

LANGUAGE POLICY



OVERBERG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DISTRKSMUNISIPALITEIT UMASIPALA WESITHILI

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LANGUAGE POLICY

FOR

OVERBERG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
DISTRIKSMUNISIPALITEIT
UMASIPALA WESITHILI

1. DEFINITIONS

In this policy, unless the context otherwise indicates –

“**administration**” refers to the administrative arm of the Overberg District Municipality;

“**municipality**” refers to Overberg District Municipality;

“**committees**” refers to the Executive Committee, Portfolio Committees and any other committee of forum established by the Council;

“**council**” refers to the Municipal Council of Overberg District Municipality;

“**province**” refers to the Western Cape;

“**three official languages**” refers to the three official languages of the Western Cape, namely English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, in terms of Section 5 of the Constitution of the Western Cape;

“**national language bodies**” refers to the bodies established in terms of Section 8(8) of the PanSALB Act. No. 59/1995.

2. NAME OF POLICY

Language Policy of Overberg District Municipality

3. PURPOSE

To give effect to –

- 3.1** Section 6 and 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108/1996);
- 3.2** Sections 18(2) and 21(2) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000);
- 3.3** The principles of Batho Pele as contained in Government Gazette No. 18340 of 1 October 1997;

- 3.4 The Western Cape Language Policy (P/N 369 of 27 November 2001);
- 3.5 Pan South African Language Board Act, Act 59 of 1995 (as amended in 1999);
- 3.6 South African Language bill “Constitution” means the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996);
- 3.7 Sections 18.2 and 21.2 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) (Chapter 4: Community Participation);
- 3.8 Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000);
- 3.9 Section 1.2.4 of the Implementation Plan: National Language Policy Framework, 2003;
- 3.10 Western Cape Languages Act, 1998 (Act 13 of 1998);
- 3.11 Western Cape Language Policy (June 2004);
- 3.12 Principles of Batho Pele as contained in Government Gazette No.18340, 1 October 1997.

4. GOALS

- 4.1 To establish the language preferences of the Municipality’s ratepayers and residents and give effect thereto;
- 4.2 To support impartial service delivery by promoting equal access to municipal services and programmes by removing communication or language barriers;
- 4.3 To promote multilingualism amongst the Municipality’s staff and communities within the municipal area of jurisdiction;
- 4.4 Subject to 4.1, 5.1 and 5.3 to promote and encourage the use of the three official languages, namely English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, in the affairs of the Municipality;
- 4.5 To give optimum effect to the equal status of the three official languages;
- 4.6 Upon request from persons with disabilities, and where practical, Council will make provision to address their special needs.

5. POLICY PROVISIONS FOR THE USE OF THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE BY THE COUNCIL

- 5.1 English shall be used in any debates and other proceedings of the Council and its Committees.
- 5.2 All policies introduced/adopted, by-laws and Resolutions of the Council and its Committees shall be in English;

- 5.3 A notice of motion or a formal motion in the Council or its Committees may be in English, Afrikaans or isiXhosa.
- 5.4 Reports (including attachments thereto) submitted to Council and/or its Committees and forums must be kept in the original form submitted. However, recommendations to all reports shall be in English;
- 5.5 Notices of all meetings and indexes to agendas shall be in English;
- 5.6 Minutes of all meetings of Council and its Committees shall be in English.

6. DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

All disciplinary hearings shall be conducted in terms of the Collective Agreement: Disciplinary Hearings.

7. OFFICIAL NOTICES AND ADVERTISEMENTS

All official notices, circulars, newsletters and advertisements issued/published by the Municipality for general public information, will be in English.

8. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- 8.1 Any of the three official languages may be used for the purpose of communication in the Administration. Provided that if the addressee does not understand the language of use in which he/she is communicated with, he/she may request that such communication takes place in a language understood by him/her.
- 8.2 All internal staff communiqué, e.g. Circulars shall be accommodated in English.

9. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- 9.1 All external responding communication shall be in the language in which the original communication was received.
- 9.2 The Municipality must, in its communication with and rendering of services to the public, ensure that these are carried out in the most appropriate way with the assistance of interpreters and translators.

10. IDENTIFICATION SIGNS

Identification signage and direction in municipal offices or facilities shall be in English.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

11.1 Code of Conduct

11.1.1 The Municipality must continuously ensure that Councillors and staff are sensitised to the value of multilingualism as a tool for building social cohesion, promoting economic development and consolidating democratic government through respect for cultural diversity.

11.1.2 The Municipality must ensure that all officials and Councillors accommodate the language use and preferences of other officials and Councillors with courtesy.

11.2 Development and Education

11.2.1 Officials and Councillors should be encouraged to learn the three official languages and training programmes may be organised to assist in the development of their language skills.

11.2.2 Services/Directorates/Branches/Sections must play an active role in promoting multilingualism in an equitable manner and also to identify the language skills required in order to render an effective and efficient service to its communities.

11.2.3 When filling vacant posts, Services/Directorates/Branches/Sections must take cognisance of the Municipality's Language Policy when advertising, recruiting, selecting and appointing staff.

11.3 Translating and Interpreting Services

The Municipal Manager shall make available translating and interpreting services if, and when considered necessary, and with prior arrangements.

11.4 Main/General Telephone Exchanges

The main/general telephone reception at all administrative buildings and within all Services/Directorates/Branches/Sections must "welcome" its clients in at least two of the official languages.

12. LANGUAGE POLICY REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

12.1 The Municipality must make every effort to ensure compliance of this Language Policy by all officials and Councillors.