

KOPANONG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

INDIGENT POLICY

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INDIGENT POLICY

PART 1 OBJECTIVE

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 indigent 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.

PART 2 WHO QUALIFIES FOR INDIGENT SUPPORT

Households (occupants of a site) classified as indigent, i.e. where verified total gross monthly income of all occupants over 18 years of age does not exceed R1100,00 per month or where the only income of a household is that of two old age pensioners "Social grant". The subsidy paid will only be applicable in respect of sewerage, water, electricity, refuse charges and assessment rates with the proviso that the subsidy cannot be guaranteed up front as it will be funded with a grant from the National Government to the Municipality. Therefore, should no grant or a reduced grant be received from the National Government, then no or fewer consumers will receive a subsidy in part or in whole in respect of certain services.

Arrears on water, sewerage, refuse and assessment rates up to the date of registration of an indigent consumer will be written off as per Council Resolution and Management must report back to Council on a quarterly basis.

For a household to qualify for subsidies or rebates on the major service charges (see part 3 below), the registered indigent must be the full-time occupant of the property concerned.

A consumer who owns more than one property can only qualify for subsidy on the property where he/she resides full-time and only if the rent, if any, of

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the other property has been added to his/her total household income and the income is still within the limits of the policy.

To apply for indigent subsidy the following must be met:

In order for households to qualify for a subsidy from date of registration, applications will have to be submitted to the Treasury Department.

If an application is approved, the assistance will be valid until the indigent does not qualify for an indigent subsidy anymore. The Ward Councilor and Unit Supervisor must report any changes in an indigent consumer's situation without any delay.

The registered indigent must reside on the property, before he/she qualifies for a subsidy.

Documentary proof of income (e.g. a letter from an employer, salary advice, unemployment/pension card etc.) must be presented to qualify for a subsidy.

In addition, applicants will be required to sign and submit a sworn affidavit, to the effect that all information supplied is true and that all income, i.e. from formal and/or informal sources, is declared.

Council reserves the right to send officials or its agents to premises/households receiving relief for the purpose of conducting an on-site audit of the details supplied.

The account holder must apply in person and must present the following documents upon application:

- (a) The latest Municipal account in his/her possession
- (b) The account holder's identity document

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- (c) An application form indicating the names and identity numbers of all occupants/residents over the age of 18 years, who reside at the property.
- (d) Documentary proof of income.
- (e) Affidavit to declare all information is correct.

PART 3 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The subsidies on 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.

In respect of water, a 100% subsidy up to 6 kl per household per month will apply; however, if consumption exceeds 6 kl per metering period (month) the consumer will be charged at normal tariffs for actual consumption on the quantity exceeding 6 kl.

In respect of electricity, a 100% subsidy up to 50 kWh per household per month will apply.

In respect of sewerage charges, charges for household refuse removal and assessment rates, the relief granted shall not be less than a rebate of 100% on the monthly amount billed for the service concerned.

PART 4 NON-COMPLIANCE OF HOUSEHOLDS REGISTERED AS INDIGENT

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.

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The onus is on each registered indigent to advise the municipal manager of such failure to comply.

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.

The relief to indigents may be withdrawn at the discretion of the municipal manager if:

- 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.

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 indigency relief until the full amount had been repaid.

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PART 5 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The municipal manager shall report on a monthly basis to the executive committee for the month concerned and by municipal ward:

- the number of households registered as indigents and a brief explanation of any movements in such numbers;
- the monetary value of the actual subsidies and rebates granted;
- the budgeted value of the subsidies and rebates concerned; and
the above information cumulatively for the financial year to date.

The executive committee 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.