



MANGAUNG

AT THE HEART OF IT ALL

**MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
LANGUAGE POLICY**

MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY	
POLICY TITLE: MMM LANGUAGE POLICY	POLICY NO:
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES	COUNCIL ITEM:
SUB-DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SECRETARIAT	DATE APPROVED:
GENERAL MANAGER: Mr. MOTETE MOTHEKHE	EFFECTIVE DATE:

MMM LANGUAGE POLICY

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PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the use of South African official languages must be promoted and pursued in accordance with the Republic's Constitution of 1996;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 provides 11 official languages of South Africa and also requires the Government to take positive measures of elevating the status and advance the use of indigenous languages;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, requires all official languages to enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably,

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The language barrier has been a dominant factor before the democracy of South Africa in 1994 particularly in the Free State where only two languages – Afrikaans and English have been officially used in the socio - economic and political domains of our society. After 1994, the Constitution of South Africa recognized other nine languages to make all eleven official languages.

It was then that the Local Government took an initiative of establishing the Municipal Systems Act in 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) which emphasized community participation whereby residents would have to be served in the language they understand best and access all the municipal services irrespective of language.

While the Constitution provides further that everyone has a right to use their language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice – section 30, the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality Language Policy provides guidelines on how the Municipality should implement multilingualism in its communication processes to ensure that all residents are served with languages they understand. It also encourages and support employees to learn at least two official languages other than their own to promote national unity and to acknowledge and appreciate cultural diversity.

1.1 Mandate

Municipalities must take into account the language usage and preferences of their residents – The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Section 6(3) (b) and the following relevant Bill of Rights, Chapter 2.

- Equality and language (Section 9 (3))
- Language and Culture (Section 30)
- Cultural, religious and linguistic communities (Section 31 (1))

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The Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality Language Policy is informed by:

- 1.1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:
- 1.1.2 The National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) and Implementation Plan, 2003
- 1.1.3 The Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995)
- 1.1.4 The Use of Official Languages Act, 2012
- 1.1.5 The Batho Pele White Paper, October 1997.

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2. DEFINITIONS

In this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise-

“Administrative Languages” means the Municipal Languages – Setswana and IsiXhosa that are used within Mangaung but not referred as official languages;

“Constitution” means the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)

“Council” means the Metropolitan Council of the Municipality;

“Interpreter” means a person who transposes or interprets an utterance from the source language into the target language;

“Language Unit” means an entity within the Municipality that will ensure the implementation of the language policy and will be responsible for translation, interpreting and production of documents in official languages;

“Multilingualism” means the use of several official languages of the Municipality in the written or oral communication of the Municipality;

“Municipality” means the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality which covers the three former Transitional Local Council of Thaba Nchu, Botshabelo and Bloemfontein and then Mangaung Local Municipality in 2000 until 2011 when it became Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.

“Official Language” means an official language in terms of section 6(1) of the Constitution;

“PanSALB” means the Pan South African Language Board established in terms of the Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995);

“Policy” means the Official Language Policy of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality;

“Translation” means the transposing of a text from the source language into the target language in a form of writing;

“Working Language” means an official language chosen by the Municipality as the language most practicable to use in a communication;

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3. AIMS

The aims of the MMM Language Policy are:

- 3.1 To designate the official languages which must be used for the purpose of the Municipality;
- 3.2 To promote the equitable use of the designated official languages of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality;
- 3.3 To facilitate equitable access to the Municipality services, knowledge and information for all the people of the Mangaung Region, including hearing impaired and visually impaired people in the spirit of Batho Pele;
- 3.4 To foster respect for and protect the language rights of the people of Mangaung.
- 3.5 To promote and encourage multilingualism;
- 3.6 To ensure social cohesion and contribute towards nation building by promoting all the languages used in the region of Mangaung for them to enjoy parity of esteem;
- 3.7 To promote collaboration with all language stakeholders to ensure effective management of resources;
- 3.8 To recognize, empower and affirm speakers of the previously marginalizes languages;
- 3.9 To promote access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) gives freedom to receive or impart information or ideas with own language usage. A requester whose request for access to a record of a public body must be given access in the language of their preference;

The promotion of equitable use of the official languages of the Municipality and the redress of the linguistic inequalities of the past which resulted in the underdevelopment of the African languages

4 Internal Spoken Communication

Due to the influx of different people moving into Mangaung, this Policy aims to ensure that the Municipality promotes multilingualism for the effective administration and communication within the Municipality which will enable the smooth facilitation of equitable access to municipal services and information.

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It should protect language diversity and promote respect for multilingualism and unity within this Municipality bearing in mind that Sesotho is the predominant language in Mangaung. Therefore all the informative documents of the Council should be translated into Sesotho, i.e.

- 4.1.1 Minutes of the Council
- 4.1.2 IDP documentations
- 4.1.3 The conditions of service
- 4.1.4 Mangaung Website, Leave Forms
- 4.1.5 Standing Rules and Orders of the Council and
- 4.1.6 Other administration and official documents of MMM as and when required

4.2 Provision of Sign Language and Braille/ Computers with Jaws software

This policy should make provision of Sign Language for the hearing impaired people and Braille for the visually impaired people if and when considered necessary as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa States in section 6 5(a)(iii). This plan should be accessible within this Municipality.

It should implement and give effect to the provisions of Section 6 of the Constitution as well as the Batho Pele Principles and related service charters.

The disciplinary hearings, trainings and performance assessment in the Municipality will be conducted in the working language (English) also with the services of an interpreter and sign language available for those who cannot speak, understand or even hear the target language.

4.3 Language use and sequence as per Census statistics in Mangaung

The Mangaung official languages in its sequence are Sesotho, Afrikaans and English and administration languages stated as Setswana and IsiXhosa. Therefore these official languages should be regarded as working languages that must be used for communication during meetings, interviews information sessions, conferences, consultations and workshops.

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5. External Spoken communication

- 5.1 Members of the Public would be allowed to exercise their right to use any of Mangaung official language to ask questions verbally or in writing and the Municipality should respond to the public in the language that was used by the public during public meetings, imbizo, campaigns, etc.
- 5.2 Language technical means such as simultaneous interpreting and translation services should be provided from source official language to target official language within the Municipality to avoid miscommunications and unnecessary language barriers during meetings, discussions, etc
- 5.3 This policy should allow informative documents communicating to the public be available in at least three of the designated official languages allowing Municipality's interaction with the public, those are:
- 5.3.1 Municipal water, lights and rates accounts,
 - 5.3.2 Municipal application forms and vacancy adverts, tender adverts and forms;
 - 5.3.3 Official notices for general information to the public i.e. water disruptions, load shedding, road constructions, IEC voting information, Municipal budget speeches, etc

6. **Branding**

All identification signage, directions signs and road signs relating to municipal buildings, services, facilities, infrastructure and vehicles must be in all the official languages of the Municipality where practicable. Where this is practicable owing to financial constraints, a bilingual policy (English and another official language of the Municipality) may be adopted, provided that English is the one language and the other is Sesotho as the dominant language of this area. (Make provision for both Internal and External Written communications as recommended in the table of content).

7. **SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This policy applies to employees directorates within the administration of the City.

The Mangaung Municipality should encourage and support private enterprise to develop and implement their own policies aligned and in accordance with this MMM Language Policy.

8. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- (i) **The Constitution of South Africa, Chapter 2: Bill of Rights**
Equality: The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, color, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, **language** and birth. Section 30: Everyone has the right to use their language “enjoy parity of esteem” and participate in the life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

The protection of language diversity and the promotion of respect for multilingualism and unity in diversity – Section 9 (3) protect citizens’ unfair discrimination on the grounds of language.

- (ii) **Systems Act 32 of 2000.** The Municipality should keep record of all the systems, procedures and key information of the Council and of the employees in all the Municipal working languages as the section 57 of this Act dictates. All the Bargaining Council agreements stated in the Municipal Systems Act section 71 (1) should be applicable in multilingual – the budgets of the Municipality, National Economic Policies and the others. All the training, competency skills development of staff members of the municipality, including the in-house training, should be facilitated in three municipal working languages – Act 1 of The Skills Development Act, 1998.
- (iii) **Records Management Act** was regulated to provide Municipal Archives and Record Service the proper management and care of the records of the Municipality, Records Management Act No 36 of 2001.
All the Municipal information about the Organization itself and the employees should be archived in the Records Services and should be available in all the Municipal working languages as per their sequence.

Some of the Municipal Records should be accessible to the public and should be accessible in their (the public’s) own language. A non-public record in the custody of the Municipal Archives shall be available for public access subject to any conditions agreed upon at its acquisition in terms of section 14 (1) of this Act.

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This Act should together with this Language Policy, should make possible that all the documents of the Municipality are archived at the Records Management and those documents are translated into three working languages of the Municipality. No Institutional Record or Public Record at this Municipality should be transferred to an archives repository, should be destroyed, erased or otherwise disposed of without the written authorization of the General Manager Corporate Secretariat and the City Manager.

- (iv) **Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003** has an objective which is to secure sound and sustainable management of the fiscal and financial affairs of the Municipal entities by establishing norms and standards and other requirements for; ensuring transparency, accountability and appropriate lines of responsibility using all working languages of the Municipality.

The Municipality should have a separate budget reserved for the Corporate Secretariat Sub Directorate with a unique vote allocated to all the expenses in as far as Municipal working languages are concerned. Section 87 5(a) of the MFMA states clearly that the budget of the Municipality should be balanced and in that manner, it should in all the means also cover all the interpreting devices such as mikes and ear pieces; the laptops with Jaws software installed and also Braille documentations for the visually impaired people.

The MFMA Act with this Language Policy should assist this Division to have and utilize its own services and refrain from outsourcing as this will help the Municipality to utilize the finances effectively, efficiently, economically and transparently according to the chapter 10 6(a) of the MFMA 56 OF 2003.

- (v) **Electronic Communications Act of 2014** and this Language Policy should assist the Municipality to have the Multilingual Call Centre. The Human Resource Management Team should have the services of computers that have the Jaws software for their interviews and prioritize the candidates who have the knowledge of more than two working languages during the interviews and the City Manager should appoint such candidates for vacant positions within the Municipality. This is key.

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All the Municipal advertisements that will be sent to any assigned radio spectrum, should be advertised in all Municipal working languages according to section 5 (b (a)) of the Electronic Communications Act of 2005. All the enquiries and complaints regarding the improper use of the official languages of the Municipality should be directed to ICASA according to section 4B of the IASA Act, and may also be directed to the involved Municipality as well.

- (vi) **The Implementation Plan: National Language Policy Framework 2003, section 1.2.4** states that the local government will determine the languages use and preferences of their communities within an enabling provincial language policy framework. Upon determination of a language use and preference of communities, local government must, in broad consult with their communities, develop, publicize and implement a multilingual policy.
- (vii) **The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB)** as the dynamic body that governs the implementation of the use of language promotes linguistic diversity multilingual languages, further, Section 6(5) provides for the promotion of multilingualism and see to it the development and use not only of the official languages but of the Khoi, Nama and San Languages as well as the **SA Sign Language**.

10. LANGUAGE UNIT

- 10.1 The Language Unit will facilitate, coordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy by providing translations, editing, interpreting, language training and terminology development services within the Municipality;
- 10.2 Raise awareness about the policy within the Municipality and ensure compliance and raise awareness among the residents about their language rights;
- 10.3 Report to the relevant language bodies i.e. The National Language Forum and Pan SALB as the official watchdog and protector of the language rights, on progress with the implementation of the policy, when requested;
- 10.4 Promote multilingualism within the Municipality and Mangaung as a whole and assess the implementation of the policy and effect the required changes.

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- 10.5 The implementation of the language policy will increase the demand for translation and editing work and interpreting services especially in the indigenous languages. Therefore the core of translation expertise in these languages will have to be expanded. At least, the Unit should comprise of the following staff members for the effective and efficient administration within the Municipality:

10.5.1 Senior Language Practitioner

10.5.2 Language Practitioner: Afrikaans into Sesotho and vice versa

10.5.3 Language Practitioner: English into Sesotho and vice versa

10.5.4 Language Practitioner: Afrikaans into English and vice versa

10.5.5 Interpreters X 3 (Afrikaans into Sesotho, English into Sesotho & English into Afrikaans.

All the staff members from Language Unit should be professionals with valued certificates from accredited institutions – Universities or Central Universities as this Unit is a specialty on its own.

11. MONITORING

- 10.1 The Office of the Executive Mayor must monitor the implementation of the MMM Language Policy and report to the relevant Compliance Committees and to the Executive Council.
- 10.2 The Pan South African Language Board and the Free State Provincial Language Committee must also monitor the implementation of the MMM Language Policy and act according to their mandate.

12. COMPLIANCE

All the Municipal Departments must comply with the provisions of this policy.

13. REVIEW

The MMM Language Policy will be reviewed every five years.

14. CLOSING

This policy would be implemented thirty days after approval.