



Theewaterskloof
Municipality

PROBATION POLICY

Control Sheet

Policy Title	Probation Policy
File Reference	HR/01/AA02
Objectives	To establish guidelines for the employer and newly appointed employees to serve a probation period of employment within a particular post in order to establish whether the employee is suitable for permanent employment within the Municipality.
Version	1 st
Policy Owner	Director Corporate Services
PAF Consultation date	N/A
Council Approval Ref	C228/2025
Date of approval	27 August 2025
Effective date	01 September 2025

Revision frequency	As and when required
Policy revision date	01 September 2026
Official responsible for revision	Senior Manager Human Resources
Applicable Legislation	Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995) Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) Local Government Municipal Staff Regulations
Related Policies	Employment Equity Policy Recruitment and Selection Policy
Implementation	Municipal Manager All Directors

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK	3
3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS	3
4. POLICY OBJECTIVES	3 -
5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROLE PLAYERS.....	4
6. APPOINTMENT ON PROBATION	5
7. COMPLETION OF PROBATION PERIOD.....	5 -
8. UNDERPERFORMANCE DURING PROBATION.....	6
9. TRANSFER OF EMPLOYEE DURING PROBATION.....	7
10. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING.....	7

1. INTRODUCTION

A newly appointed employee should be subject to a period of assessment regarding performance within the relevant post to establish whether the incumbent satisfies the requirements of the job for possible permanent appointment.

This policy is therefore applicable to any permanent employee who is newly appointed in a post at the Municipality, including promoted employees and employees promoted in terms of the Rapid Promotion Scheme (refer to definitions) with the exception of the Municipal Manager and Managers reporting directly to the Municipal Manager who are appointed in terms of a performance contract.

2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995)
- 2.2 Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997)
- 2.3 Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000)
- 2.4 Municipal Staff Regulations

3. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- 3.1 **Employer** refers to Theewaterskloof Municipality.
- 3.2 **Employee** refers to an individual who, through following the full recruitment and selection process, is appointed in a permanent position at the Municipality (definition applicable to this policy only).
- 3.3 **Probation period** refers to the initial period of employment during which the employee's performance is tested to determine his/her suitability in terms of the requirements of the post.
- 3.4 **Line manager** refers to the head of division or manager who is responsible for the management of a division.
- 3.5 **Director** refers to the senior manager who is directly responsible to the Municipal Manager and appointed in terms of Section 56 and 57 of the Municipal Systems Act.
- 3.6 **Transferred employee** refers to an existing employee who has moved from one post to another that is similar in pay, responsibility and organisational level.
- 3.7 **Promoted employee** refers to an employee of the Municipality who has been appointed in a post which is higher in pay, responsibility and/or organisational level than his/her previous post and was appointed in the higher post (full recruitment process followed).
- 3.8 **Leave** refers to all types of leave as per the Municipality's Leave Policy.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the policy are to:

- 4.1 To establish guidelines for the employer and newly appointed employees to serve a probation period of employment within a particular post in order to establish whether the employee is suitable for permanent employment within the Municipality;

- 4.2 To outline the importance of identifying the employee's areas of poor or under- performance in order to attempt to correct such performance; and
- 4.3 To increase employee retention and to lead to a positive impact on work productivity and quality during the employee's career at the Municipality.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROLE-PLAYERS

5.1 The Line Manager:

The employee's line manager or his/her delegate shall:

- 5.1.1 Inform the staff member within the first two (2) weeks of appointment of the performance requirements of the post;
- 5.1.2 Assess, on a monthly basis, the progress and performance of the employee appointed on probation;
- 5.1.3 Provide the employee with feedback on his/her performance on a monthly basis according to the criteria and job requirements of the post;
- 5.1.4 Advise the employee of any aspects that he/she is considered to be failing to meet.

5.2 The Director:

The director of the Directorate in which the post exists, shall:

- 5.2.1 Review the evaluation conducted by the line manager on a monthly basis before submission to the Human Resources division;
- 5.2.2 Determine whether or not to extend a probation period in terms of under-performance or poor performance;

5.3 The Municipal Manager:

The Municipal Manager shall:

- 5.3.1 Complete the probation assessments of employees reporting directly to him/her.

5.4 The Human Resources Division:

The Human Resources division shall:

- 5.4.1 Distribute probation assessments to the relevant line managers at the start of each month;
- 5.4.2 Provide guidance / advice to the relevant line manager and director if a case of underperformance is brought to the division's attention during the probation period;
- 5.4.3 At the end of the probation period provide the line manager or director with the leave history of the employee to ensure that the full probation period was completed (refer to clause 6.2);

- 5.4.4 Upon successful completion of a probation period and upon recommendation from the director and/or Municipal Manager for permanent appointment, supply written confirmation to the employee of his/her permanent appointment.

6. APPOINTMENT ON PROBATION

- 6.1 The appointment of an employee as per this policy shall be effective on a minimum probation period of six (6) months.
- 6.2 The period of probation must exclude the number of days for which leave has been taken by the employee during the period of probation or any extension thereof.
- 6.3 The appointment letter the employee receives shall indicate that the appointment is subject to the successful completion of the probation period related to the post.
- 6.4 The probation period will be for a period of six (6) consecutive months and will be applied to newly permanently appointed employees including promoted employees (full recruitment process followed).
- 6.5 The line manager must inform the employee within the first two (2) weeks of employment of the performance requirements of the post which will be monitored during the probation period. If an employee's performance is unsatisfactory during the probation period, the line manager must advise the employee of any aspects that the employee is considered to be failing to meet.
- 6.6 If, after the expiry of an employee's probation the director is convinced that the employee's performance is satisfactory for the post he/she occupies, the appointment shall be confirmed by the relevant Director after consultation with the Manager Human Resources.
- 6.7 If, after expiry of an employee's initial probation assessment the director believes that the employee's performance does not meet the required standards, the probation period may be extended for maximum period of 12 months or the employee may be dismissed provided that:
- 6.7.1 The employee has been given a reasonable period of time for reasonable assessment, training, guidance and counselling; and
 - 6.7.2 The employee's performance continues to be unsatisfactory after a reasonable period has been given to the employee to improve his/her performance.

7. COMPLETION OF PROBATION PERIOD

- 7.1 The delegated authority shall confirm the appointment of the employee after completion of the probation period if:
- 7.1.1 The employee's performance during the probation period was satisfactory (the employee was awarded at least 66% for each probation assessment); and
 - 7.1.2 The employee complied with all the conditions of the probation appointment.
- 7.2 On submission of the final probation report and upon approval of the delegated authority, the Human Resources Division shall notify the employee in writing of his/her permanent appointment.
- 7.3 Should the delegated authority not recommend appointment after completion of the initial probation period, he/she must refer to the Manager: Human Resources in writing that:

7.3.1 The service of the employee be terminated, subject to the stipulations of paragraphs 8 and 9 of Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995) as amended (*refer to clause 8.2*)

7.4 If an employee on probation works beyond the initial probation period without being evaluated and informed of the permanent appointment or extension of the probation period, the employee will be regarded as having successfully completed the probation requirements.

8. UNDERPERFORMANCE DURING PROBATION

During the initial probation period, the relevant line manager and director (in terms of their delegated powers) must express in writing to the Manager: Human Resources should they be of the opinion that the incumbent does not perform up to standard in terms of his/her job requirements.

The Manager: Human Resources shall as a result advise the line manager and director as to the necessary steps (refer to clause 8.1 and 8.2) to initiate in order to provide guidance or training to the incumbent, or to conduct further investigation.

8.1 Extension of the probation period

8.1.1 Should the relevant line manager be of the opinion that the employee's performance does not meet the required standards of the post, he/she may after consultation with the Manager: Human Resources, recommend to extend the probation period to a maximum of 12 months on the basis of performance and provided that the extension is not disproportionate to the legitimate purpose that the employer seeks to achieve.

The performance of the employee should be assessed on an ongoing basis during the probation period to ensure that shortcomings in performance are identified and the necessary corrective action taken immediately.

8.1.2 The employee on probation is entitled to be given reasonable evaluation, instruction, training, guidance and/or counselling where necessary to enable him/her to render satisfactory performance.

8.1.3 Should an employee not meet the required performance standard(s) or is alleged to be incompetent for the post during the probation period, the line manager must advise the employee on aspects in which he/she does not meet the required performance standards of the post or is alleged to be incompetent and record such detail on the prescribed form.

The line manager and director must furthermore supply written reason to the employee as to why an extension of the probation period is necessary and the terms thereof. Areas of under-performance must be indicated on the probation record form.

8.1.4 The period of probation excludes the number of days for which leave has been taken by the staff member during the period of probation or any extension thereof. It is the responsibility of the relevant line manager to obtain the employee's leave record from the Human Resources Division and to ensure that the probation period less leave taken amounts to six (6) months.

8.2 Termination of employment based on incapacity and/or poor performance during the probation period

8.2.1 In dealing with poor performance or incapacity issues in this regard, the provision of fair labour practice indicated in the Labour Relations Act shall be adhered to.

8.2.2 The relevant director may, after thorough investigation of reports, approve termination of employment of an employee based on incapacity and/or under-performance after sufficient reasons have been recorded in writing for termination.

8.2.3 For posts on levels T13 and above, the relevant director shall motivate and give reasons in writing to the Municipal Manager as to why permanent appointment of the specific incumbent is not recommended. The report to the Municipal Manager should contain results of monthly probation reports, evidence of support and/or training provided to the employee for improvement of performance, and any written correspondence to the employee regarding the probation period and/or extension thereof.

8.2.4 The Municipal Manager may approve the termination (on post levels T13 and above) of an incumbent in terms incompetence after satisfactory consultation with the relevant report(s) from the Directorate in which the post exists.

8.2.5 An employee may not be dismissed for unsatisfactory performance unless the employer has provided the employee with appropriate evaluation, instruction, training, guidance and/or counselling. Furthermore, reasonable time for improvement should have been provided to the employee before dismissal is considered. The procedure leading to dismissal should include an investigation to establish reasons for the unsatisfactory performance and the employer should consider other ways, short of dismissal, to remedy the matter.

9. TRANSFER OF EMPLOYEE DURING PROBATION

An employee may be considered for transfer into another post should the employee still be under probation in his/her current post.

10. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The policy will be implemented and become effective on the 1st of the month following Council's approval.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL: 27 August 2025

EFFECTIVE DATE: 01 September 2025



PROBATION REVIEW FORM

You are NOT required to submit a copy of this form where the staff member's performance during probation is satisfactory. However, you MUST submit a copy and seek the advice of the Head of HR unit as soon as possible if difficulties arise during the probationary period which mean that extending the probationary period and/or non-confirming the staff member in the post are possible outcomes. Non-reporting will result in the assumption that the staff member's probation period is progressing satisfactorily.

The supervisor should ensure that the staff member is given a copy of this document at each stage of their probation and should retain the original to monitor progress against set objectives at follow-up meetings.

Probation Record

Staff member name:		
Job Title:		
Grade:		
Department:		
Start Date:		
Supervisor:		
	Date Due	Please tick when completed
Initial Meeting		
1-month review:		
3-month review:		
6-month final review unless extension is required:		
9-month review:		
12-month review:		

If any areas of performance, conduct or attendance require improvement please provide details below.			
Where concerns have been identified, please summarize how these will be addressed during the remaining period of probation.			
Summarize the staff members' performance and progress over the period			
Have the requirements Identified for this period of the probation been met?	YES/NO	If NO, what further action is required?	Review Date
Have the training/ development needs identified for this period of the probation been addressed?	YES/NO		
Staff members' Signature:			
Manager's Signature:			
Date:			

(please tick)	Improvement required	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
If YES, please provide reasons and, where appropriate, specify any areas of improvement required and how these will be monitored.				
Length of the extension (max 3 months):				
New probation period completion date:				
Staff members' signature:				
Manager's signature:				
Date:				