

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY IN MORTUARIES**

Forensic Pathology Services - Health and Safety Programme

### **Vision:**

To deliver quality forensic services for all through:

1. Our commitment is to the safety and health of our employees and clients.
2. By ensuring that environmentally friendly practices are embraced in all our facilities.

### **Mission Statement:**

1. Alignment to the regulations set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and other relevant legislation
2. Integration within all enabling and healthcare functions.
3. Risk based preventative programmes.

### **The Health and Safety Policy:**

1. The Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Health Forensic Services – is committed to the excellence in safety, health, environment and quality management. There are no higher priorities for us than the health and safety of our employees and clients as well as the community and the protection of the environment. Continuous improvement in these areas is a fundamental element of the growth of our department and it will be pursued as an integral feature of all the processes and programmes in our department.
2. In striving for excellence in the safety, health, environmental and quality management we will:
  - a. Provide a good quality service that will satisfy the communities needs
  - b. Comply with all the relevant legal requirements and standards and co-operate fully with the authorities in the development of such laws, regulations and codes of practice.
  - c. Maintain a safe, healthy and environmentally sound facility by the assessing and effectively managing the risks arising from our activities and services through the application of the best operating practices
  - d. Continually review our operations and processes and create appropriate programmes and support to bring about continuous improvement in performance.

- e. Identify and minimise waste by ensuring optimal use of personnel, energy, raw materials and all other resources.
- f. Place a duty of care on all mortuary and hospital managers and health and safety officers and hold them accountable for the safety, health, environmental and quality performance against agreed key performance indicators
- g. Ensure functional competence of all our employees through ongoing training, development and communication programmes.
- h. Place on all our employees the duty to act all times in harmony with the tenets and spirit of this policy.
- i. Work with and encourage our suppliers and clients to conduct their business with us in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.
- j. Develop and market processes that are safe and environmentally acceptable when properly used and provide all necessary information and assistance to that end.
- k. Learn from incidents and share the lessons with employees, clients and other bodies as appropriate.
- l. Conduct ourselves in a responsible manner at all times and pursue sustainable development programmes and effective communication with all stakeholders.

## **The Occupational Health and Safety Programme**

### **Definitions:**

1. **Safety:** refers to the occupational safety of our employees and clients i.e. safety at work. The aim of safety programmes is to prevent all accidents and injuries at work and related to the workplace. It includes the Fire Risk and Life Safety of employees, the driver safety programmes and other safety programmes. **(Check)**
2. **Health:** refers to the occupational health of employees and clients- specifically related to the workplace. This concentrates on the exposure to infectious diseases, long - term back injuries, exposure to medical waste, chemicals and hazardous biological substances.
3. **Environment:** refers to all those aspects of our operations that can have an impact on the environment inside and outside of our boundaries. This includes for example how medical waste is handled and disposed of.

4. **Quality:** refers to the standards set in the management and prevention of health and safety incidents. This includes workers, visitors and other clients that are present at our facilities.

**The duties of the employer:**

1. To reduce occupational hazards.
2. To inform employees of the potential hazards at the workplace.
3. To provide the necessary personal protective equipment and to ensure that adequate training in its use is provided and the employee uses that PPE.
4. To ensure that the OHS-Act is being implemented.

**The duties of the employee:**

1. Obey all the safety rules and safety signs.
2. Follow all the instructions in the procedures and if unsure to request help from the supervisor.
3. To use the personal protective equipment correctly and appropriately at all times.
4. To report all unsafe acts and conditions to the supervisor immediately
5. To report any accident and incident immediately.
6. To act in a responsible manner at all times- taking care of their own and their colleagues well-being.
7. To attend and comply with all the health and safety programmes and workshops.

**Legislation applicable to the Health and Safety Programme:**

1. Compliance with the OHS Act (Occupational Health and Safety Act) and its regulations is mandatory for all employers and employees.
2. Compliance with the Forensic Pathology Services Health and Safety Policy and the policy statements.
3. Compliance with all safety rules, work instructions and procedures which are derived from the OHS- Act and are therefore mandatory for all staff members.

4. Reporting of all incidents and work related injuries and diseases as per regulations and procedure set out in the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA).