

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**



**DIRECTIVES ON THE USAGE OF
DEPARTMENTAL PROPERTY AND
RESOURCES WITH REGARDS TO
FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES**

"The general public trusts public servants with the assets, property and funds of the State, expecting employees to handle these in a responsible and honest manner"

Extract from the Public Service Commission's Explanatory Manual on the Code of Conduct for the Public Service.

1. PURPOSE

This document provides directives on the use of Departmental Property and Resources to attend, arrange and fund funerals and memorial services.

2. BACKGROUND

The Accounting Officer has been inundated with requests from officials to utilise Government Motor Transport (GMT) to attend the memorial services and funerals of family members and colleagues within the province and outside of the parameters of the Western Cape. Furthermore, there have also been requests for financial assistance in arranging memorial services and funerals. Due to the irregular nature of these requests, a need has been identified to regulate this practice.

Although the department is under no obligation to grant assistance with regard to funerals and memorial services, a decision was taken to issue these directives in order to provide support in a reasonable manner.

These directives intend to achieve the following:

1. Support the caring and compassionate ethos of the organisation,
2. Standardise the control measures to manage expenditure.

3. SCOPE

These directives are applicable to all **officials** in the department (said officials defined as a person in the employ of the department)

4. APPLICABLE PRESCRIPTS

These directives are informed by the following:

- The Constitution of RSA, 1996
- The Public Service Act, 1994(as amended)
- The Public Finance Management Act, 1999
- The Public Service Regulations, 2001
- National Treasury Regulations
- Provincial Basic Guidelines for Professional Conduct in the Work Place
- Public Service Commission's Explanatory Manual on the Code of Conduct for the Public Service

5. PRINCIPLES

Departmental assistance for funerals and memorial services is viewed as a compassionate concession on the part of the employer and not a right of any official. In making this concession the department applies the following principles:

- Nurturing a culture of self-reliance and enacting the departmental vision of a self-reliant society;
- Promoting the value of accountability and transparency in the department;
- Encouraging indigenous knowledge systems such as *ubuntu* within the department.

6. DIRECTIVES

These directives are applicable to departmental property and resources, which the Accounting Officer *may* consider to be used for funeral and memorial services.

6.1 TRANSPORT

6.1.1 GOVERNMENT MOTOR TRANSPORT (GMT)

The Accounting Officer *may* consider the utilisation of Government Motor Transport for special use if:

- The funeral or memorial service is in honour of an official who was *in the service of the department* at the time of her / his passing on;
- The usage does not contravene any applicable legislation and policy; and is not linked to illegal activities.
- Line managers/supervisors are aware of the intended usage and have established the legitimacy, cost-implications and the potential risk attached to the request.
- The usage is not for the purpose of conducting an outside business or private employment.
- The usage will in no manner compromise the operations, security or integrity of the department.
- Officials ensure that the usage does not give the impression of acting in an official capacity while using the Government Motor Transport for personal purposes.
- Only *one* Government Motor Transport vehicle is used to attend the funeral or memorial service of an official.

6.1.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT (TRAIN, BUS, AIRPLANE)

The Accounting Officer *may* consider the utilisation of Public Transport for special use if:

- The funeral or memorial service is in honour of an official who was *in the service of the department* at the time of her / his passing on;

- The use of public transport will be more feasible than that of Government Motor Transport in terms of the cost of the transport, the time spent arranging and traveling and the availability of GMT.

6.2 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Departmental funds will not be used for any funeral costs whatsoever. However, the Accounting Officer *may* consider the utilisation of departmental funds for an internal memorial service on the following conditions:

- The memorial service is in honour of an official who was *in the service of the department* at the time of her / his passing on;
- The venue of the memorial service has no financial implications for the department or is held at the building where the departed official was stationed.
- Only *reasonable* costs related to the following items and quantities are realised to the department.

ITEMS	QUANTITY
Bouquet	2
Memorial Programme	50

6.3 SUBSISTENCE AND TRAVEL ALLOWANCES (INCLUDING ACCOMMODATION) TO ATTEND FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

Subsistence and Travel Allowances, including accommodation and incidental costs *will not* be incurred to the department as attendance at funerals and memorial services are viewed as a compassionate concession.

6.4 HUMAN RESOURCES

6.4.1 A departmental delegation consisting of officials *may* attend the funeral or memorial service during normal working hours if:

- The funeral or memorial service is in honour of an official who was *in the service of the department* at the time of her / his passing on;
- Priority is given to operational requirements and care is taken that there is no negative impact on service delivery.
- Managers nominate officials whom have formed a relationship with the departed official.
- The attendance does not contravene the directives on Government Motor Transport as stated above.

6.4.2 Officials of the department *may* arrange a memorial service if:

- The memorial service is in honour of an official who was *in the service of the department* at the time of her / his passing on;
- The preparations and/or arrangements do not result in loss of productivity or interfere with an official's duties or the duties of other officials.

- The memorial service is arranged to be no longer than one hour in duration. It is further preferred that the service be conducted in such a manner that it incorporates lunchtime.

7. PROCEDURE

7.1 When officials decide to attend a funeral or a memorial service, applications should take the form of a submission as per finance instruction no. SS/9/2006 containing the following information:

- The intended usage of the GMT request (if any);
- The confirmed legitimacy of the request;
- The potential risk attached to the request;
- The number of GMT vehicles that will be used;
- The number of staff in the unit and those that will be attending the funeral service;
- The estimated duration of journey, that is, departure time and arrival time;
- The cost implications to the Department.

7.2 Approval will be granted in terms of the departmental financial delegations.

8. GENERAL

8.1 Resources that the department provides for further assistance, if needed, are:

- An Employee Assistance Programme
- Family responsibility Leave

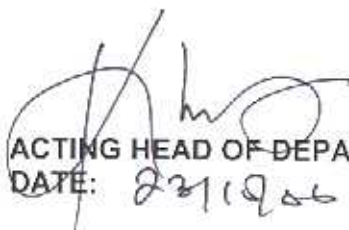
The Directorate: Human Resource Management should be contacted for further information in this regard.

8.2 Officials are at liberty to utilize their vacation leave for purposes of attending funerals in their private capacity.

8.3 The department also encourages officials to display their sympathy for an official in need by making voluntary contributions.

9. CONCLUSION

It is envisaged that adherence to these directives will regulate expenditure, decrease lost working hours and improve service delivery.


ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
DATE: 23/1/06