



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development

POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF WHITE DOOR CENTRE

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1. DEFINITIONS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

1.1 **“Empowerment”** means the process of equipping service users with skills and knowledge; aimed at helping a victim recover, and it is not limited to the provision of psychosocial services;

1.2 **“Re-admission”** means accommodation of clients that have been in the White Door Centre previously;

1.3 **“SAPS”** means South African Police Services

1.4 **“Service users”** means victims of the crime and violence and including perpetrators who are accessing services at White Door Centre;

1.5 **“Victims of crime and violence”** means individuals who have experienced traumatic crime and gender based violence in their lives (Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Rape, Trafficking in Persons, Hate Crimes and Intimate Partner Violence);

1.6 **“White Door Centre”** means a short term safe space that has been registered with the Department of Social Development which can be accessed by victims of crime and violence including perpetrators if they need to wait for professional services, including the police.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The White Door Centres were established to counteract crime and violence and to encourage community participation whereby authorized dwellings are identified within the community to be utilized as safe spaces for victims of violence for crisis intervention.

2.2 White Door Centres provide victims of crime and violence including perpetrators with short term accommodation and care. The level of service is geared at psychologically healthy individuals who are experiencing a high level of distress. The intervention focuses on emotional support, mobilization of support, giving information, practical assistance and basic problem solving. Direct links are with the SAPS, hospitals, courts, social workers and other mental health professionals within the government and the non-government sector.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of this policy are:

3.1.1 To ensure that White Door Centre services are easily accessible to all communities.

3.1.2 To minimize the chances of secondary victimization within the criminal justice system.

3.1.3 To encourage all victims to access victim empowerment services as part of breaking the cycle of violence.

3.1.4 To encourage communities to protect all victims of crime and violence from victimization.

3.1.5 To encourage community members to be active participants in the prevention of crime and violence.

4. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY

4.1 This policy is applicable to all registered white door centres for victims of crime and violence that are in partnership with the Department of Social Development.

5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- 5.2 Children's Act, 2005 (Act No.38 of 2005);
- 5.3 Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters), 2007(Act No.32 of 2007);
- 5.4 Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act No. 116 of 1998);
- 5.5 Minimum Standards on Shelters for Abused Women;
- 5.6 Minimum standards for service delivery in Victim Empowerment;
- 5.7 National Policy Guidelines for Victim Empowerment, 1996;
- 5.8 Older Persons Act ,2006 (Act No. 13 of 2006);
- 5.9 Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act ,2013 (Act No.7 of 2013); and
- 5.10 Shelter strategy for victims of crime and violence in South Africa, 2013

6. PRINCIPLES OF VICTIM EMPOWERMENT SERVICES

The Policy is guided by the following principles: -

6.1 Accountability

Anyone who intervenes with all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be held accountable for the delivery of an appropriate and quality service.

6.2 Empowerment

The resourcefulness of all (each) victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be promoted by providing opportunities to use and build their own capacity and support networks and to act on their own choices and sense of responsibility.

6.3 Participation

All victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be actively involved in all the stages of the intervention process.

6.4 Family-centred

Services should be contextualized within the family, the extended family and the community. Support and capacity building to families should be provided through regular developmental assessment and programmes which strengthen the family's development and reinforce family preservation where applicable.

6.5 Community-centred

Services should be contextualized within the community environment. Support and capacity building to communities should be provided through regular developmental assessment and programmes which strengthen the community's development.

6.6 Continuum of care and development

All victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should have access to a range of differentiated and integrated services on a continuum of care and development, ensuring access to the least restrictive, least intrusive and most empowering environment and/or programme/s appropriate to their individual developmental and therapeutic needs. The changing social, emotional, physical, cognitive and cultural needs of all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators recognized and addressed throughout the intervention process. Links with continuing support networks and resources, when necessary, should be encouraged after disengagement from the system.

6.7 Integration

Services to all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be holistic, inter-sectoral and delivered by an appropriate multi-disciplinary team wherever possible.

6.8 Normalisation

All victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be exposed to normative challenges, activities and opportunities, which promote participation and development.

6.9 Effectiveness and efficiency

Services to all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be delivered in the most effective and efficient way possible.

6.10 Person-centred

Positive developmental experiences, support and capacity building should be ensured through regular developmental assessment and programmes which strengthen all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators' development.

6.11 Rights

The rights of all South Africans (inclusive of victims and perpetrators of crime and violence) as established in the South African Constitution, the victims charter (draft and various) international conventions ratified by South Africa, shall be protected.

6.12 Restorative justice

The approach to services for victims should focus on Restorative Justice. The perpetrator should be held accountable for his/her actions and where possible make amends to the victim.

6.13 Appropriateness

Services to all victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be appropriate for the individual, the family and the community.

6.14 Confidentiality and privacy

Services and information gathered from the victims of crime and violence including perpetrators should be kept confidential.

7. SITES THAT MAY BE USED FOR WHITE DOOR CENTRES

7.1 The following sites may be used as White Door Centres: -

- 7.1.1 Private community spaces for example, homes or churches that are manned by trained community members. Police clearance and clearance against the Child Protection and Sexual Offences registers must be undertaken for people who want to utilize their private homes as White Door Centres.
- 7.1.2 The housekeeper is supervised by an NGO registered with the Department of Social Development that renders Victim Empowerment Services in the area.
- 7.1.3 The local SAPS is informed in order to be part of the site as the police play an important role in securing the community.
- 7.1.4 An arrangement must be made with the local SAPS to provide patrol services at the White Door Centre especially where there is no full time security.
- 7.1.5 Public structures that are located within the community, which are easily accessible to the public. These may include child and youth care centres and residential facilities for the elderly, people with disabilities or schools and provincial clinics that operate on a 24-hour basis.

8. TARGET GROUP

8.1 All community members who are victims of crime and violence should be allowed to have access to White Door Centres.

9. PHYSICAL ACCESS TO WHITE DOOR CENTRES

- 9.1 The White Door Centre must be disability friendly allowing people with disabilities to access services with ease.
- 9.2 The White door Centre must be painted and furnished creating a warm, friendly and welcoming environment.
- 9.3 The White Door Centre must be kept neat and clean at all times.
- 9.4 Victims of crime and violence must have access to their basic needs
- 9.5 There must be access to a telephone, fax and photocopy facilities in order to ensure that referrals of victims can be made and that copies of appropriate documentation can be kept on file.
- 9.6 The White Door centre must be accessible to all victims.
- 9.7 The services at the White Door centre must be available at all times.

10. RECEPTION

- 10.1 The housekeeper to introduce herself and explain what services are offered.
- 10.2 Once the victim requests assistance, s/he must be taken into the centre and made as comfortable as possible.

- 10.3 The housekeeper must:
- 10.3.1 Treat the victim with fairness and respect for his/her dignity and privacy by offering emotional and practical support in a private space. The conversation will be treated as confidential and the victim as far as possible is to be interviewed in a language that s/he understands;
 - 10.3.2 Assist the victim to report the case should s/he wish to.
 - 10.3.3 Provide help in contacting family and friends.
 - 10.3.4 Explain the process that will be followed.
 - 10.3.5 Help in communicating with SAPS and/or criminal justice officials
 - 10.3.6 In the event of a sexual offence, where the police may need the victim's clothing as evidence, the housekeeper will assist in obtaining alternative clothing.
 - 10.3.7 Explain the victim's rights to him/her and the procedures that are to be followed;
 - 10.3.8 Explain what further professional services (e.g. counseling, court preparation, etc) are available to the victim on a referral basis.
- 10.4 An intake and screening form must be completed for every victim seeking assistance at the centre and process notes on any intervention pertaining to the victim whether contacting family members, issuing clothes, or care packs and contact with referral sources. All files are to be kept in a lockable filing cabinet to ensure confidentiality and privacy of client information.
- 10.5 Victims of crime and violence with injuries requiring medical attention cannot be attended to by the housekeeper. The person must be referred to a medical facility to receive medical attention.
- 10.6 Housekeepers are under no circumstances allowed to examine injuries. Documentation of injuries is to be done by a registered medical practitioner when completing the J88.
- 10.7 The housekeeper should under no circumstances verify the authenticity of the victim's allegations'. Victims are to be assisted based on the needs that they are presenting with.
- 10.8 Where possible, should a victim request to be assisted by a person of the same gender and/or language such a need should be accommodated
- 10.9 Housekeepers are not to engage in discussion with child victims regarding their removal. The Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences officers are to be contacted to attend to the case.
- 10.10 Housekeepers are not to enter into counseling or therapeutic relationship with the victim as this is outside the scope of the centre.
- 10.11 Housekeepers are not to engage with alleged perpetrators in any capacity and are not allowed to "mediate" between the victim and the perpetrator.
- 10.12 Housekeepers are not to establish a personal/intimate relationship with a victim.
- 10.13 All victims attended must be captured in the Admission Register.
- 10.14 The victim cannot be accommodated in the White Door for more than three working days, however they may be accommodated over a weekend.

11. SCREENING

- 11.1 The screening process entails where the housekeeper determines firstly whether the victim is indeed at the right place or whether the victim should be at another government department or NGO.
- 11.2 The housekeeper will determine what assistance the victim requires and where appropriate provide the necessary emotional and practical support, give relevant information and refer accordingly depending on the type of victimization or needs being presented.

12. REFERRAL

- 12.1 Referral is to be based on the needs identified during the screening process.
- 12.2 As the White Door centre is a reception, screening and referral service, housekeeper must not render counseling or provide any other specialized/professional service. Victims must be referred to appropriate service providers to assist the victim further.
- 12.3 All referrals discussed and made are to be documented in a process note and attached to the Screening/intake form;
- 12.4 The Housekeeper must ensure that the victim is being referred to the appropriate service provider by contacting the service provider telephonically to discuss the assessment of the victims needs and whether the contacted service provider can in fact assist the victim.
- 12.5 In the case where telephonic contact with the service provider is not possible, a referral note outlining the victims needs and reason for referral by the centre and details of the referring housekeeper is to be given to the victim to take with him/her to the organization.
- 12.6 The housekeeper is to follow up with the victim that they did in fact receive appropriate assistance.

13. REQUIREMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE HOUSEKEEPER

- 13.1 The housekeeper must be over the age of 18 years, not have a criminal record, have basic literacy, not have a history of substance abuse and/or violence, and in the event of having been a victim themselves to either have received assistance (proof to be provided) be prepared to complete a counseling programme if deemed necessary.
- 13.2 All housekeepers are to obtain police clearance and must be screened in terms of the Children's Act and Sexual Offences Act before a contract is signed.
- 13.3 The housekeeper must be trained to understand trauma and the impact of trauma on victims and their recovery.
- 13.4 The housekeeper must sign a standard code of conduct, confidentiality agreement and task description.
- 13.5 All housekeepers must be registered on the database of the Department of Social Development.

14. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy shall be monitored and evaluated by the Directorate: Restorative Services and Families in the KZN Department of Social Development and reviewed three years from the date of approval or earlier should the need arise.

15. EFFECTIVE DATE

The Policy will be effective from the date of approval.

16. TITLE OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be called Policy on the implementation of White Door Centres for victims of crime and violence.

17. POLICY APPROVAL

This Policy will be approved with effect from the 19th day of March in the year 2021


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Mrs N.I Vilakazi

Head of Department: Social Development

Date: 19/03/2021