



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
*Republic of South Africa*

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**  
**NATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINES**



### **1. Person who may perform community service**

- a) Any person registering for the first time in the professions of:
  - i. clinical psychology, dentistry, dietetics, environmental health, medicine, occupational health, physiotherapy, radiography and speech therapy; in terms of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act 56 of 1974)
  - ii. nursing; in terms of the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act 33 of 2005)
  - iii. pharmacy; in terms of the Pharmacy Act, 1974 (Act 53 of 1974)
- b) Any medical practitioner or clinical psychologist who has completed internship as required by the Health professions Act
- c) Any person who is a South African citizen qualified in and outside the Republic.
- d) Any foreign national who is a refugee or has permanent residence

### **2. Registration of persons doing community service**

An applicant for registration as a person performing community service shall submit to the professional council (Health Professions, Nursing and Pharmacy Council) the following:

- a) Proof of qualification recognized by the council in terms of regulations made under section 24 and 25 of the Health Professions Act, section 40 of the Nursing Act and section 14 and 14a of the Pharmacy Act.
- b) A formal application for registration as a person performing community service.

### **3. The Allocation Criteria**

**In the allocation of applicants to the facilities for community service, the following criteria shall apply:**

- a) Placement to a facility shall depend on service needs
- b) Bursary holders will be allocated to the province from which they received their bursary



- c) If on the establishment of the South African Military Health Services (SAMHS) which falls under the Department of Defence, or a civilian SAMHS bursary holder, community service will be done in a Military facility
- d) The number of allocated posts will determine placement
- e) Regional hospitals with the attached facilities like Community Health Centres & District Hospitals and clinics may form a complex for community service placements
- f) Preference will be given to health professionals within their cycle over those who delayed community service
- g) Proximity to place of residence will be considered pending availability of funded posts
- h) The officer will work with other members of the health team

#### **4. Application process**

##### **The following process shall be observed:**

- a) The National Department Health of in collaboration with provincial coordinators designs and issues a standard application form to all applicants and provinces with an informatory letter
- b) Applicants give five choices of approved health facilities on the application form
- c) The National Department of Health does Central Processing (sorting per provinces of choice and data-capturing) of all applications
- d) The province of choice does selection and allocation of the applicants
- e) Three meetings are held per year:
  - i) Stakeholders' meeting at the beginning of the year
  - ii) Allocation meeting to increase the number of allocated personnel in the first round
  - iii) Ratification meeting to finalise the allocation
  - iv) Meetings are chaired by a representative of the Department of Health. Stakeholders are Provincial co-ordinators for the relevant professions, Deans of Health Science Faculties, Medical, Dental, Pharmacy and Nursing schools



or their representatives, student representatives, professional councils, professional associations and societies

f) Provinces issue job offers to the prospective community service officers allocated

## **5. Control Measures**

### **Nationally**

- Registration with the council
- The Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994)
- Legislation relevant to the professions
- Regulations for the performance of community service

### **Provincially**

- Letter of employment and contract by province/department
- Quarterly reports by the Team leader
- Final report on completion shall be submitted to the Council for registration in the category Independent Practice

## **6. Conditions of Service**

### **Leave benefits**

- **Annual vacation leave (working days) –**
  - community service officers are entitled to 22 days vacation leave
  - 36 days of sick leave in a three year cycle
  - 10 days family responsibility leave
  - 3 days paternity leave
- **Maternity leave –** An employee is entitled to (4) four consecutive calendar months paid maternity leave to commence at least four weeks before the expected date of birth or on a date certified by the attending practitioner as necessary for the employee's health or that of the unborn child. Community Service should not be extended by the number of approved working days maternity leave taken.



- **Study leave** – No studies shall be allowed during the year of community service
- **Salaries** – Officers doing community service shall be remunerated based on OSD of the posts

**Resignation** – Officers are expected to give 30 days notice when resigning. Present the release letter to NDOH for re-application.

#### **7. Places where community service is performed**

- a) A person contemplated in paragraph 1 shall apply for a post in a health facility or a complex approved for the purpose of performing community service and a list of approved facilities shall be published by the Minister in the Government Gazette.
- b) The Minister may, after consultation with a member of the Executive Council responsible for health in a province, make a final decision with regard to a place where a person contemplated in paragraph 1 shall perform community service.

#### **8. Interruption of period of community service**

- a) If a period of community service is interrupted, such period shall consist of periods which, when added together are not less than one calendar year in total, including approved periods of leave; provided that community service is completed within two years.
- b) If a period of six months or more has been done, the period will be recognized if the remaining period is completed within two years.
- c) The period of community service already served shall lapse if community service is not completed within a maximum period of two years
- d) No extension will be granted for community service