Musina local Municipality
Draft Indigent policy

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PART 1 OBJECTIVE

Because of the level of unemployment and subsequent poverty in Musina Local Municipal area, there are households that are unable to pay for normal municipal services. The municipality therefore adopts this indigency management 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 where verified total gross monthly income of all occupants over 18 years of age does not exceed R 3500 or such other amount as the council may from time to time determine, qualify for a subsidy on property rates and service charges for refuse removal, and will additionally receive 50 kWh of electricity per month free of charge.

Only households where the accountholder or property owner has registered as indigent in terms of the municipality's annual registration programme, and whose registration has been accepted and entered into the register of indigents shall qualify for the above concessions.

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, and if not also the owner of the property concerned, may not own any other property, whether in or out of the municipal area.

For a household to qualify for a rebate on rates, the registered indigent must be both the owner and fulltime occupant of the property concerned, and may not own any other property, whether in or out of the municipal area.

Indigency relief shall apply for a period not extending beyond the financial year in which the particular household is registered as indigent. Registration must be renewed in each registration programme if relief is to continue.

To register as an indigent, the relevant property owner or accountholder must personally complete and sign the registration form provided by the municipality for this purpose, and furnish such further documentation as the municipality specifies. The municipal manager will provide assistance to persons who cannot read or write, at such times and places as are specified in the notices published to indicate that the registration programme is to take place. Registration will take

place on dates and at times and places determined by the council, but shall generally be undertaken during January and/or February each year.

PART 3 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The subsidies on rates and 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 electricity, a 100% subsidy up to 50 kWh per household per month will apply; however, if consumption exceeds 50 kWh per metering period (month), the consumer will be charged at normal tariffs for actual consumption on the quantity exceeding 50 kWh.

In respect of charges for household refuse removal, the relief granted shall not be less than a rebate of 50% on the monthly amount billed for the service concerned.

In respect of property rates, the rebate shall be 100% of the rates based on the rateable value up to R30 000 and 75% of the rates based on the rateable value above R30 000.

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.

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

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 for a period extending for 5 (five) years beyond the financial year in which the misdemeanour is detected.

Indigency relief will not apply in respect of property owners owning more than one property, whether in or outside the municipal area.

PART 5 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Municipal Manager shall report on a monthly basis to the Mayor or Finance Committee, as the case may be, 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 Municipal Manager 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.