincial treasuries within seven calendar days after the report is submitted to municipal council.

22. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW PROCESS

- 22.1 This policy will be reviewed at least annually or when required by way of a council resolution, or when an update is issued by National Treasury.

23. CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ADHERENCE TO THE COST CONTAINMENT MEASURES

- 23.1 Any person must report an allegation of non-compliance to the cost containment policy to the accounting officer of the municipality.
- 23.2 The accounting officer must investigate the allegations and if frivolous, speculative or unfounded, terminate the investigations.
- 23.3 If the accounting officer determines the allegations are founded, a full investigation must be conducted by the disciplinary board.
- 23.4 After completion of a full investigation, the disciplinary board must compile a report on the investigations and submit a report to the accounting officer on:
- ☐ Findings and recommendations; and/or
 - ☐ Whether disciplinary steps should be taken against the alleged transgressor.
- 23.5 The accounting officer must table the report with recommendations to the Municipal council.
- 23.6 Subject to the outcome of the council decision the accounting officer must implement the recommendations.

24. OVERTIME

- 24.1 All requests for any staff to work overtime must be approved by the Municipal Manager before the work is undertaken.
- 24.2 All overtime claims where the application does not have the **APPROVED/ STAMP** of the Municipal Manager or any form of proof of authorisation must not be paid.

25. SHORT TITLE

The success of NDZ LM is entirely dependent on its ability to meet its service delivery obligations over a long term. Management will always be vigilant not to conduct the affairs of the Municipality in a way that will bankrupt us in the future. In that we need the support of Council, staff and the community. Prudent, honesty transparent financial management and good governance are a cornerstone of Developmental Local Government as envisioned in the Constitution, 1996, the White Paper on Local Government, the MFMA and the Systems Act. This policy shall be called the Cost Containment Policy of the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Local Municipality.

26. COMMENCEMENT

This Policy shall come into effect upon approval by Council of Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality

27. COUNCIL APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy has been considered and approved by **Council of Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Municipality** as follows:

Resolution No:

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2024

MUNICIPAL MANAGER
MR NC. VEZI

DATE