



health

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**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE ON GUIDELINES TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND LABOUR FORUMS**

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Description	This document provides Guidelines to the Establishment of Management and Labour Forums in North West Department of Health.
Coverage	This SOP document is applicable to all staff/officials and stakeholders of North West Department of Health
SOP number	LR25/SOP03/R28

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish and monitor functionality of Labour forums in the North West Department of Health, as well as to create a conducive platform for localized engagements between the Department and organised labour.

2. Background

- 2.1 In order to maintain labour peace between the Department and organised labour and in ensuring that information is shared between parties it is important to establish Labour forums with the department
- 2.2 In the recent past the Department has been experiencing collective conflict situations which have in many ways compromised the image of the Department and service delivery. While the reasons for these were apparent, these could be deemed to be symptoms of tensions that have been brewing over a period of time. The immediate prognosis has been the clear and apparent distanced engagement between management and labour/unions to constantly communicate over daily operational issues in a form of a more localized recognized platform. Whilst the public service administration provides for the grievance rules to deal with any erupting conflicts, a less graduated but proactive platform is required to immediately deal with issues in order to curb a resurgence of grievances at the lowest point of operations.
- 2.3 Directorate Labour Relations shall establish Labour forums within the Department and must ensure that these structures are functional.

3. Scope of Application

This SOP applies to all institutions of the Department, its employees and unions existing within these institutions.

4. SOP Details

- 4.1. The forums should strictly be consultative and information sharing structures and this should be expressly stated.
- 4.2. These forums are also referred to as workplace forums as contemplated in Chapter V of the Labour Relations Act.
- 4.3 These forums do not seek to imitate, undermine or replace the collective bargaining structures and their roles and functions, such as the PHSDSBC and other dispute forums.

4.4. The Composition

Given the size of the Department, the geographical dispersion and the nature of the service the Department provides, the following is suggested:

- 4.4.1 **Provincial Office:** The Provincial office will establish its forum which should comprise of senior representatives/office bearers from the respective trade unions' Provincial structures and the executive management members from the head office.
- 4.4.2. **District level:** The Department has four districts and as such each will have a district based forum. This will be forums that will hold consultative engagements with the Provincial and Regional Structures of each representative union in participation at both Provincial head office and district levels.
- 4.4.3. **Hospital and Sub-district level:** This model suggests that the number of forums equivalent to the number of district composition will be established for the district hospitals and sub-district offices, this will also apply to the nursing colleges, Medical store and the EMRS College.

4.5. Role players

- 4.5.1. The forums will be made up of organized labour (representative trade unions) where representation at that forum will be on a 50/50 basis between the employer and organized labour and preferably not more than 10 representatives on each site to allow constructive engagement..

- 4.5.2. It is desirable for the proper functioning of these forums that the Labour Relations provide support, guidance and advice where necessary. It may also be preferable that both parties nominate persons within their ranks as alternating chairpersons, for purposes of directing the meeting. Parties may however deliberate on this issue to find common approach.

4.6. Meetings of the Forums

- 4.6.1. The forum must meet at least once in every quarter, where necessary an impromptu meeting may be convened on request by either party.
- 4.6.2. The Chairperson may on his/her own accord, at the request of any party as stated above, call a meeting of the forum with an urgent matter/s.
- 4.6.3. The Secretariat/coordinator must serve all the members of the Forum a written notice of the meeting, with written request for submission of agenda items, to be submitted within 10 working days before the meeting sits.
- 4.6.4. Copies of the minutes of the meeting held immediately prior to the relevant meeting with decisions, must be made available to the parties concerned at least 5 working days prior to the said meeting, and must after confirmation of the meeting, be signed by Secretariat and the person who chaired the relevant meeting.
- 4.6.5. Copies of minutes of all meetings and agenda items must be forwarded by the Secretariat to all members of the Forum within 10 working days subsequent to a meeting, unless the Forum determines a shorter period at such a meeting.
- 4.6.6. Apologies must be forwarded in writing 5 working days before the meeting.
- 4.7. The fora must be able to evaluate their performance annually to determine the impact of their work on service delivery.

4.8. Record keeping

- 4.8.1. The Secretariat/LR coordinator will keep all records/copies of minutes and relevant documents of the Forums in liaison with offices of institutional managers for controlled record keeping purposes.

5. Monitoring and review

This SOP will be reviewed after three (3) years after its approval or where there are changes to the environment or legislation

6. SOP Approval

Recommended/ ~~Not Recommended~~/ Amended



25 June 2025

Dr. M. Tlhogane

Date

Chief Director: Corporate Services

Approved/ ~~Not Approved~~/ Amended



25 June 2025

Mr. O. E. Mongale

Date

HOD: North West Department of Health

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