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GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DEPARTEMENT VAN GESONDHEID

No. R. 391

15 May 2012

HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT, 1974 (ACT NO.56 OF 1974)

REGULATIONS DEFINING THE SCOPE OF THE PROFESSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS: AMENDMENT

The Minister of Health intends, under section 61 of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974) and after consultation with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, to make the regulations in the Schedule.

Interested persons are invited to submit any substantiated comments or representations on the proposed regulations to the Director-General: Health, Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001 (for the attention of the Director: Public Entities Governance and Management), within three months from date of publication of this notice.

SCHEDULE

Definitions

1. In this Schedule, “**the regulations**” means regulation defining the scope of the profession of Environmental Health published under Government Notice No. R.888 of 26 April 1991, as amended by Government Notice No. R. 698 of 26 June 2009.

“**Department**” means the provincial, and national department of health and municipality employing environmental health assistants.

“**Service unit**” means an appropriate section or division in the national, and provincial department of health, and municipality.

Amendment of the regulations

2. The regulations are hereby amendment:-
- (a) by the substitution for the word "Annexure" of the word "Annexure A"; and
 - (b) by the addition, at the end of "Annexure A", of the following Annexure:-

"ANNEXURE B**SCOPE OF PRACTICE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANTS**

In addition to the scope of the profession as prescribed in the regulations, the following acts fall within the scope of practice of environmental health assistant:-

WATER

1. (1) Collecting water samples for laboratory analysis;
- (2) Carrying out field tests on public water supply sources.
- (3) Conducting inspections of Community water supplies as part of the health surveillance programme.
- (4) Providing health education on proper and safe water usage and waste water disposal;
- (5) Carrying out surveys in both residential and informal settlements so as to determine the provision of water supply and sanitation in these areas.

FOOD CONTROL

2. (1) Assisting in sampling of foodstuffs for microbiological and chemical purposes and the collecting of preliminary food, milk, cholera swabs and cooking oil indicator samples for non-forensic analysis;
- (2) Conducting health education programmes for food handlers with reference to personal hygiene, sanitizing of food contact surfaces and cleaning procedures and methods, the prevention of food contamination from sources such as soil, water, air plants, animals and humans.
- (3) Assisting in food borne illness investigations.

- (4) Assisting in sampling foodstuffs sold by Informal Traders.
- (5) Carrying out surveys of both formal and informal food trading enterprises for statistical purposes.
- (6) Assisting in the seizure, removal, detention, and proper disposal of unsafe foodstuffs.

GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NUISANCES AND CONTROL

3.
 - (1) Assist in drafting and preparing notices and reports on public health nuisances.
 - (2) Attending to public complaints and enquiries and direct non-specific complaints to the appropriate service unit to attend to.
 - (3) Carrying out routine environmental health investigations, including the investigation of complaints relating to:
 - (a) Unsanitary yard areas;
 - (b) Defective drainage and the prevalence of cockroaches, rodents, flies, mosquitoes and other nuisance;
 - (c) Nuisance caused by keeping of animals and birds including but not limited to:-
 - (i) Poultry keeping
 - (ii) Dogs nuisances
 - (iii) Stables, Piggery, and kraals
 - (iv) Religious events and ritual slaughtering.
 - (d) Structural defects in buildings including but not limited to:-
 - (i) Poor ventilation and lighting;
 - (ii) Inadequate sanitary facilities;
 - (iii) Defects relating to walls, floors, ceilings; and
 - (iv) Facilities for the disabled facilities.
 - (e) Unhygienic conditions on the property including but not limited to:-

- (i) Overcrowding;
 - (ii) Dirty conditions;
 - (iii) Unsatisfactory living conditions;
 - (iv) Lack of access to basic facilities;
 - (v) Illegal dumping;
 - (vi) Derelict motor vehicles;
 - (vii) Overgrown vacant land; and
 - (viii) Odours;
- (f) Public and private ablutions facilities, toilets and private sewerage disposal systems like septic or vacuum tanks and soak a ways.
- (g) Illegal trading
- (h) Accommodation, establishments and institutions
- (i) Fetes, fairs, exhibitions, flea markets, etc.

VECTOR CONTROL

4. (1) Conducting regular vector surveys and monitoring programmes and reports thereon;
- (2) Conducting the trapping and poisoning of rodents;
- (3) Submitting rodent carcasses for laboratory identification;
- (4) Ensuring effective destruction and control of rodents, cockroaches; bedbugs, fleas, flies, mosquitoes and other vermin by the correct selection of chemicals, materials and appropriate equipment; and
- (5) Conducting ditching and vector control programmes.

HEALTH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

5. (1) Identifying specific project needs.
- (2) Assisting in the planning, organizing and implementation of community projects.

- (3) Assisting in training of specific target groups in the communities and implementing "train the trainer" programmes.
- (4) Assisting in arranging programmes and campaigns jointly with other departments and the communities e.g. clean up campaigns, ditching of drains, T.B. campaigns and etc.
- (5) Assisting in arranging and attending community meetings so as to keep communities fully informed about all activities of the department.
- (6) Carrying out health education talks at clinics, schools, workplaces and communities e.g. T.B., HIV & AIDS, cholera, typhoid, and diarrhoea including other environmental health related diseases.
- (7) Carrying out health education in terms of common problems, e.g. odours, flies, disposal of waste, etc.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

6. (1) Assisting with the co-ordination of the district communicable disease surveillance programme throughout all hospitals, clinics, mobile clinics, private medical practices and community health workers and community structures.
- (2) Carrying out investigations and follow up on all cases of infectious disease and epidemics notified to the department.
- (3) Identifying and referring contacts and suspected cases of T.B to clinics for examination.
- (4) Assist in following up on defaulter patients at clinics, hospitals and community health centres.

- (5) Advising patients, relatives and employers of environmental health related infectious diseases patients in relation to health education, and delivering talks to groups of employees as requested.
- (6) Initiating and creating awareness of Directly Observed Treatment of Tuberculosis (DOTS).
- (7) Educating and training volunteers on environmental health matters related to the scope of practice of Environmental Health Assistants.
- (8) Liaising with community leaders, traditional healers, church organizations, and volunteers to encourage acceptability and implementation of DOTS.
- (9) Assisting in all animal bite investigations in liaison with State Vet, District Surgeons, hospitals and clinics.
- (10) Assisting in placing anti-rabies posters at strategic points (public awareness raising).
- (11) Collecting laboratory specimen from cases and contacts of notifiable disease.
- (12) Assisting in dog bite investigations, applying Animal By-Laws and making referrals in accordance with the relevant procedures.
- (13) Carrying out rabies certificate surveys.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL

7. (1) Assisting in investigation of environmental pollution complaints e.g. air, water, soil, ground, and noise.
- (2) Carrying out field surveys of industries to determine impacts on specific communities.
- (3) Assisting with noise surveys and dealing with community noise complaints.

- (4) Disseminating information to Industries and communities concerning environmental pollution.
- (5) Assisting in taking environmental air, soil and dust samples for analysis to the laboratory.
- (6) Carrying out surveys of all fumigation firms both formal and informal retail premises, which deal with the manufacturing, application, transport and storage of chemicals.
- (7) Carrying out education programmes for safe paraffin usage for the communities at large.

INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING

8. (1) Assisting in the collection of environmental health data for decision-making purposes in one or more of the following fields of activity:-
 - (a) Water quality monitoring;
 - (b) Food control;
 - (c) Waste management;
 - (d) Health surveillance of premises;
 - (e) Surveillance and prevention of communicable disease excluding immunisations;
 - (f) Environmental pollution control;
 - (g) The disposal of the deal;
 - (h) Port health;
 - (i) Malaria control; and
 - (j) Control of hazardous substances.

SUPERVISION

9. The Environmental Health Assistant must performed the acts referred to in this Annexure under the supervision of an environmental Health Practitioner."


DR. A MOTSOLEDI, MP
MINISTER OF HEALTH

DATE: 17/4/2012