

Free Basic Water Services Policy

UGU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



Policy Custodian	Budget and Treasury Office
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PREAMBLE

The municipality fully supports the National Government's policy on providing free basic services to the poorer of the community. It also intends to ensure that no one is completely denied access to basic water supply of water and basic level of sanitation because they are unable to pay for the service. Underlying this is the recognition that the supply of water and sanitation at a basic level assist in alleviating poverty and improves health. The financial implication must determine the extent to which water can be provided free to certain consumers.

As part of government's strategy in South Africa, a policy for the provision of a free basic level of services has been introduced. In response to this commitment, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) commenced the implementation of phase 1 of the National Free Basic Water Strategy in February 2001.

The Ugu District Municipality will progressively introduce the Policy to its areas. Full advantage will be taken of subsidies and grants made available by other spheres of government to enable the municipality to implement a policy of free basic water without violating the fundamental principle.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Constitution states that all citizens have the right to an adequate amount of safe water. The Free Basic Water Policy (FBW) was implemented to ensure that these rights are fulfilled, and that the inequalities in service provision which were established during the apartheid era are reduced.

With this policy, the Government is responsible for supplying each household with 6000 litres of potable water, accessible within 200m of the home as per RDP standards, and sanitation at a basic level free of charge each month

The goals of water supply in South Africa are outlined in the 1997 National Water Services Act, and the government has aimed to have implemented FBW at these standards by 2014, in line with the World Health Organization Millennium Goals. The Free Basic Sanitation Implementation Strategy 2008 aims to guide Water Service Authorities in providing all poor households with free basic sanitation by 2014. The strategy is informed by the vision of sanitation for all.

2. DEFINITIONS

"Accounting Officer" is the Accounting officer of the municipality

"Basic water" supply means the minimum standards of water supply services necessary for the reliable supply of water to households to support life and personal hygiene

"Basic sanitation" means the prescribed minimum standard of services necessary for a safe, hygienic and adequate collection, removal, disposal or purification of human excreta, domestic wastewater and sewerage from households, including informal households

"Chief Financial Officer" CFO means a person employed by the Municipality in terms of section 57 of the Systems Act as the Chief Financial Officer of the Municipality, and includes any person to whom the Chief Financial Officer has delegated or sub-delegated a power, function or duty in accordance with the system of delegation developed by the Accounting Officer in terms of section 79 of the Municipal Finance Management Act and section 59 of the Systems Act;



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“Council” means the Council of the Ugu District Municipality

“Household” means all the people who permanently reside in the dwelling

“Indigent person” means a person lacking the basic necessities of life in respect of water and sanitation services, who meets the criteria for indigent support as per the policy

“Municipality” means Ugu District Municipality

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

There are two interrelated long-term objectives which will guide the municipality regarding the provision of free basic services, and these are:

- (a) The elimination of poverty in the Ugu District Municipality’s area, and
- (b) The equal treatment of all persons in the area

4. PRESCRIPTIVE/LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by the following legislations: -

Municipal Finance Management Act, No.56 of 2003

Water Services Act, No. 108 of 1997

Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000, Section 74

National Free Basic Water Strategy in February 2001.

The Constitution of South Africa Section 27 (1)(b)

Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013

White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation 1994

White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation 2001

Free Basic Sanitation Implementation Strategy 2008

Indigent Support Policy

5. POLICY APPLICATION

Whilst the historic imbalances between the citizens of South Africa are a fact, resulting in a mass of poor people badly provided with the basic services, therefore different levels of service must be provided at affordable or no cost, but the Policy is accepted that, overtime realistically computed, these distinctions should be eliminated, and everyone should be treated equally. The benefit is aimed at providing the basic service levels poor households.



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6. ADMINISTRATION OF FREE BASIC WATER SERVICES

In recognition of the primary importance of having clean and adequate water supply, the South African Government in 2000 introduced the Free Basic Services Policy, which allows for households to get 6 000litres (6kl) of water per month at no cost and access to the basic level of sanitation services. Such service is dependent on the Municipality receiving equitable share from National Treasury and as determined by Council from time to time.

6.1 Free Basic Water

Private, Commercial, Government, Bulk users and Industrial users, and other categories be retained with no Free Basic water allocation, except for users classified in paragraph 6.1.1 below. All households who fall in the group who qualify for free basic water in terms of the municipality will receive a free water usage of 200 litres per day, based on the quota allocation and the number of days in a meter reading period.

6.1.1 Qualification Criteria

- (a) Indigent households
- (b) Rural communities where water is supplied by standpipes
- (c) Informal settlements where water is supplied by standpipes
- (d) People served from springs and borehole water in rural areas
- (e) Rainwater harvesting schemes
- (f) The authority or the Authorised Provider may convey any water required as a temporary measure by tanker to any place where such temporary supply of water is required, subject to such conditions and period, which shall not exceed three months, or as may be prescribed by it.

6.2 Free Basic Sanitation

Private, Commercial, Government, Bulk users and Industrial users, and other categories be retained with no Free Basic Sanitation allocation. Free basic sanitation promotes sustainable access to a basic sanitation service by subsidising the ongoing operating and maintenance costs of a basic sanitation services. Free basic sanitation will be subsidized at 100% to the qualifying beneficiaries as per 6.2.1

6.2.1 Qualification Criteria

- (a) Indigent households
- (b) Rural communities where there is no sanitation infrastructure
- (c) Informal settlements

7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This information will be reported monthly to the MANCO, Portfolio of Committee on Finance, EXCO and Council for the oversight

8 COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLICY

The policy will come into effect on adoption by Council

9 AMENDMENT AND / OR ABOLITION

The policy's amendment and / or abolition will come into effect on approval by Council

10 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT



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Violation or non-compliance with this policy will give just cause for disciplinary steps to be taken.

11. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure applicability and relevance

Records of Approval		
Meeting	Date	Resolution
Review 2021/2022		
Policy Review Committee	20 January 2022	Recommended to MANCO
MANCO	24 January 2022	Recommended to Portfolio Committee on Finance
Portfolio Committee on Finance	03 February 2022	Recommended to EXCO
EXCO	06 March 2022	Recommended to Council
Council	26 May 2022	Approved
Review 2022/2023		
Policy Review Committee	10 February 2023	Recommended to MANCO
MANCO	24 April 2023	Recommended to Portfolio Committee on Finance
Portfolio Committee on Finance	16 May 2023	Recommended to EXCO
EXCO	17 May 2023	Recommended to Council
Council	25 May 2023	Approved
Review 2023/2024		
Policy Review Committee	14 February 2024	Recommended to MANCO
MANCO	11 March 2024	Recommended to Portfolio Committee on Finance
Portfolio Committee on Finance	14 March 2024	Recommended to EXCO
EXCO	20 March 2024	Recommended to Council
Council	23 May 2024	Approved
Review 2024/2025		
Policy Review Committee	18 February 2025	Recommended to MANCO
MANCO	19 May 2025	Recommended to Portfolio Committee on Finance
Joint Portfolio Committee on Finance and EXCO	26 May 2025	Recommended to EXCO
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