

CITY OF MATLOSANA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

ETHICS WEEK 12 -20 SEPTEMBER 2026

Introduction and Background

The Ethics week was officially launched on the 13th of September 2023. Launched by the DPSA in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, as this event is part of the broader context of Integrated Public Services Month and focuses on ensuring high ethical standards and integrity within public services. The Minister reaffirm commitment in ensuring the highest standards of integrity and accountability remains the heart of Public Services.

Ethics Week offers us the opportunity to focus on the role of Ethics Officers, whose work is essential in promoting good governance, combating corruption, and supporting the professionalization agenda of our government. The alignment of Ethics Week is integrated Public Service Month. Ethics Week focuses on ensuring that the principles underpinning this service – which are integrity, honesty, fairness, and transparency, are upheld.

The Purpose of Ethics Week

The purpose of the Ethics week is to raise awareness and reinforce the importance of ethics and compliance within an organisation. It serves as a platform to highlight the core principles of compliance and ethics, such as awareness, recognition and reinforcement. By focusing on these principles, organisation can foster a culture of ethics and compliance that is integral to their operations and values.

What about ethics week

Ethics Week activities often include discussions, training sessions, and events that engage employees in learning about ethical decision-making, compliance and compliance with municipal policies. The activities can range from interactive to presentation and workshop, all aimed at educating employees on the importance of ethical behaviour and compliance.

The success of Ethics Week can be measured by the engagement and understanding of employees regarding ethical behaviour and compliance. It is a testament to the organisation's commitment to creating a workplace culture that values ethics and is dedicated to maintaining a high standard of ethical conduct.

Ethics Awareness Week is an annual observance designed to promote ethical behaviour, integrity, and compliance in organizations and communities. Ethics Awareness Week encourages individuals and organizations to reflect on their ethical standards, make improvements, and commit to integrity in both professional and personal contexts. It emphasizes the importance of ethical decision-making, transparency, and accountability, helping to foster a culture where employees and community members feel empowered to act responsibly and speak up against misconduct.

PRINCIPLE 1 – INTEGRITY: ALIGNMENT OF VALUES AND ACTIONS

Integrity is the alignment between stated values and actions, operationalized by leaders through consistent decision making and visible modelling. Practitioner guidance highlights modelling, explaining choices, and following through on commitments as core behaviours that demonstrate integrity in practice Centre for Creative Leadership guidance.

Concrete leader actions that show integrity include making decisions that match stated principles, documenting why a choice was made, and publicly correcting course when mistakes occur. These actions are short, repeatable, and teachable.

Training programs often use scenarios and role play to rehearse these behaviours. Measurement approaches include perception surveys that ask staff whether leaders act consistently, and review of decision records to check alignment over time.

Leaders can start by identifying two or three principle-based decisions they make regularly and practice explaining the rationale in team meetings. Over a quarter, they can track whether those explanations are recorded and whether staff perceptions of consistency improve.

PRINCIPLE 2 – ACCOUNTABILITY: RULES, REPORTING, AND SANCTIONS

Accountability functions as an enforceable mechanism that makes ethical leadership sustainable. Government and international frameworks emphasize formal rules, reporting, and sanctions as central tools to maintain accountability in public institutions.

In practice, accountability looks like clear role descriptions, transparent reporting channels, documented responsibilities, and proportionate sanctions when rules are breached. These instruments create predictable expectations and make it easier to correct course when necessary.

PRINCIPLE 3 – TRANSPARENCY: CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND DECISION RECORDS

Transparency is operationalized as timely, clear communication about decisions and the rationales behind them, and practical guides recommend keeping documented decision records and stakeholder reports to support openness on ethics and integrity. Transparency complements accountability.

When leaders document rationale and make summaries available to stakeholders, it becomes easier to review choices and detect patterns that need attention. Typical transparency practices include short decision summaries, regular stakeholder updates, and a central repository for key documents. These practices can be tailored to protect privacy and security while keeping the organization accountable.

PRINCIPLE 4 – FAIRNESS: EQUITABLE PROCESSES AND TREATMENT

Fairness focuses on equitable procedures and treatment rather than identical outcomes, and workplace surveys link fair treatment to higher trust and to lower reports of misconduct in many settings Ethics & Compliance Initiative findings.

Leaders should distinguish fair processes from equal results. Fair processes mean consistent criteria for hiring, promotion, discipline, and resource allocation, and mechanisms to appeal or review decisions when stakeholders raise concerns.

Practical leader actions include standardizing selection criteria, documenting disciplinary decisions, and publishing a short explanation of how policies are applied. These measures protect both staff and the organization by reducing ambiguity about expectations.

When resources are constrained, fairness can be supported by transparent prioritization rules and by making clear how trade-offs are decided.

PRINCIPLE 5 – RESPECT: DIGNITY, INCLUSION, AND VOICE

Respect as a pillar means treating people with dignity, listening actively, and protecting channels for voice so that employees can raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Survey evidence ties respectful practices to higher trust and to reductions in misconduct reports Ethics & Compliance Initiative findings.

Daily behaviours that signal respect are small and repeatable: active listening in meetings, acknowledging contributions, and following up on raised issues. These habits support psychological safety and inclusion, which in turn affect whether staff speak up about ethics risks.

Examples of leader actions include starting meetings by inviting input from quieter participants, publicly thanking people for raising concerns, and protecting confidentiality when appropriate. Over time, those routines build norms of voice and mutual respect.

For Information in the City Matlosana

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