



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE
& TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

2026

Departmental Contact Details	
Physical Address	Tyamzashe Building Phalo Avenue Bhisho 5605
Postal Address	Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs Private Bag X0035 Bhisho 5605
Document Number	3
Document Name	Career Path Development and Management
Contact Person	Mr S. Ned
Designation	Director
Component	Human Resource Utilisation and Development
Telephone No.	
Cell Phone No.	082 798 3519
Fax No.	040 635 1161
E-mail Address	samora.ned@eccogta.gov.za
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SIGN OFF

I. Head of Department

This Policy on Career Path Development and Management has been recommended by Mr V. Mlokothe in my capacity as the Head of Department for the Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs.

I am satisfied and concur with the contents of this Policy.

The development of the Career Path Development and Management Policy will ensure the Department is able to exercise its powers in compliance with the law and guide decision-making in the Department.

Signed:	
Designation:	Head of Department
Date:	13/09/2026

II. Executive Authority

The Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs has unprecedented opportunity to improve the lives of the people by effectively rendering services that it is expected to provide. We have envisaged a department that has the required capacity to respond adequately to the challenges of its people.

I, therefore, trust that guidance from this Policy will contribute to the effective Career Path Development and Management in the Department.

Signed:	
Designation:	MEC: Z.A. Williams of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs
Date:	28-09-2026

1. PREAMBLE

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs commits itself to an open, honest, fair, objective and transparent career path development and management system. The Department shall implement this Policy in a manner that advances transformation, employment equity, diversity and inclusion, and shall create programmes aimed at identifying, developing, appointing and retaining employees with due regard to women, youth, persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups.

This Policy recognises that career progression in the public service must be merit-based, lawful, fair and responsive to organisational needs, while also addressing historical exclusion, structural barriers and unequal access to development opportunities.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

To ensure structured, fair, inclusive career development, availability of competent and skilled employees aligned to departmental and legislative priorities.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 To promote equitable representation across all occupational levels.
- 3.2 To retain employees of a high calibre to meet the Departmental human capital needs.
- 3.3 To develop leadership pipelines for women and youth.
- 3.4 To ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities with reasonable accommodation.
- 3.5 To devise strategies that will improve the ability of the Department to accelerate career-path.
- 3.6 To strengthen internal capacity and succession planning.
- 3.7 To define employee-career path, which will help the Department to train and retain a pool of suitably qualified employees.
- 3.8 To enable a flow of these candidates through various directorates with the view of educating them into the culture and processes of the Department.
- 3.9 To align development programmes with organisational needs.
- 3.10 To establish positive goals for key personnel which will keep them in the Department.

4. DEFINITIONS

Terms and definitions that will be used throughout the Policy that need clarification for the reader can also include any keywords, technical terms and abbreviations that may be used in this document.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Bench-strength	An assessment of the Department's preparedness to re-place departing staff in critical positions. Primarily, this refers to having officials capacitated to take up another position at the appropriate time, under the appropriate circumstances with a virtually seamless transition.
Career	Any sequence and variety of jobs or work-related experiences and occupations which one undertakes throughout a lifetime. Careers are also viewed in terms of life-long learning rather than in terms of upward movements.
Career appraisal	The process by which individuals receive and use career-related feedback.
Career development	An ongoing process by which an individual's progress, through a series of stages, each of which is characterized by a relatively unique set of issues, themes or tasks. A career consists of different stages and the individual is confronted with different issues during each of these stages.
Career goals	A desired career-related outcome that an individual intends to attain.
Career management	The process of designing and implementing goals, plans and strategies that enable HR professionals and managers to satisfy work-force needs and allow individuals to achieve their career objectives.
Career paths	Employees move from one job to another. These moves often indicate a sequential pattern of jobs or work experiences.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Career success	The concept of “career success” has different meanings for different people. The way individuals define ‘career success’ strongly influences their career decision. To some, success means promotion, to others it means becoming an expert in their occupational field, or moving frequently from one challenge to another, etc.
Continuous learning	The process by which an individual acquires knowledge, skills and abilities through-out his/her career in reaction to, and in anticipation of, changing performance criteria.
Individual career planning	The process by which employees obtain knowledge about themselves (their values, personality, preferences, interests, abilities, etc.) and information about the working environment and then attempt to achieve a proper match.
Job	A set of tasks and work-related responsibilities designed to be performed by an individual, in return for remuneration.
Organizational career planning	The process whereby management develops organizational plans and goals.
Occupation	A set of jobs whose main tasks and associated responsibilities are of such similarity that they can be grouped or clustered together.
Career-path Development and Management	The flexible, long term, development view of future management staffing. A key aspect of the overall HR planning is having a systematic process for defining future management requirements, identifying candidates and matching this demand to supply, as a basis for future planning
Designated groups	Persons or categories recognised in terms of the Employment Equity Act, including black people, women and persons with disabilities.
Diversity and inclusion	The deliberate creation of an enabling work environment in which differences are valued and all employees have equitable access to opportunities, development and progression.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Gender mainstreaming	The systematic integration of gender equality considerations into policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
Youth	Employees and potential entrants to the public service who fall within the age cohort recognised in applicable youth development frameworks and policies.
Persons with disabilities	Persons who have long-term or recurring physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder full and effective participation on an equal basis with others.
Reasonable accommodation	Necessary and appropriate modifications or adjustments to ensure persons with disabilities enjoy equal access to career development opportunities, unless such measures impose unjustifiable hardship.

5. APPLICATION & SCOPE

The Policy is applicable to all the employees of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Its implementation shall extend to all occupational categories, salary levels, employment statuses and programmes, and shall be applied without unfair discrimination.

6. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The Constitution of the RSA.
- 6.2 The Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 published in GG 15791 of 3 June 1994), as amended.
- 6.3 Public Service Regulations 2016 as amended.
- 6.4 Skills development Act 97 of 1998.
- 6.5 Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998.
- 6.6 DPSA Guide on the Practice of Career Management in the Public Service.
- 6.7 DPSA Strategy to Reduce the Recruitment Period and the Vacancy Rate in the Public Service.
- 6.8 The National Framework on the Professionalisation of the Public Service of 2022
- 6.9 Provincial Recruitment and Selection Policy.

- 6.10 Provincial Attraction and Retention Strategy Framework.
- 6.11 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service.
- 6.12 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service.
- 6.13 Provincial Public Sector Transformation Strategy (2009-2014).
- 6.14 Provincial PMDS Policy.
- 6.15 Provincial Human Capital Management Framework.
- 6.16 Applicable disability, youth and gender mainstreaming frameworks and prescripts.

7. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department shall embark on a vigorous effort to identify, develop, deploy and retain talented and high-potential employees for advancement and to ensure the systematic and long-term development of individuals to fill key vacancies arising from attrition, retirements, resignations, transfers and organisational needs. All career-pathing interventions shall be implemented in a fair, transparent and auditable manner, and shall actively promote equitable representation and inclusive participation.

8. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Department subscribes to the following principles contained in Chapter 5.10.2 of the White Paper on Human Resource Management in Public Service:

- 8.1 Line Management and individual employees are responsible for career management and development respectively. Employees have a duty to avail themselves of job training and development opportunities as they occur
- 8.2 The employees immediate supervisor is responsible for familiarizing himself or herself at regular intervals about the employees career aspirations and for reaching an understanding with him or her about how these can best be met within the organization's future operational objectives
- 8.3 The manager should keep up to date with the job, training and development opportunities which are likely to assist in meeting both the employees career aspirations and the organizational operational objectives and to inform the employee of these and support this or her efforts to avail himself or herself of them

- 8.4 Managers have a particular duty in respect of employees whose careers have been or are still hampered through no fault of their own, such employees who have been educationally disadvantaged, women, youth and persons with disabilities, as well as employees from other under-represented groups.
- 8.5 The managers own performance assessment should include an assessment of the extent to which they have carried out their career management responsibilities.
- 8.6 The Department shall implement Career Path Development and Management in a manner that actively promotes transformation, equity and inclusion, in line with the Constitution, Employment Equity Act, the National Development Plan and DPSA frameworks.
- 8.7 Career development interventions shall be merit-based and consistent with the constitutional values of fairness, transparency, accountability and representativity.
- 8.8 All career development interventions must intentionally advance:
- 8.8.1 Gender equality
 - 8.8.2 Youth empowerment
 - 8.8.3 Inclusion of persons with disabilities
 - 8.8.4 Representation of designated and under-represented groups
- 8.9 Transformation shall be planned, measured and reported upon, and shall not be treated as incidental to the implementation of this Policy.
- 8.10 The implementation of this Policy shall be subject to the availability of resources; however, resource constraints shall not be used to justify unfair exclusion or the failure to provide reasonable accommodation and minimum inclusion measures.

9. CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

A number of affected stakeholders including employees at all levels have been consulted and their inputs, comments have been incorporated into this Policy. Management of the Department has been consulted for inputs, buy-in and adoption. Legal Advisory Services was also consulted for their legal opinion and soundness.

10. ANTICIPATED BENEFITS OF THE POLICY

- 10.1 Career-path as a dynamic process shall include some of the following basics:

- 10.1.1 Mitigating for the unexpected loss of key leaders.
- 10.1.2 Improving the organization's bench-strength in key positions.
- 10.1.3 Identifying potential talent early and devising strategies to retain talent.
- 10.1.4 Ensuring career development for staff.
- 10.1.5 Reducing the cost of replacing employees.
- 10.1.6 Building departmental core competence.
- 10.1.7 Enhancing representation of designated groups.
- 10.1.8 Motivating and providing an incentive to employees.
- 10.1.9 Fostering a culture of internal upward mobility and development and providing career opportunities.
- 10.1.10 Improved productivity levels.
- 10.1.11 Determination of key positions in the Department
- 10.1.12 Drafting of a replacement plan for each position.

10.2 Career-path Development and Management Structures

Career-path Development and Management forms part of broader Strategic Human capital management initiatives and the provisions of the Professionalisation Framework. The structure to drive the Plan may be comprised as follows:

- 10.2.1 Oversight of the Programme is incorporated in the work of the Departmental Skills Development Committee.
- 10.2.2 HRA and HRU&D provide a key consultancy service to the leadership and employees of the Department. This includes facilitating the identification of posts which will be included in the Program, employees who will undergo the Program and appropriate developmental interventions.
- 10.2.3 Reporting on the Outputs and Outcomes achieved should also be included in the routine reporting on HRA and HRU&D matters to management.

10.3 Process to Develop a Departmental Career-path Development and Management Programme

- 10.3.1 Identify Key/Critical Positions
- 10.3.2 In order to be a meaningful process career-path Development and Management needs to be closely linked to the Human Resource Plan over the MTEF period. The first stage, therefore, involves looking at the future goals and strategies of the Department for the next few years, identifying the key job roles that are critical to the success of those Objectives and Strategies. This will enable the Department to identify the kind of employees, particularly at Senior/Managerial level or those who possess scarce or critical skills which it will need in those roles.
- 10.3.3 Posts which are identified may be presently occupied or vacant, or could be a newly created post on the Post Establishment. An important consideration in determining whether a post is suitable for the Programme will be whether the Department possesses or is able to source the required technical capability to develop the required skills attached to the post.
- 10.3.4 Other considerations may be whether the present incumbent of the post is approaching retirement or the employment contract of the incumbent is to expire. This type of information could be used to ensure the timely identification of posts.

A position is considered key or critical if;

- 10.3.4.1.1 In terms of the organisational structure, it is a key contributor in achieving the Department's Mission.
- 10.3.4.1.2 It performs a critical task that would stop or hinder vital functions from being performed if it were left vacant.
- 10.3.4.1.3 The position requires specialised or unique expertise that is difficult to replace.
- 10.3.4.1.4 Positions in the same job classification or occupational group in danger of knowledge drain, due to retirements or high turnover.

10.4 Conduct Position Analysis

- 10.4.1 The next key step is to identify the specific skill sets required for each of these positions through the identification of key competencies i.e. skills, knowledge and attributes that will be necessary within those roles. This can be done by using tools such as job descriptions, job specification and competency

frameworks. These will serve as the framework in determining existing bench strength within the Department.

- 10.4.2 The position analysis will to a large extent determine the content of the succession programme and the requirements for the selection of potential candidates for the programme.
- 10.4.3 Posts which are included in the Departmental Career-Path Development and Management Program could broadly be classified as managerial or professional / technical. This classification will guide the content of the Program.

10.5 Develop a Career Path for the identified posts

- 10.5.1 During this phase specific interventions are designed, consolidated and implemented to bridge the current or anticipated future skills deficiencies related to the positions identified above. The planned strategies to overcome the gaps should be outlined to include target completion dates, responsible parties and required resources.
- 10.5.2 The content of a Career Path Development and Management programme will essentially comprise two elements, namely generic managerial development and capacitating on job-specific technical content. The nature of the post will determine the relative weight of the two elements.

10.6 Generic managerial development

This aspect of the programme should include as a minimum the following provisions of the Professionalisation Framework:

- 10.6.1 Leadership & management development programmes such as the Advanced Management and Development Programme (AMDP) (development towards middle management) or Executive Development Programme – EDP (development towards senior management).
- 10.6.2 Participation in a relevant culture change programme
- 10.6.3 Competency assessment to identify areas for development
- 10.6.4 Job Rotation

- 10.6.5 Specific programmes which address the identified competency gaps
- 10.6.6 Comprehensive induction
- 10.6.7 Khaedu deployment
- 10.6.8 Coaching and Mentoring Programmes (current leaders must teach, mentor and provide role models to others on what it takes to succeed).
- 10.6.9 Where relevant, include women's leadership development, youth pipelines and targeted disability inclusion measures as integral programme components and not optional add-ons.
- 10.6.10 Leadership Seminar Series
- 10.6.11 Women development programmes (where applicable)
- 10.6.12 Moving employees laterally across the Department within related functional areas (job rotation).

The above list is not exhaustive and any other appropriate required developmental interventions may be considered.

10.7 Capacitating on job-specific technical content

- 10.7.1 This type of development is generally department-specific and a need to conduct proper research to develop value-adding content is necessary. This will require bench-marking with other departments provincially and nationally which also have the relevant post on its establishment. In some instances it may be possible to utilise learnerships or internships as vehicles to conduct the development, but this may not be possible especially for higher level posts.

10.8 Quality control measures

- 10.8.1 The entire program should be clearly structured and indicate clear milestones and indicators to measure the progress of the candidate. Training interventions should be appropriately quality assured. Where on-the-job training takes place, this needs to be planned, documented and assessed. The PMDS should be used as the primary tool to consolidate assessments, over and above specific separate assessments. Candidates on the program should collate a portfolio of evidence

over the duration of the program which contains the results of assessments undergone during the program.

NB: Prior to launching of the Career-path Development and Management programme, the Department will present the suggested Programme to the Office of the Premier for final validation and quality assurance.

10.9 Selection of the pool of candidates to undergo the Program

- 10.9.1 The number of candidates to be selected for the program will be determined by the current and future needs of the Department.
- 10.9.2 In addition to merit considerations, selection shall take into account the Employment Equity targets, representational gaps, youth development priorities, disability inclusion and the need to diversify developmental pipelines.
- 10.9.3 The Department shall develop and use appropriate, fair and auditable selection instruments. Selection panels must be sensitised to unconscious bias, and no cohort should be approved where there is unreasonable exclusion of designated or under-represented groups without documented justification.
- 10.9.4 Career-path Development and Management programmes must be advertised within the Department and only employees within the department will be considered for the Program. Such an advertisement should clearly specify that it is not a post that is being advertised, but a developmental opportunity. The advertisement should indicate minimum requirements to undergo the Program, an overview of the program and a clear indication that there are no guarantees for appointment upon completion of the program.
- 10.9.5 The Department will develop and utilise appropriate selection instruments which will ensure that candidates with potential are selected. Possible criteria could include:
 - 10.9.5.1 Competencies
 - 10.9.5.2 Major accomplishments
 - 10.9.5.3 Performance
 - 10.9.5.4 Work experience

- 10.9.6 The job title or conditions of service of candidates who are accepted to undergo the Program will not change. The Department needs to keep a database of all employees undergoing the career-path Program and report on a quarterly basis to the Office of the Premier on progress made with respect to the Program.
- 10.9.7 Contractual binding of employees undergoing the program will be determined by departmental bursary and HRD policies.
- 10.9.8 All registration requirements for appointment in posts remain valid and supersede the Programme.
- 10.9.9 An employee who is accepted to undergo the Program must be assessed against the developmental post requirements to determine the developmental needs of the employee. The line manager and employee in conjunction with the departmental HRD unit must then draw up an individual development plan in line with the required Program. This Plan must be incorporated in the performance contract of the employee and integrated with the PMDS cycle and Workplace Skills Plan.

10.10 Completion of the program

- 10.10.1 The spirit of the programme is essentially to prepare candidates while allowing them to compete in the recruitment and selection processes as guided by Policy. There will not be guarantees for appointments linked to the Programme. The Department must issue a certificate to the candidate to indicate that the candidate has successfully completed the Program.
- 10.10.2 During implementation there should be no presupposition as to who will succeed any given person until such time as all qualified candidates, as well as those who have not undergone the programme, are provided an equal opportunity to apply for and be considered for the job. This will prevent possible abuse of the program through unfair appointments.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles of various stakeholders in managing the Career-Path Development and Management Policy and Program are as follows:

FUNCTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CROSS-FUNCTIONAL INVOLVEMENT
- Leads and supports the development and implementation of a Career-path Development and Management Policy and Program - Oversee placement / appointments in line with HRM delegations.	Head of Department (MEC may be responsible for approval of certain programmes if not delegated)	CFO, Heads of HRA and HRU&D
- Compile work-force Planning Reports - Anticipate employee movements - Facilitate the up-dating of the organogram and Job Descriptions - Project vacancies - Support the development and implementation of the Career-path Development and Management Policy and Programme	Human Resource Administration (HRA)	Line Managers, Human Resource Development (HRD)
- Guide to the Career-path Development and Management process - Develop a departmental Career- path Development and Management Policy	Human Resource Development	HRA & CFO

FUNCTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CROSS-FUNCTIONAL INVOLVEMENT
- Develop a departmental Career Path Development and Management program - Identify relevant career-paths - Implement day-to-day Career-path Development and Management. - Develop training Curriculum - Partner with business division leaders to select and develop succession candidates - Monitor and report on implementation of the Career-path Development and Management policy and Program		
Oversee and support the development and implementation of the Career-path Development and Management Policy and Programme	HRD Committee	Departmental Management
Participation in the Career-path Development and Management Training Programs	Employees	

FUNCTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CROSS-FUNCTIONAL INVOLVEMENT
• Take responsibility for their own career progression • Utilize available developmental opportunities. • Give feedback on how effective the current Career-path Development and Management practices are.		

12. COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION OF THE POLICY

This Policy shall be communicated through workshops, circulars and other internal communication channels to all employees. Awareness sessions shall include guidance on transformation, employment equity, disability inclusion, gender mainstreaming and youth development responsibilities.

13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Human Resource Development Unit will monitor the implementation of this Policy and will submit a quarterly report to the Chief Director: Human Resource Management & Development for submission to the Head of Department.

14. APPROVAL OF THE POLICY

The Policy will be approved by the Member of the Executive Council on the delegations and the Policy will become official on the date it is signed by the Executing Authority (i.e. the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs).

15. DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISM

An employee who has a grievance or dispute within the Department concerning his/her career-path as defined in this Policy, shall have normal recourse to the applicable resolutions as well as any other right they have by law. After Labour Relations has not resolved a case of a party, a dispute concerning unfair labour practice may refer the dispute in writing to the Bargaining Council within 90 (Ninety) days after the act or omission occurred.

16. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Policy will be reviewed once in five (5) years and in line with future legislative and collective agreements promulgations. The development of this policy is a dynamic process, and it may require revision from time to time. The review shall specifically assess the effectiveness of transformation, gender, youth, disability and diversity measures.

17. VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
2021		Honourable X.E Nqatha (MEC for Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs)	Preamble Policy Statement Legislative Framework Review of the Policy
2026		Z.A. Williams	Preamble Purpose of the Policy Objectives of the Policy Definitions Application and Scope Legislative Framework Policy Statement Policy Principles

CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026

			Anticipated benefits of the Policy Communication/Education of the Policy Review of the Policy
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Executive Authority
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