



**MTUBATUBA**  
**LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

**INDIGENT POLICY**

**2016/2017**

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## **1. DEFINITIONS**

“Indigents” means those people who are unable to make monetary contribution towards basic municipal services.

“Basic Services” means Water, Sewerage, Refuse removal, Public lighting, Street cleaning, etc.

“Rebate” means the total value of reduction to the amount charged for a particular service on the account of a consumer.

“Subsidy” means the total amount incurred by the municipality for basic services consumed by an indigent household.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

In terms of Chapter 7, Sec.152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa; the objectives of Local Government are:

- a) To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- b) To ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner
- c) To promote social and economic development;
- d) To promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- e) To encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government.

Because of the level of unemployment and subsequent poverty in the municipal area, there are households which are unable to pay for normal municipal services. The municipality therefore adopts this indigence management policy to ensure that these households have access to at least basic municipal services, and is guided in the formulation of this policy by the national government's policy in this regard.

### **3. APPLICATION FOR INDIGENT**

#### **3.1 Criteria for qualification**

In order to qualify for indigent support the following criteria must be met:

- 3.1.1 South African Citizen with a valid South African Identity.
- 3.1.2 Households where verified combined gross monthly income of all occupants over 18 years of age does not exceed two times the official state monthly old age pension, or such other amount as the council may from time to time determine during the budget process.
- 3.1.3 The applicant must reside in the municipal area and may not conduct a commercial or industrial activity from the property.
- 3.1.4 All child headed households qualify for indigent support.
- 3.1.5 Households headed by old aged pensioners who depend on pension grants or are without any other sources of income.
- 3.1.6 Households headed by people whom are depended on social grants, (e.g. Disability; Child support; Forster care or Veterans grants).
- 3.1.7 Any household with total monthly income not exceeding R 3,000.00 as incorporated in the tariff policy including other relevant rebates.

#### **3.2 Completion of application form and its pre-requisites**

- 3.2.1 The application or re-application form must:-
  - a) be fully and properly completed;
  - b) Bear the stamp of the commissioner of oath.
  - c) Be accompanied by a certified copy of the South African identity document.
  - d) Certified proof of total household income;
  - e) Report from the social worker and / or medical certificate on request;
- 3.3 A visit by the ward councillor or his/her delegate to verify a sample of applications / re-applications received;
- 3.4 Any other necessary screening process performed internally or via external professional service provider;
- 3.5 The municipality reserves the rights to register or not to register the applicant on the indigent register pending the outcomes of vetting the application.

#### 4. COUNCIL SERVICES REBATES

a) The subsidies on rates and the specified service charges will be determined as part of each annual budget and in terms of the municipality's policies on property rates and tariffs.

No	Indigent Category	Rebate
1.	Household refuse removal charges.	100% on the monthly amount billed.
2.	Property rates based on the rateable value up to R60 000	100%
3.	Other categories of rateable properties	Rebate will be granted in accordance with the property rates policy.
4.	Other rateable properties	Refer to property rates possible on guidelines and permissible in this regard.
5.	Non- profit organisations	To be dealt with property rates policy Category C properties.
6.	Other service charges (minor)	Up to a maximum of 50% of the chargeable tariff as determined by the council periodically.

b) In terms of other subsidies, the municipality together with community services department will determine from time to time the types of relief to be granted to registered indigents as well as their monetary value which will be approved by the Municipal Manager in line the property rates policy.

c) The municipality reserves the right to reduce or increase the quantities and/or values of the subsidies annually depending on the availability of the budget.

## 5. NON-COMPLIANCE OF HOUSEHOLDS REGISTERED AS INDIGENT

- 5.1 When a property owner or accountholder who has registered as an indigent fails to comply with any arrangements or conditions materially relevant to the receipt of indigency 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.
- 5.2 The onus is on each registered indigent to advise the municipal manager of such failure to comply.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 The relief to indigents may be withdrawn at the discretion of the municipal manager if:
- a) a registered indigent who qualifies for such relief fails to keep to the terms of the policy agreement or any tampering with the installations of the municipality is detected; and
  - b) failure to inform the municipality annually by submitting the relevant documentation that confirms applicants' status.
  - c) If a registered indigent is found to have provided fraudulent information to the municipality in regard to any material condition for registration as an indigent, such person shall immediately be removed from the register of indigents, and shall be liable to repay to the municipality with immediate effect all indigency relief received from the date of such fraudulent registration. Moreover, such person may not again be considered for indigent relief for a period extending for **5 (five) years** beyond the financial year in which the misdemeanour is detected.

- d) Indigent relief will not apply in respect of property owners owning more than one property, whether in or outside the municipal area.

## **6. REPORTING INDIGENT SUPPORT**

The municipal manager shall report annually to the mayor or council, as the case may be, for the year concerned and by municipal ward:

- a) the number of households registered as indigents and a brief explanation of any movements in such numbers;
- b) the monetary value of the actual subsidies and/or rebates granted;
- c) the budgeted value of the subsidies and rebates concerned; and
- d) the above information cumulatively for the financial year to date;
- e) The mayor, as the case may be, shall submit the above reports on a quarterly basis to the council and to the municipality's ward committees, or monthly frequently to any ward committees if so requested.

## **7. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- a) The indigent subsidy is valid for a period of 12 months only, effective from the 1st of July each year and will be applied in the financial year in which the application was approved.
- b) All approved indigent will be subsidised in terms of the council service rebates per section 4 above.
- c) New applications for indigent status will be opened annually from **01 July until 30 November** every year for implementation in the next financial year.
- d) Application for re-consideration of indigent status will be opened annually from **10 January until 31 March every year** for consideration in the next financial year.
- e) The whole indigent register will be reviewed and made public every three years but members of the community will be allowed to inspect the register from time to time at Municipal offices.
- f) Only households where the account holder or property owner has registered as indigent in terms of the municipality's annual registration program, and whose registration has been accepted and entered into the register of indigents shall qualify for subsidies mentioned in section 4 of this policy.

- g) For a household to qualify for subsidies or rebates on the major service charges (see section 3 of this policy),
- h) the registered indigent must be the full-time occupant of the property concerned, and also the owner of that property and may not be the owner of any other property, whether inside or outside the municipal area of jurisdiction.
- i) For a household to qualify for any of the subsidies mentioned in section 3 of the policy; the following documentation must be submitted to the municipality on application or re-application :
  - i. *Fully and properly completed application form / re-application form with a stamp from the commissioner of oath.*
  - ii. *Certified copy of a valid South African identity document.*
  - iii. *Certified proof of total household income.*
- j) Indigency relief shall apply for a period not extending beyond the financial year in which the particular household is registered as indigent.
- k) Registration must be renewed in each registration programme if relief is to continue.
- l) To register as an indigent, the relevant property owner or account holder must personally complete and sign the registration form provided by the municipality for this purpose, and furnish such further documentation as the municipality specifies.
- m) The municipal manager will provide assistance to persons who cannot read or write, at such times and places as are specified in the notices published to indicate that the registration program is to take place.
- n) A committee will be established by the Municipal Manager to review all new application.

## **8. REQUEST FOR INDIGENT BURIAL / CREMATION ASSISTANCE**

**Any member or family of a registered indigent who applies for indigent burial /cremation assistance will be required to submit the following documents as proof:**

- 8.1 Applicant's Identity document SA green barcoded ID.**
- 8.2 Deceased's Identity document SA green barcoded ID.**
- 8.3 Deceased's birth certificate.**
- 8.4 Death certificate of the deceased.**



- 8.5 Affidavit by South African Police Services (SAPS) as proof by the family member or relative declaring that they cannot afford to bury / cremate the deceased due to a lack of income.
- 8.6 Confirmation letter from Ward Councillor or PR Councillor.

## **9. BURIAL / CREMATION BENEFITS**

- 9.1 The Municipality will incur the costs relating to the transport to a government mortuary, a standard coffin, hears and cost for the grave. No relative or friends have any claim against the Municipality whatsoever.
- 9.2 The family or relative of the deceased buried as an indigent will be allowed to erect a tombstone on the grave after 24months of burial, at their own expense.
- 9.3 The next of kin will receive the reservation certificate and grave number upon request.
- 9.4 Services to registered indigent household that have, in terms of the credit control policy, been restricted, removed or disconnected will be temporarily re-instated for a period of 7 days to cater for the funeral. The cost of re-instatement of services will be debited to his/her Municipal services account. In case of death, three additional plastic refuse removal bags (60l each) will be made available to the registered indigent household free of charge.
- 9.5 The deceased may be cremated upon request.
- 9.6 Family members can attend the burial according to their culture.
- 9.7 The family of the deceased can arrange the funeral service with the designated funeral undertaker.

## 10. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

- a) Violation of or non-compliance with this policy will give a just cause of disciplinary steps to be taken as per the Municipality's disciplinary code of conduct.
  
- b) It will be the responsibility of Chief Financial Officer to enforce compliance with this policy.

## 11. POLICY ADOPTION

This policy has been considered and approved by the **COUNCIL OF THE MTUBATUBA MUNICIPALITY** as follows:

Resolution No:.....

Approval Date:.....