

CIRCULAR 16 / 2020

FROM : CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

TO : EXECUTIVE MAYORS / MAYORS
SALGA PROVINCIAL CHAIRPERSONS
SALGA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
CITY/MUNICIPAL MANAGERS

DATE : 26 APRIL 2020

**SOLIDARITY PLEDGES TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE CURBING OF THE SPREAD OF
AND IMPACT OF COVID-19**

The President of the Republic, His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa announced the establishment of a Solidarity Fund on 23 March 2020 to unite the nation in our response to the COVID-19 crisis. The Solidarity Fund has created a platform for all South Africans, from the public and private sectors, civil society, as well as the general public, to contribute to one consolidated effort.

Following the President's announcement on 9 April 2020 that members of the Cabinet and Deputy Ministers will each take a one-third salary cut for the next three (3) months as a contribution towards the Solidarity Fund; a number of public representatives and executives of large companies have responded to the President's call by similarly pledging salary contributions to the Fund.

The SALGA National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of 10 April 2020, considered whether local government as a sector, should also respond to the President's call and if so, how? During the discussions, the SALGA NEC noted the following:-

- Acknowledgement that Councillors are the least paid public office bearers which is evidenced by the huge salary gap between local and both provincial and national public office bearers;
- Both Councillors and Senior Managers are yet to receive their annual increase for the 2019/20 financial year

which is to be back dated to 1 July 2019; and

- As a commitment and good will it is necessary for local government to respond as a collective to the President's call.

SALGA NEC RESOLUTIONS pertaining to COVID-19

As such the SALGA NEC resolved to recommend that:-

1. Councillors, municipal officials and SALGA Staff should respond to the President's Call;
2. Councillors should pledge to contribute the 4% annual increment for the months of April, May & June 2020;
3. Senior Managers of municipalities and SALGA staff should pledge their annual increment for the months of April, May & June 2020;
4. the South African Local Government Bargaining Council should be approached to recommend that municipal bargaining staff make a similar contribution over the next three (3) months;
5. Every municipality considers establishing a Municipal Solidarity Fund Linked to COVID-19 and other related future municipal support initiatives;
6. All pledges/contributions should be paid into the Municipal Solidarity Fund;
7. The contributions from Councillors and municipal officials should constitute seed funding for the Municipal Solidarity Fund to encourage other stakeholders and role players within the municipal area to contribute;
8. All contributions so made should be used at a municipal level, linked to a COVID-19 programme targeting the vulnerable in the community and to immediately fund high-impact initiatives such as improving the well-being of targeted communities, Combatting Homelessness; Food Security and assistance to informal traders; Safe Havens and the unemployed and job seeking young people.

Informed by the aforementioned SALGA NEC resolutions, we are therefore calling on municipalities to positively consider the recommendations. Kindly note that with regard to resolution 4 above, we are consulting with SAMWU and IMATU and will provide an update upon conclusion thereof. For the benefit of providing clarity and certainty on the Municipal Solidarity Funds to be so established, we attach hereto a draft framework for establishing Municipal Solidarity Funds with generic terms of reference.

Proposed Processing of the Solidarity Fund Contributions

Within the context of the current national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, municipalities are reminded that **physical meetings of Council are suspended until after the lockdown**. It therefore requires municipalities, in

considering this matter in addition to the Upper Limits Notices for Councillors and Senior Managers, to consider convening virtual meetings of Council. If this is not feasible, municipalities may consider any other measure prescribed in the Rules of Council, including round robin, where provided for.

Proposed Council Resolutions

In so doing, and to provide guidance to municipalities, Municipal Councils should consider the following proposed resolutions:-

1. THAT Councillors and municipal officials should respond to the President's Call;
2. APPROVE that Councillors pledge to contribute the 4% annual increment for the months of April, May & June 2020;
3. RECOMMEND that Senior Managers, which includes the Municipal Manager and Managers directly reporting to the Municipal Manager, should pledge their annual increment for the months of April, May & June 2020;
4. APPROVE the establishment of a Municipal Solidarity Fund linked to COVID-19 and other related future municipal support initiatives;
5. APPROVE the terms of reference for the establishment of the Municipal Solidarity Fund;
6. APPROVE that all pledges/contributions should be paid into the Municipal Solidarity Fund;
7. APPROVE that the contributions from Councillors and municipal officials will constitute seed funding for the Municipal Solidarity Fund; and
8. APPROVE that the seed funding may be used to encourage other stakeholders and role players within the municipal area to similarly contribute towards the Municipal Solidarity Fund.

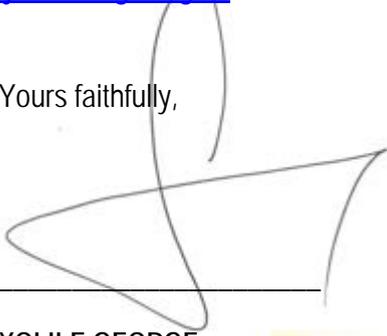
Our attention has also been drawn to requests made to municipalities by either political parties or professional bodies for deductions to be effected from their respective members. We would in this regard remind municipalities that in terms of Section 34 (1) of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, deductions from an employee's remuneration without the employee's consent is prohibited. Therefore, for any deductions to be made, municipalities would have to secure the necessary consent from each employee, similarly that of councillors.

Once again, mindful that we are dealing with extraordinary circumstances, which require extraordinary action and responses at a local level, SALGA is calling on all councillors and municipal officials to contribute towards this fight against COVID-19. It is only through these means that we can collectively defeat this pandemic and ensure the safety of our communities.

To support your endeavours, we will also make available our SALGA support expertise, including IT related support for

virtual meetings, and any queries may be directed to Mr Lance Joel at SALGA National Office per email ljoel@salga.org.za or cell: 0829083335.

Yours faithfully,



XOLILE GEORGE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER