NDWEDWE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

APPROVED INDIGENT POLICY 2025/2026

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1. PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the municipality receives an equitable share contribution from National Treasury annually.

WHEREAS Council therefore needs to approve the Indigent Support Policy.

WHEREAS such policy must provide procedures and guidelines for the subsidisation of basic services and tariff charges to its indigent households; and

WHEREAS the Council has committed itself to render a basic level of services necessary to ensure an acceptable and reasonable quality of life, which considers health and environmental considerations.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the municipality has adopted the **Indigent Support Policy** set out hereunder:

And whereas the National Department of Provincial and Local Government has issued guidelines regarding indigent support.

And whereas the municipal council wishes to give access to basic services for all its communities.

Now therefore the municipal council Ndwedwe municipality adopts the Indigent Policy.

2. INTRODUCTION

In terms of Section 74 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act 2000, a Municipal Council must adopt and implement a Tariff Policy. In terms of Section 74(i) of the Act in adopting a Tariff Policy, the Council should at least take into consideration the extent of subsidization of tariffs for poor households. Arising from above, Council needs to approve an Indigent Support Policy. This policy must provide procedures and guidelines for the subsidization of basic services and tariff charges to its indigent households. The Council accepts that they are responsible for the rendering of services in terms of Schedules 4 and 5 of the Constitution as well as other services which may be delegated by National and Provincial Government. The municipality will endeavour to render a basic level of life, a

which considers health and environmental consideration. None of the residents should fall below the minimum level of services.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this Indigent Policy, unless the context otherwise indicates, a word of expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act.

No 56 of 2003 and other related legislations / Regulations, has the same meaning as in that Act.

"Act" means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), as amended from time to time.

"Council" means the established committee made of the Councillors of the municipality.

"Municipality" refers herein, the Ndwedwe Local Municipality.

"Indigent" means any person / any household including child headed households who is lacking financial affordability to pay for necessities of life such as sufficient refuse removal, basic electricity, health care, housing, food, and clothing.

"Indigent households" are households that are registered with the municipalities as such and meet the criteria of the indigent policy and occupying / owning a property within the jurisdiction of the municipalities.

"Income" it is the amount of money or its equivalent received during a period of time in exchange for labour and or services rendered, from the sale of goods or property, or as profit from financial investments or any earned or unearned income which is taxable in terms of the SARS provision

"Free basic services" Free basic service is defined as the minimum amounts of basic levels of services, provided on a day-to-day basis, sufficient to cover or cater for the basic needs of the poor households

"Social pension" (Old age grant): Is a monthly income provided by South African Social Security Agency to older people (age 60 and above)

"Child support grant" It is the money paid to the primary care giver, who must be 16 years or older and be a South African citizen or permanent resident of a child to provide for the child's basic needs.

"Household" means a traditional family unit consisting of a combination of persons.

"Child headed household" A household headed by a person under the age of 21 years but with all other requirements for an indigent household as stated in this policy.

"Dependants" that person or people or people living together that are relying on a sole person for financial support.

"Resident" Registered person living in the municipal area of jurisdiction on a long-term basis.

"Indigent register" the municipality's list of indigent customers as per the municipal policy, which has to be updated on a monthly basis, designed to contain all the data completed in the indigent application forms which contain the following:

i. Indigent customer details.

ii. Socio – economic details.

"Indigent Management System" an electronic management system applied by the municipality for the smooth and efficient management of the register of indigent households.

"Occupier" means the person who controls and resides on or otherwise uses immovable property.

"Owner" in relation to immovable property means:

(i) The person in whom is vested the legal title thereto provided that:

(a) The occupier of immovable property in terms of a service or right analogous thereto shall be deemed the owner thereof.

(ii) If the owner is deceased, then the person in whom the administration of such property is vested as executor, administrator as the case may be.

"Premises" includes any piece of land, the external surface boundaries of which are delineated on

- A general plan or diagram registered in terms of the Land Survey Act, or in terms of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937.

- A general plan registered in terms of the Sectional Titles Act, 1986 and situated within the jurisdiction of the municipality.

"Indigent burial / cremation" refers to any burial/cremation of an indigent (in terms of this policy), motivated by a ward councillor, excluding pauper.

"**pauper**": bears the same meaning as an indigent person.

"**next of kin**": in relation to a deceased person whose human remains are to be buried or cremated

"**community**": refers to people residing within the municipal area of jurisdiction.

"**cemetery**": means any place:

- Where human remains are buried in an orderly, systematic, and pre-planned manner in identifiable burial plots.
- Which is intended to be permanently set aside for and used only for the purposes of the burial of human remains?

"**councillor**" : in terms of the Municipal Systems Act No: 32 of 2000, a member of the political structure or committee or collective structure of a municipality elected, designated or appointed in accordance with the above legislation.

"**traditional authority**": refers to Inkosi or Induna who participates in the local affairs of the traditional council.

"**valid service provider**": means a recognized funeral undertaker who resides within the iLembe municipality with a valid compliance certificate and in good payment terms with municipality and other government affiliates.

"application for indigent" means a process whereby the resident in charge of a household, and who is responsible for payment of municipal charges and also whose combined household income is equal to or less than the amount as determined by the Council to qualify for indigent status, makes an application to the Council and is accepted to be classified as an indigent.

"**Indigent Support**" the means by which concession is afforded to qualify people in terms of elevating poverty.

"**Verification**" The process which will be conducted to determine accuracy.

"**Civil pension**" is regarded as income that is taxable in terms of SARS

"**MPRA**" Municipal Property Rates Act

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This policy is designed and implemented within the context, but not limited to other prescripts:

1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

1.2 The Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003).

1.3 The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No.3 of 2000).

1.4 The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No.2 of 2000).

1.5 The Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No.6 of 2004).

1.6 The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2003).

1.7 The Municipal Structures Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2003).

1.8 The Free Basic Water Implementation Guideline for Local Authorities 2002.

1.9 The Free Basic Water Implementation Strategy 2007; Consolidating and maintaining.

1.10 The National Policy for the Provision of Basic Refuse Removal Services to Indigent Households 2011.

1.11 The Local Government Equitable Share Municipal Demonstration Spread sheet for 5 years (2013/14 to 2017/18)

1.12 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)

1.13 Health Act, 1977 (Act No. 63 of 1977)

1.14 National Health Act, 2003 (Act No. 61 of 2003)

1.15 KwaZulu-Natal Cemeteries and Crematoria Act, 2006 (Act No. 12of 1996)

1.16 Section 20 of Health Act, 1977: Local Authorities (Assumption that local municipalities are still responsible for primary and municipal health services)

1.17 Section 48 of Health Act, 1977: Removal and burial of dead bodies (local municipalities' responsibility, hence promulgation of KwaZulu-Natal Cemeteries and Crematoria Act)

5. OBJETIVE OF THE POLICY

The objective of this policy is to guide the Council and municipal officials in ensuring that poor households have access to basic services in a sustainable manner. The policy aims to achieve this objective by providing guidelines on.

i. The criteria for qualification as indigent or Pauper Burial

ii. Procedures to recover arrears on municipal debt.

iii. Mechanisms for providing subsidy where conventional municipal services are not available.

iv. Registration as indigent

v. Exit strategy for indigents.

6. QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR INDIGENT SUPPORT

6.1 The applicant must be a resident of the municipality and may not conduct any commercial or industrial activity from the property.

6.2 Indigent support shall apply to households per dwelling and not individuals – where an individual is renting an affidavit by the owner is required.

6.3 The property must be zoned as residential.

6.4 Households wherein the verified total gross of monthly income of all occupants over 18 years of age shall not exceed **R 5020.00** as the threshold determined by Council on an annual basis and, as and when the policy is reviewed. **This amount has been determined based on a municipal pre-determined combination of two monthly old-aged grants (R2080.00) + Social Relief of Distress Grant (R350.00) + Child Support Grant (R510.00)**

6.5 Child headed households are automatically considered indigent unless proven otherwise.

6.6 The applicant as well as any other member of the household may not own any other fixed property, whether in or out of the municipal area other than the one on which they reside.

6.7 For a household to qualify for subsidies or rebates on the major service charges, the following will apply: -

6.7.1 Household / occupants / residential dependents who do not own more than one property in SA

6.7.1 May be equipped with pre-paid meter, the conversion shall be done free of charge or alternatively council shall adopt a special tariff for conventional meters. Only property owners who live in the premises shall qualify for subsidies and / rebates.

6.8 For a household to qualify for **indigent persons burial or cremation** the following circumstances must be met:

6.8.1 The deceased shall be a South African citizen and resident within the municipal area of jurisdiction [if need be, the voter's roll may be used for positive verification].

6.8.2 The deceased did not have an income greater than the state old age pension or state disability pension.

6.8.3 The deceased did not have an insurance policy or estate which could be used to pay for the burial.

6.8.4 No next of kin or relative with a legal duty to support the deceased, and with sufficient means, is able to pay for the burial or cremation costs of the deceased person.

6.8.5 No other person, religious organisation, NGO or welfare organisation has offered to pay for the burial or cremation costs of the deceased person.

6.8.6 The deceased in a South African residing in Ndwedwe Local Municipality.

6.8.7 In the event of the death of a member of a registered indigent household, such application must be accompanied by the following documentation.

i. Certified copy of the death certificate
ii. The deceased's identity document or birth certificate
iii. Burial order
iv. An affidavit made at the South African Police Service regarding the relationship of the applicant declaring that they cannot afford to bury or cremate the deceased due to lack of income.
v. The applicant's identity document.

6.8.8 The process to be initiated by the next-of-kin of the deceased if the deceased is an indigent by informing the ward councillor.

6.8.9 The ward councillor shall investigate the authenticity of the claim once he/she is satisfied that the deceased qualifies, he/she may then apply for assistance.

6.8.10 In exceptional instances the Speaker [in the absence of ward councillor], shall write a letter declaring the indigent status of the deceased and most of all fill in the pauper/indigent burial form (in triplicate) which shall be accompanied by supporting documents such as the death certificate, burial permit or affidavit from local SAPS officer. See the attached Form on the last page of the policy.

6.8.11 All requests for indigent burials must be referred and considered by the Director Community and Social Services, of Ndwedwe Local Municipality.

6.8.12 The Director Community and Social Services must ensure that all the above-mentioned procedures and requirements are met before an order could be placed at the funeral undertaker appointed by the municipality to bury a deceased person as indigent person.

6.8.13 In the event that the deceased dies outside of Ndwedwe it is the onus of the next of-kin to transport the body to the area within which the scope of this policy shall be applicable.

6.9 To qualify for a **pauper persons burial or cremation** the following circumstances must be met:

6.9.1 The deceased is found within the proclaimed boundaries of the Ndwedwe Municipality area of Jurisdiction.

6.9.2 The deceased has no next-of-kin or relatives that can be traced by the SAPS Officers. The SAPS must issue an affidavit to the effect that the exercise to trace the deceased's next-of-kin has been abortive, in which case police should then endorse the deceased as pauper.

6.9.3 Should the next- of- kin or members of the extended family be not found, the municipality shall carry the burden.

6.9.4 In instances where the South African Police Services are not involved, a written statement has to be received from the welfare organization stating that the deceased was indeed indigent. An affidavit, a copy of the birth certificate or deceased's Home Affairs endorsed identity document and death certificate must be shown as concrete proof.

6.9.5 In the event of a death of a pauper person, such application must be accompanied by the following documentation.

(i) Case Number

(ii) Affidavit making an application for a pauper burial must make a declaration to that effect.

(iii) A certified copy of the Identity Document of the deceased, where possible.

(iv) Details of the deceased (where found, date, time and action taken to trace the relatives, when admitted to State Mortuary).

(v) A death certificate must be submitted, stating the cause of death, and signed by a Medical Officer.

(vi) A written statement by the South African Police Services must be submitted, stating the there is no objection to the burial of the body.

6.9.6 The process for the pauper burial application is as follows;

(i) Submission of a written application to Ndwedwe Local Municipality.

(ii) Submission of the necessary documents by the relevant authorities and parties.

(iii) Final assessment and approval.

6.10 *Nota Bene:* Outsourcing the indigent or pauper burial function – the municipality to enter into a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with a qualified funeral service provider or a sister municipality that has the capacity, on an annual basis.

6.10.1 In the event that the municipality appoints a funeral service provider certain rules and specifications (as laid down by Ndwedwe Local Municipality have to be adhered to. The undertaker must supply the coffin with the following:

(i) Permanently fixed name plates.

(ii) Timber to be free from defects, i.e. the visible surface of coffins shall be free from splinters and all cavities are to be acceptably filled loose and decayed knots shall be allowed provided that loose knots are glued in position or drilled out and plugged.

(iii) The interior of the coffin to be lined with a white plastic material that forms a complete lining.

(iv) The thickness of composite and chipboard shall be for coffins of length 900 mm and more and be at least 20 mm and less than 900 mm, be at least 16mm.

(v) The lids shall be free from excess machine marks, tear outs and shall have an acceptable finish with at least a coat of paint colour shall be specified by the supplier.

(vi)

6.10.2 In the interest of cost-effective measures to safeguarding the control of public funds, Municipality may, if it deems it necessary, outsource the pauper's burial function to Council approved funeral service provider/s within the radius of 40 km of the municipal area of jurisdiction.

6.10.3 It is to be noted that only valid service providers listed in the municipality's database shall be allowed to execute any burial for Municipality subject to, prior approval by relevant official.

6.10.4 The undertaker shall:

(i) Provide necessary documentation.

(ii) Obtain permit to enter the cemetery site.

(iii) Supply of coffins as specified.

(iv) Collection of the corpse from the South African Police Service or mortuary.

(v) Transport the corpse to the gravesite and bury it.

6.10.5 The service provider contracted to the Municipality shall be paid an amount of, herein determined by the Council, R3500 which has an escalation rate of 10% over a period of 3 years. (Finance Department to give proper financial guidance and taking into cognisance the annual increases in commodity prices). Hence for the Financial Years 2023/2024, 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 an amount of R 3850.00 shall be paid to the service provider.

7. MUNICIPAL SPECIAL FUNERALS

7.1 Whenever there are fatalities of 2 or more people within the same household due to unnatural circumstances such as through Motor Vehicle Incidents (MVA's), lightning strike, mass shootings, the Municipality with the discretion of the Executive Committee shall declare a municipal special funeral.

7.2 An amount of R 8000.00 will be dedicated to each member of the bereaved family that appears as indigent on the municipal indigent register.

7.3 In the case where such a tragic accident involved members from different families, a mass funeral sermon will be held in one venue and families will be at liberty to bury their loved ones in their places of residence.

7.4 A special size of a coffin for weight and length of the deceased should also be taken into consideration although it is not deemed as a special funeral.

8. REGISTRATION AS INDIGENT

8.1 Only those residents who comply with the qualifications set out in the policy may apply for registration as indigents.

8.2 In order to register as an indigent, the relevant property owner or account holder must:

8.2.1 Personally complete and sign the prescribed registration form provided by the municipality for this purpose.

8.2.2 Furnish such further documentation as the municipality specifies.

8.3 Each application form for indigent must be accompanied by certified copies of the following documents:

i. Proof of income, or if you are unemployed, an affidavit to that effect
ii. Identity document and those of your spouse and your dependants
iii. Latest municipal account and prepaid meter number
iv. Birth certificates of your children and proof of their school attendance

8.4 Persons may apply for registration as indigents in respect of any financial year at any time in the preceding financial year up to three months before the adoption of the budget. Applications made thereafter will not be considered.

8.5 Indigence relief shall apply for a period not extending beyond the financial year for which the particular household is registered as indigent. Registration must be renewed for each financial year if relief is to continue in such year.

8.6 The onus shall also be on the account holder to notify the council of any change in circumstances, and, if so required by the Council, to submit proof of such change.

9. ASSESSMENT AND SCREENING OF APPLICATIONS

9.1 Upon receipt of an application, all information will be captured and verified by the Ward Councillor.

9.2 The Ward Councillor will then make a recommendation on whether the application should be approved or declined.

9.3 The application form with supporting documentation will then be submitted to the municipality's indigent office for further verification and final approval.

9.4 Once the form has been captured on the municipal indigent database and verification has been completed, the Indigent Management System will generate a recommendation based on the information captured on the database and shall be dealt with in terms of this policy.

9.5 The appeal must be in writing and lodged with Municipal Manager within 14 days after receipt of the notification setting out:

9.5.1 The reason for the appeal

9.5.2 Any other documentary proof in support of the appeal

9.6 The appeal shall be decided:

9.6.1 within 21 days after lodgement of the appeal

9.6.2 Strictly in terms of the provisions of this policy

9.6.3 By three officials designated by the Municipal Manager

10. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIGENT REGISTER

10.1 The Chief Financial Officer will be responsible to compile and administer the database for households registered in terms of this policy.

10.2 All approved applications will be captured in the computer where after an indigent register is produced.

10.3. The indigent register must be approved by Council before implementation.

10.4 The indigent register must contain the total number of applicants, accepted applications as well as rejected applications with reasons.

10.5 The Indigent register after approval will be distributed to all the Municipal pay-points for public perusal.

10.6 The indigent register must be updated on a monthly basis immediately after changes of the indigent status or circumstances are identified.

11. EXTENT OF INDIGENT SUPPORT

11.1 The subsidies on specified services will be determined as part of the annual budget and in terms of the municipality's policies and tariff.

11.2 The funding of the indigent support shall be sourced from the equitable share contribution as provided for in the budget. As such, the subsidy can only be credited to the qualifying customer's accounts until the budget allocation is exhausted. Whereupon no further credits will be granted until further national funds are received. Notwithstanding the above, if there is a budget surplus, the Council shall set aside funds from own revenue sources for the purposes of augmenting any shortfall in funding received from the National fiscus, the Council will bridge fund the payment of the indigent support until the Council receives its allocation from the National fiscus, but only to the extent that confirmed funding is granted.

11.3 **Electricity**

(i) Eskom shall, on behalf of the Municipality, provide FBE through it prepaid and conventional meters to Eligible Customers falling within the municipal boundaries of the Municipality. The Municipality will have an option to renew and submit its indigent list four times a year or quarterly.

(ii) Eskom shall supply Eligible Customers who have prepaid meters with tokens and shall provide Eligible Customers who have conventional meters with an allocation on a targeted basis as provided in the FBE policy or as agreed between the Municipality and Eskom. Municipal requests for customized FBE system configurations will not be entertained due to their high costs and resource implications.

(iii) Eskom shall provide 50kWh of electricity to Eligible Customers and shall charge the Municipality for the FBE based on the recommended National Tariff (NERSA) from time to time.

(iv) Eskom shall furnish the Municipality with monthly Tax Invoices detailing the FBE units issued, and the total amount owed by the Municipality to Eskom.

(i) All registered indigents will receive a 100% subsidy of 50kWh per household per month as determined by Council will apply.

(ii) Unused free electricity will not be carried over to the next month. In the event of the electricity supplied by ESKOM directly, the Municipality will pay over an amount to ESKOM equal to 50 kWh of electricity per month based on the customers registered with the municipalities as indigent.

11.4 **Refuse removal**

(i) All registered indigent customers will receive a 100% refuse rebate per month. The tariff applicable will be the tariff for indigent customers as per the tariff of charges as approved Council annually.

(ii) The subsidy shall not be more than the applicable tariff for that year and will be applied for the duration of that particular financial year.

(iii) The subsidy shall form part of the tariff policy applicable for the financial year

11.5 **Property rates**

(i) All registered indigents shall be fully subsidized for the payment of property rates provided for by Council in the annual budget from time to time and subject to the provisions of the MPRA.

(ii) The subsidy shall not be more than the applicable tariff for that year and will be applied for the duration of that particular financial year.

11.6 **Burial**

(i) Any member of a family of a registered indigent can apply for indigent burial assistance.

(ii) The funding of the indigent or pauper support shall be sourced from the equitable share contribution as provided for in the budget.

(iii) Council will on an annual basis review the beginning of every financial year the amount to be set aside to be applied for the duration of that particular financial year towards this policy.

11.9 Any service rendered without prior investigation and/or approval and with no supporting document and signing of form, will not be paid for.

12. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INDIGENT HOUSEHOLD

12.1 The registered indigent must accept technical assistance offered by the municipalities to make his or her current monthly consumption of services more affordable through limiting those services.

12.2 The applicant must accept the limited level of services and stay in the programme for at least 24 months unless assessed and approved for voluntary exit.

12.3 The registered indigent must always ensure that his or her monthly consumption does not exceed the limited level of services in terms of the indigent support.

12.4 The indigent must annually confirm his or her status as an indigent.

12.5 Participation in economic development activities initiated by the municipalities is compulsory for registered indigents.

12.6 If the municipality offers a device to control consumption and the registered indigent refuses to accept it, the suspended debt will be re-instated, and the household will be deregistered.

12.7 The registered household has a responsibility to report any tempering of or vandalism to the device to the SAPS. If the tampering or vandalism is not reported the beneficiary will be held responsible.

13. ARREARS ON INDIGENT ACCOUNTS

13.1 Customers who qualify for indigent support and who are in arrears may be placed on the pre-paid metering system at council discretion.

13.2 The arrears on the accounts of households, approved as indigent, will be submitted to Council for consideration to be written off in full (including any interest charged). This submission will only be valid as a once-off exercise after approval and will not be applicable for future consumption in excess of the approved subsidy accumulated.

13.3 Once an application for indigent support has been approved, all arrears on the consumer account will be written off.

13.4 The non-payment and arrangement as referred to above will be as determined in terms of Council's Credit Control and Debt Collection policy.

14 NON-COMPLIANCE OF HOUSEHOLDS REGISTERED AS INDIGENT

14.1 When a property owner or accountholder who has registered as an indigent fails to comply with any arrangements or conditions that are materially relevant to the receipt of indigence relief, or if such person ceases to qualify for indigent relief such person will forfeit his or her status as a registered indigent with immediate effect, and will thereafter be treated as an ordinary residential property owner or accountholder for the financial year concerned.

14.2 The onus is on each registered indigent to advise the Municipal Manager if such person ceases to qualify for indigent relief.

14.3 It may happen that even with the introduction of the indigent policy, certain households may fall into arrears in respect of the amounts due by them. The property owner or accountholder concerned will have to make immediate arrangements with the Municipal Manager to pay off these arrears owing within a reasonable time determined by the Municipal Manager in terms of the Municipality's credit control and debt collection policy. If these arrangements are not made, no subsidies will be paid or free services provided, and services may be terminated in terms of the Municipality's credit control and debt collection policy.

14.4 The relief granted to any indigent person in terms of this policy may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Municipal Manager if such person fails to observe the terms of this policy.

14.5 If a registered indigent person is found to have provided fraudulent information to the Municipality in regard to any material condition for registration as an indigent, such person:

i) Shall immediately be removed from the register of indigents.

ii) Shall cease to receive any benefit under this policy.

iii) Shall be liable to repay to the Municipality with immediate effect all indigence relief received from the date of such fraudulent registration. Normal credit control in accordance with the Municipality's credit control policy will apply.

iv) Shall not be considered for indigent relief for a period extending for two years beyond the financial year in which the misconduct is detected, and

v) Shall be subject to a criminal charge of fraud against the recipient.

14.6 The municipality reserves the right to investigate all indigent registered households who use water in the excess of 10 KL on a monthly basis. In the event that the investigation is conducted, and it is evident that a consumer does not qualify for indigent support, the municipality has a right to withdraw and apply the credit control policy.

15 TERMINATION OF INDIGENT SUPPORT

15.1 Upon death of the accountholder or the head of the household where no accounts are rendered. If the indigent had dependents, the dependents would need to re-apply for the support as subsidies are not transferable.

15.2 At the end of the 24 months cycle, except in the case of pensioners and disabled.

15.3 Upon sale of the property in respect of which support is granted.

15.4 When circumstances in the indigent household have improved to the extent where the income threshold as determined is exceeded.

15.5 If the applicant is found to have lied about his/her personal circumstances or has furnished false information regarding indigent status, in which case the following will apply;

a) All arrears will become payable immediately.

b) Stringent credit control measures will apply.

c) The applicant will not be eligible to apply for indigent support for a period of 2 years

15.6 If the indigent criteria for approval changes to the extent that approval no longer applies, as Council has the discretion to review the policy from time to time.

16 COMMUNICATION PROCESS

16.1 The municipality has to develop a communication and implementation strategy in terms of which communities will be informed and educated in order to have a clear understanding of this policy and implementation thereof.

16.2 The communication activities that a municipality must undertake are not only to allow the municipality to communicate with its constituency, but also to allow the constituency to communicate back to the municipality.

16.3 The municipality must communicate the following:

(i) What is the municipality trying to achieve with regards to the indigent policy.

(ii) How will the municipality be going about implementing the indigent policy.

(iii) What is the value for indigent and non-indigent households.

(iv) Who qualifies for the service and how the municipality has determined this.

(v) How should qualifying household access the services.

16.4 How should this be communicated.

(i) Municipalities are responsible for implementing processes of community consultation which supports planning and evaluation. A variety of means can be used to ensure effective consultation with the community; these include ward committees, public forums, and campaigns. These activities are carried out by municipal appointees.

(ii) Through their community consultation, municipal appointees are a key link between the municipality, community, and other organizations (service providers, non-profit agencies and private sector companies) concerned with issues affecting FBS provision.

16.5 Regular information dissemination and awareness campaigns must be undertaken to eliminate unrealistic expectations; both in terms of qualifying for the free basic services subsidy as well as the services that will be rendered in general, and methods of communication that will be used, but not be limited to.

(i) Ward committees

(ii) Municipal meeting

(iii) Loud hailing

(iv) Community based organisations

(v) Local radio stations and newspapers

(vi) Municipal accounts

(vii) Izimbizo's and road shows

(viii) Municipal notice boards

17 INSTITUTIONAL ARRAMGEMENTS

17.1 The municipality must have formal structures and processes through which indigent policy will be managed.

17.2 The following major actors must be involved in the institutional arrangement for the implementation of the policy;

(i) The municipal council will need to commit to providing Members of Free Basic Services Task Team and will need to sign-off on the developed indigent policy.

(ii) The FBS Task team should comprise specialists (from within a municipality or drawn from outside a municipality to act on behalf of the municipality) that will develop the municipality's indigent policy. The team should comprise of:

- Chairperson of Finance – To make sure that the meeting of FBSTT takes place for verification.
- Chairperson of Infrastructure
- Chairperson of Community
- All Councillors - will ensure that the Indigent household registered
- Office of the speaker – To assist the chairperson of Free Basic Services Task Team with invitation to Councillors
- CFO - will ensure that the indigent policy is being developed and the associated plans fall within the municipality's financial capacity, and that the plans and policy are integrated with the municipality's own financial planning and processes.
- Technical Director – To address all queries relating to department
- Community Director – To reduce levels of poverty through any intake in municipality and also to address all queries relating to department
- IDP Manager - Manager will need to be involved in the process so that the indigent policy is in line with a municipality's IDP.
- Office of the Speaker
- LED Manager – To reduce poverty through learnerships, internship or any other intake by considering Indigent Register.
- Communication Officer – Communicate with community.
- FBS Manager /Official - Will ensure that indigent's forms are captured.
- Community Development Workers - They are actively involved in the community and have sense of who in the community qualifies with the municipality's indigent definition.

- Ward Committee Members - need to be involved to support the community participation and buy-in of the municipality's indigent policy and verification of indigent application forms.

17 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

17.1 The Chief Financial Officer will report monthly to the Municipal Manager via the municipality's Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan to enable the Municipal Manager to report to Council and other interested parties such report shall reflect on:

(i) Number of indigent household's applications received.

(ii) Amount of subsidy allocated per benefit category.

(iii) Amount of debt accumulating and debt recovery information (number of customers, enquiries, default arrangements, growth or diminishing of arrears debtors; ideally divided into wards, domestic, state institutions and other such divisions.

(iv) Performance against targets set in respect of indigent support and poverty relief and in particular with regard to the following:

- Number of applications for indigent support dealt with
- Time taken to process and finalise applications
- Site visits undertaken
- Awareness initiatives
- Changes in the registered status of indigents
- Exit initiatives

18 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

18.1 The Municipality need to be in a position to assess whether the service implemented is appropriate, functioning adequately and directed at the correct people. It is important that municipalities are able to ascertain the following from monitoring and tracking of the service delivery:

(i) Who is receiving the service?

(ii) Is the service offered at the appropriate service level, in view of the environment, financial aspects and the social habits of the community?

(iii) Is the service operating adequately?

(iv) Is the community making adequate use of the service?

(v) Does the community require any form of training to make better use of the service?

(vi) Is the service meeting the required needs of the community?

19. CAPACITY BUILDING

19.1 The municipality will ensure that all officials and councillors are appropriately capacitated in Free Basic Services in terms of the following key areas:

(i) Database management

(ii) Demand and revenue management

(iii) Policy and by-law implementation

20. EXIT PROGRAMME

20.1 The proposed exit of indigent's beneficiaries from the approved indigent register would be;

(i) The continuous verification of the register.

(ii) The involvement of all stakeholders namely, Councillors, Community Development Workers and Ward Committee members.

(iii) Members of households registered as indigent will be prepared to participate in exit programmes coordinated by the municipality in collaboration with other government departments, stakeholders involved, sector departments and the private sector.

(iv) As part of its broader poverty reduction programme the municipality undertakes to provide for the participation and accommodation of indigent persons in its Local Economic Development initiatives and in the implementation of integrated development programmes where possible.

20.2 Ndwedwe Local Municipality will promote exit from indigence by;

(i) Identifying indigents for inclusion in public works projects

(ii) Initiating local job creation projects such as cleansing operations, small infrastructure projects etc.

(iii) Facilitation of opportunities to enter the informal trade market.

(iv) Facilitation of food security projects.

(v) Liaison with National and Provincial departments to include indigent customers in their public works programme.

21. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

21.1 The municipality will review this policy on an annual basis.

PAUPER/INDIGENT BURIAL FORM

DECEASED NAME : _____ **ID NO: _____**

AREA/WARD :_____ **DOB:_____**

WARD CLLR :_____ **CELL NO :_____**

NOTIFICATION DATE:_____ **MORTUARY/HOSP:_____**

UNDERTAKER :_____ **CELL NO:_____**

DECLARATION BY MAYOR/SPEAKER,WARD CLLR

In terms of the rules of the pauper burial policy I hereby declare that the body and/or his/her next-of-kin truly deserve Council assistance and that should the contrary be proven, no assistance will be received and if already paid I shall be held liable for reimbursement of the amount to Ndwedwe Local Municipality account.

(a) For more information, please contact the relative/informant whose details are as follows:

(b) Relative's Name: _____ ID No:_____ Cell No:_____

Councillor Name: _____ Signature:_____Date:_____

CHECKED BY

Community Development Worker_____Signature:_____Date:_____

RECOMMENDED BY

Manager Community Services_____Signature:_____Date:_____

APPROVED BY

Director

Community Services: _____ Signature:_____ Date:_____

Indigent Policy for Ndwedwe Local Municipality

This policy has been submitted by the Department of Community Services for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and will be legible for review on an annual basis.

22. Policy Implementation

This policy takes effect on the date on which it is adopted by the Council.

Policy adoption date	29 May 2025
Policy implementation date	01 July 2025
Next Review date	May 2026
Signed by……	Date……