



Occupational Health and Safety Policy

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1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to communicate an integrated needs-driven and holistic approach to employee health, wellness and safety within SASSETA;

1.2 The policy not only covers aspects of occupational health and safety, but also aspects of non-communicable and communicable chronic diseases and/or conditions; health management and employee wellness;

1.3 The objectives of the Policy are as follows:

1.3.1 To be aware of all risks and changes in risk factors in areas regarded as high risk;

1.3.2 To stay abreast of legislative requirements and to meet them as far as is reasonably practicable;

1.3.3 To ensure the knowledge and information available is adequate to achieve these objectives;

1.3.4 To continually evaluate health and safety programmes, adapting them as problems are identified; and

1.3.5 To actively partake in the accident/incident prevention programme.

2. GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

Source		Key Imperatives
2.1	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	In respect of the implications regarding the health, safety and wellness of employees.
2.2	Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993	In respect of the general duty imposed on employers to provide a reasonably safe and healthy working environment; information; training and supervision, as is necessary and reasonable, to ensure the health and safety of employees and to compile a report to an inspector regarding any incident in which an employee dies or is injured or when dangerous situations arise.

2.3	Compensation for Occupational Diseases and Injuries Act 130 of 1993 (COIDA)	To provide compulsory compensation for all employees under contract of employment (with a few exceptions) for death; personal injury or illness suffered in the course of their employment.
2.4	Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995	In respect of the procedure to deal with an employee's incapacity.
2.5	Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998	In respect of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all employees in the workplace.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of SASSETA.

4. TERMINOLOGY

Terminology		Description
4.1	He/She	The use of either of these pronouns will, throughout this policy, refer to both male and female and is intended to be gender neutral.
4.2	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	It is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It is a serious, and often fatal, disease transmitted through blood products; contaminated needles and by sexual contact.
4.3	Standard Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)	It consists of the use of, at least, three (3) anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs to maximally suppress the virus and to stop the progression of the HIV disease.
4.4	Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP)	Employee benefit programmes offered by employers to help employees with personal problems which might adversely impact their

		work performance; health and well-being. EAPs include assessment; short-term counselling and referral services for employees and their household members.
4.5	Employee Health & Wellness (EH&W)	An indicator of the quality of work of employees in the public service.
4.6	Hazard	Means a source of and/or exposure to danger.
4.7	Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)	It is a lent virus and a member of the retrovirus family that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).
4.8	Incident	<p>Means an incident as contemplated in section 24(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act -</p> <p><i>"24 (1) Each incident occurring at work or arising out of or in connection with the, activities of persons at work, or in connection with the use of plant or machinery, in which, or in consequence of which-</i></p> <p><i>any person dies, becomes unconscious, suffers the loss of a limb or part of a limb or is otherwise injured or becomes ill to such a degree that he is likely either to die or to suffer a permanent physical defect or likely to be unable for a period of at least 14 days either to work or to continue with the activity for which he was employed or is usually employed;</i></p> <p><i>a major incident occurred; or</i></p> <p><i>the health or safety of any person was endangered and where-</i></p> <p><i>(i) a dangerous substance was spilled;</i></p>



		<p><i>(ii) the uncontrolled release of any substance under pressure took place;</i></p> <p><i>(iii) machinery or any part thereof fractured or failed resulting in flying, falling or uncontrolled moving objects; or</i></p> <p><i>(iv) machinery ran out of control, shall, within the prescribed period and in the prescribed manner, be reported to an inspector by the employer or the user of the plant or machinery concerned, as the case may be."</i></p>
4.9	Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)	It stipulates that employers must implement procedures/processes to ensure the health and safety of employees. It includes occupational hygiene, occupational medicine and biological monitoring.
4.10	Quality of Work Life (QWL)	It is a process by which an employer responds to the employees' need for developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that impact on their lives at work.
4.11	Risk	The probability that injury or damage will occur.
4.12	Safe	Means free from any hazard.
4.13	Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT)	It describes the confidential procedure that is followed when an employee decides, on a voluntary basis, to take an HIV test.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be effective from the date of approval by the Board.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The implementation of this policy will be guided by the following ethical principles -

6.1 Autonomy

It refers to an individual's right to self-determination and the right to refuse any medical investigation; procedure and/or other intervention offered by the employer, in the form of an Employee Assistance Programme. This right is embodied in the requirement of informed consent to intervention.

6.2 Equality

The Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa entrenches every person's right to equality and protection against unfair discrimination.

6.3 Voluntarism

Whilst accepting that employees should be motivated to utilise the services, it must be understood that this utilisation and disclosure of their health status must be voluntary.

6.4 Accessibility

The Employee Assistance Programme/s should be open and accessible to employees at all levels.

6.5 Openness and Transparency

SASSETA has a legal responsibility to inform all employees of any conditions in the workplace that may be harmful to their health and/or safety; how to protect their health and safety and regarding the services offered through the Employee Assistance Programme/s.

6.6 Confidentiality

It arises from the entrenchment of the right to privacy as stated in the Bill of Rights. The maintenance of confidentiality, with respect to an employee's health status; personal information; diagnosis and/or records is absolute and such information must not be disclosed without the employee's prior written consent.

6.7 Language Sensitivity

Language used in the Employee Assistance Programme/s shall uphold human dignity; reflect inclusion and be gender-sensitive; accurate and understandable.

6.8 Broad Brush

It refers to all the issues experienced by employees, such as substance abuse; lack of stress management; abusive relationships; financial difficulties etc.

6.9 Timeous Intervention

The early indication of a troubled employee who should be referred to the Employee Assistance Programme/s as soon as it becomes apparent and/or known that such an employee needs assistance in dealing with a particular issue/s in his personal life which negatively impacts on his performance as an employee.

6.10 Equal Treatment

Employees and prospective employees with non-communicable; communicable and/or chronic diseases will not be treated differently from other employees.

6.11 Equal Treatment

Employees and prospective employees with non-communicable; communicable and/or chronic diseases will not be treated differently from other employees. SASSETA undertakes to treat such affected employees and prospective employees in a just, humane and life affirming way.

SASSETA further acknowledges that continued employment for such affected employees and prospective employees will be therapeutically important in prolonging their lives and, as such, management will take all reasonable and available steps to provide necessary assistance and support.

7. ELEMENTS OF THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME/S

The Employee Assistance Programme/s shall encompass the following key functional areas -

- 7.1 Occupational Health, Safety and Risk;
- 7.2. Health and Disease Management; and
- 7.3 Wellness Management.

8. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY FACTORS

8.1 Occupational Safety

Protecting the workplace from occupational injuries; diseases; stress and/or hazards through proactive measures of risk reduction.

8.2 Occupational Hygiene

It involves the recognition; evaluation and control of physical; ergonomic; psychological and biological factors in the workplace which may affect the wellness of employees.

Should there be no access to water in the building for a period exceeding four (4) hours within a single working day, SASSETA may choose to release staff to go home for hygienic reasons.

However, pregnant employees shall be released after one (1) hour of no access to water within a single working day.

8.3 Environmental Management

Refers to the environmental conservation such as waste management; environmental impact assessments and use and control of hazardous materials inside and outside the workplace.

8.4 Disaster Management

Refers to preventing; planning for and managing disasters through disaster preparedness; rapid response; recovery and rehabilitation, so as to minimize loss of life; injury and/or damage to property.

9. HEALTH AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 This refers to preventive measures taken and promotes health care, aimed at all non-communicable; communicable and chronic diseases, the types of which are defined by the South African Medical Association;
- 9.2 It involves a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to managing diseases effectively and includes health risk profiling, disease prevention and management protocols and rehabilitation;
- 9.3 The Employee Assistance Programme/s shall therefore play a pivotal role in promoting activities that increases vitality; early identification of wellness problems; referral to inside or outside wellness services and providing support to employees affected by ill health, facilitating adherence to health protocols and liaison within SASSETA to improve employees' well-being.
- 9.4 Wellness Management - This encompasses the totality of human wellness, guided by risk assessment, and promoting individual and organizational wellness and it encompasses of the following components to facilitate fulfilment of employees' needs:

9.4.1 Spiritual Needs

To promote set guiding beliefs, principles and values to help give direction to life and includes intra-personal skills, value clarification, principle of *Ubuntu* and religious activities;

9.4.2 Emotional Needs

To promote emotional intelligence, self-esteem, optimism, sense of coherence and resilience of employees and includes fear management skills, stress management, trauma counselling and critical incidents management;

9.4.3 Social Needs

To promote the ability of employees to interact successfully and to live up to the expectations and demands of personal roles by learning good communication and financial management skills; creating support networks with colleagues, friends and family and showing self-respect and respect for others;

9.4.4 Physiological Needs

SASSETA shall make sports and recreational opportunities available to its staff to promote healthy behaviours, awareness and behavioural regulation toward healthy lifestyles and includes assistance with fitness, nutrition, weight control, work-based support activities, music and healthy cooking methods.

9.4.5 Intellectual Needs

To promote the ability to make sound decisions, to think critically, to be open to new ideas, to master new skills, to be creative and curious and includes role clarity, participation in the decision-making surrounding their immediate job content and procedures and growth opportunities.

10. **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATIONS**

10.1 **General Determinations -**

- 10.1.1 SASSETA adheres to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and to the requirements and conditions for the safety of all employees and will at all times uphold and meet the requirements laid down therein;
- 10.1.2 SASSETA will provide employees with healthy and safe working conditions;
- 10.1.3 SASSETA employees will be expected to observe and maintain all health and safety rules and regulations and to report any observed breach of such regulations;

- 10.1.4 There is an Occupational Health and Safety Committee constituted by the Executive Management representative, an HR representative and other Health & Safety representatives nominated by employees;
- 10.1.5 Health and Safety representatives will perform functions in accordance with the stipulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- 10.1.6 There are employees trained in First Aid for the purpose of attending to employees in emergency situations;
- 10.1.7 First aid kits must be kept in an accessible and agreed place in each Department;

10.2 Policy Guidelines on non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases

- 10.2.1 If discrimination or prejudice occurs as a result of an employee's non-communicable, communicable, and/or chronic status, he will have the same recourse through SASSETA's Grievance Policy and the procedures therein;
- 10.2.2 An employee who contracts a non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease whilst in the employ of SASSETA, will continue with such employment until he is declared medically unfit to perform his job;
- 10.2.3 Employment of an employee with a non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease will only terminate if and when -
 - 10.2.3.1 The employee is unable to carry out his normal function;
 - 10.2.3.2 The employee is unable to attend the required number of working days or working hours and the employee has exhausted all sick leave days;
- 10.2.4 Termination of employment of an employee with a non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease due to his incapacity will be done in accordance with the provisions of the Incapacity-, Termination of Employment- and Performance Management Policies;
- 10.2.5 There is no medical and/or scientific justification for refusing to work with someone who has a non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease and should a fellow employee refuse to work with such an employee, SASSETA will assist with professional counselling, however, should such refusal persist, it will be dealt with in terms of the provisions of the Disciplinary Policy.

11. NON-DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EMPLOYEES WITH NON-COMMUNICABLE, COMMUNICABLE AND/OR CHRONIC DISEASES

- 11.1 Affected employees will be afforded the same opportunities for career advancement such as training, promotions and other benefits enjoyed by other able-bodied employees;
- 11.2 Affected employees will be expected to meet the same performance requirements that apply to other employees in the same position;
- 11.3 Affected employees will be allowed to negotiate reasonable conditions as described in the Labour Relations Act applicable to incapacity;
- 11.4 Should certain Organization Benefit Schemes require pre-benefit non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases testing, which could result in limitations, exclusions and/or premium loading, as determined by regulations of the medical aid scheme or any such benefit, SASSETA will inform the affected employees accordingly;
- 11.5 Affected employees will be eligible for all standard employee benefits which include:
 - 11.5.1 Medical Aid and health related benefits;
 - 11.5.2 Group Life Assurance;
 - 11.5.3 Provident and/or Pension Funds;
 - 11.5.4 Unemployment Insurance Fund benefits.

12. POLICY GUIDELINES REGARDING EMPLOYEES AND PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES WITH NON-COMMUNICABLE, COMMUNICABLE AND/OR CHRONIC DISEASES

12.1 Testing and/or screening of employees and prospective employees -

- 12.1.1 In line with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act regarding non-discrimination, no employee or group of employees will be exclusively tested and/or screened for non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases, unless the Medical Aid and/or the Insurance Company requires that employees must undergo such a testing and/or screening;
- 12.1.2 Should a prospective employee voluntarily disclose his non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases status, SASSETA will not use that to determine the outcome of the selection process;
- 12.1.3 SASSETA recognises that there may be employees who would like to know their non-communicable, communicable and/ or chronic diseases status for personal reasons and SASSETA will therefore endeavour to make such

services available to employees, either directly or through referral to suitable service providers;

12.2 Confidentiality -

- 12.2.1 SASSETA acknowledges that privacy is a basic human right and the organisation will therefore not tolerate any breach of confidentiality and any employee who breaches such confidentiality will be dealt with in terms of the provisions of SASSETA's Disciplinary Policy;
- 12.2.2 All personal details of employees, including the actual suspected non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease status of any employee must remain strictly confidential;
- 12.2.3 Any information about an employee's non-communicable or communicable and/or chronic disease will be disclosed only with his written express consent and the affected employee must be counselled regarding the rights and consequences of disclosing such information;
- 12.2.4 When an affected employee decides to disclose his non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic disease status to a colleague and/or supervisor/manager, such a colleague, supervisor/manager must take reasonable measures to ensure that this information remains private and confidential;
- 12.2.5 An affected employee is under no obligation to inform an employer about his non-communicable, communicable, and/or chronic disease status.

12.3 Roles and responsibilities of SASSETA and its employees regarding Education and Awareness -

- 12.3.1 Management of SASSETA, as an employer, and all employees have a right to receive ongoing education relating to the latest information and developments in respect of non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases including, but not limited to:
 - 12.3.1.1 Modes of contracting non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases;
 - 12.3.1.2 The means of preventing such contracting;
 - 12.3.1.3 The need for counselling and care; and
 - 12.3.1.4 The social impact of infection on those affected by non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases;



- 12.3.2 To ensure that such education is in line with SASSETA's Social Responsibility Policy, SASSETA will train and keep all its employees informed about non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases;
- 12.3.3 Such education programmes will discuss various non-communicable, communicable and/or chronic diseases and will be conducted in the workplace from time to time as determined by management;
- 12.3.4 Where feasible, employees will be provided with access to services such as voluntary non-communicable, communicable, and/or chronic disease testing counselling and treatment;
- 12.3.5 In educating its employees, SASSETA will try, as far as reasonably possible, to utilise teaching and facilitation methods which are non-stigmatising and promote safer sex.

13. FIRST AID

- 13.1 SASSETA shall take reasonable steps that are necessary under the circumstances, to ensure that employees at work receive prompt first aid treatment in case of injury or emergency;
- 13.2 SASSETA shall provide a first aid box or boxes at the workplace which shall be available and accessible for the treatment of injured employees at the workplace; and
- 13.3 Each first aid box must contain the following:
 - 13.3.1 10 antiseptic cleansing towelettes, individually packaged;
 - 13.3.2 25 sterile adhesive dressings, individually packaged;
 - 13.3.3 10: 10cmX10cm sterile gauze pads, individually packaged;
 - 13.3.4 2: 10cmX10cm sterile compress dressings, individually packaged;
 - 13.3.5 2: 15cmX15cm sterile compress dressings, individually packaged;
 - 13.3.6 2 conform gauze bandages - 75mm wide;
 - 13.3.7 3 cotton triangular bandages;
 - 13.3.8 5 safety pins - assorted sizes;
 - 13.3.9 1 pair of scissors;
 - 13.3.10 1 pair of tweezers;
 - 13.3.11 125mmx4.5 m of adhesive tape;
 - 13.3.12 1 crepe tension bandage - 75mm wide;
 - 13.3.13 Resuscitation barrier device with a one-way valve;
 - 13.3.14 4 pairs of disposable surgical gloves;

- 13.3.15 1 waterproof waste bag;
- 13.3.16 1 first aid instruction manual; and
- 13.3.17 Inventory of kit contents.

14. MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REPORTING

SASSETA shall monitor the implementation of this Policy and the Employee Assistance Programme/s.

15. APPROVAL

Document Name	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Year of Current Review	2022/2023
Year of Next Review	2026/2027
Review process championed by the Chief Executive Officer	
Name of the CEO	Mr Thamsanqa Mdontswa
Signature: 	Date: 24/06/2022
Document reviewed and recommended for approval by HR and Remuneration Committee	
Name of the Chairperson	Ms Motlalepula Molefe
Signature: 	Date: 2022-06-24
Approved by the Board	
Name of the Chairperson	Mr Chris Mudau
Signature: 	Date: 24/06/2022