

BAVIAANS MUNICIPALITY

INDUCTION TRAINING AND STAFF ORIENTATION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

When a new staff member commences work in a municipality, it is important that he becomes productive as early as possible. All staff members commence duties and undergo a learning period wherein they familiarise themselves with the work environment, the staff members with whom they interact and the tasks and duties which make up their job content.

In this policy, we will deal with a staff orientation procedure, which human resources practitioners should use when orientating new staff members on their first day at work. This policy also deals with induction training, which in the municipal environment means introducing the new employee to municipal systems (including how Local Government fits into the overall sphere of government) and how one should proceed in familiarising the employee with his new duties.

2. STAFF ORIENTATION ON THE FIRST DAY OF WORK

New staff members are always apprehensive about meeting their new " bosses" and colleagues. They will also have fears on whether or not they will "fit in" in their new department and in the municipality as a whole. Furthermore, they will also be concerned about meeting the competence expectations of their seniors i.e. whether they will do their jobs capably or not.

The task of the departmental head, assisted where necessary by the human resources staff, will be to attempt to allay these fears and concerns and make the new employee a productive staff member as quickly as possible.

There is nothing worse for a new employee than to simply be told where his desk (or workbench or worksite) is and to be told to commencing working, on his first day of work.

The following steps must be followed when orientating an employee on the first day of work:

Step 1

The human resources official who was part of the interviewing process when the staff member was appointed, should ask the new staff member to report to the Human Resources Department at the beginning of his first day of work. The human resources official will then take the new staff member to the Head of Department in which the employee will be working.

(If the new employee is the Head of Department, he must be taken to the Municipal Manager on his first day).

Step 2

The Head of Department should then welcome the new employee, try to make him feel at ease and briefly describe some of the achievements and goals of the department and what the main functions are.

Step 3

The Head of Department should then arrange for the employee's immediate senior to introduce him to all the employees in the department (both junior and senior) as well as to those staff members with whom he will be required to interact in other departments.

Step 4

The employee's immediate senior will show the new staff member his working environment (e.g. office / workshop etc).

Step 5

The employee's immediate senior will ensure that the staff member has the necessary stationery (or tools / implements / picks / shovels etc). He will ensure that the employee is given any uniform or protective clothing and anything else he needs in order to do his job.

Step 6

The employee must then be briefed on any safety procedures that have to be complied with in his working environment. This would include any fire drill procedures as well as the safety requirements in terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The induction training course should also include details of how staff salaries are determined, how a Bargaining Council operates, as well as details on the various fringe benefits and Conditions of Service applicable to that municipality. The course should also include information on how any probationary period works, details on union membership and agency shop agreements as well as how the staff Disciplinary and Grievance Code operates.

In brief, the induction course should not take longer than 30 – 60 minutes to present and should preferably be divided into two parts:

- a description of how a municipality operates and how a Council fits into the overall sphere of Government in South Africa.
- Municipal salaries, fringe benefits, conditions of service etc in the municipality.

4. CONCLUSION

The purpose of induction training is to make any new employee feel comfortable and become as productive as possible in the shortest possible period. What is essential, however, is that staff members be given every opportunity to succeed in their new jobs and not be set up for failure.

Step 7

The employee must also be shown how to use any equipment with which he will work e.g. photostat machine / fax machine / lawnmower / jackhammer etc.

Step 8

He must then be informed of his working hours, any flexi time arrangements, tea breaks (if any) and how any tea club works. He must also be shown where the cloakrooms are.

Step 9

The employee must be told who he should contact if he has any problems and must be given the opportunity to ask any questions which he may have.

Step 10

It is preferable that the new employee then attends an induction training course, prior to him commencing his duties. If no such course is being held on that day, the employee must attend an induction training course as soon as possible after commencing work.

Step 11

It is essential that someone assist the new employee for the first few hours of his duties, simply to "show him the ropes" and in order that he may familiarise himself with his job. Thereafter, less and less time must be spent on mentoring the employee, depending on the complexity of the job. The employee must understand that if he is unsure of what to do, he always has someone available to assist him. All employees take one to three months to totally familiarise themselves with any job, depending on the complexity of the duties, and managers must understand this and be patient with new employees.

3. THE INDUCTION TRAINING COURSE

In the municipal environment an induction training course should cover the spheres of Government in South Africa, the Council's structure and committee systems, the staff organisational structure including reporting relationships and any policies or programs affecting municipal operations. New employees should also be shown what a Municipal Integrated Development Plan is and how the Council's Performance Management System works.