



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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TO : Deputy Directors-General
CHIEF DIRECTORS: DISTRICT OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
CHIEF DIRECTOR: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CESSs: CIRCUIT MANAGEMENT
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CHAIRPERSONS OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ASSOCIATIONS

KZN CIRCULAR NO. 52 OF 2022

PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING OF TIME OFF FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

1. Section 15(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and KZN Circular No. 83 of 2011, the Provincial Policy Framework on Special Leave refer.
2. Principals of schools and the School Governing Bodies are hereby directed to manage applications for religious observance taking into account the prescripts of both documents quoted above.
3. Annually the Department has to deal with complaints from various religious organizations complaining about non approval of applications of time off for religious observance either for teachers or learners.
4. It has also been established that some schools or teachers have been abusing the privilege for time off for religious observance by applying for more than one day in a year.
5. Religion is a very sensitive issue to the point that it is highly unlikely that an individual can belong to more than one religion. It is for this reason that in terms of the Provincial Policy Framework on Special Leave, only one day in a year is allocated for religious observance.



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6. In order to ensure proper planning that will protect the right of learners to education as enshrined in Section 29(1)(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, principals and SGBs are expected to manage applications as follows:
 - 6.1 Parents of learners who wish that their children participate in their family religious' observance must apply to the principal of the school specifying the day applied for.
 - 6.2 In the case of teachers who wish to take time off for religious observance, they must apply for Special Leave, time off for religious gathering.
 - 6.3 The Principal must keep the record of the applications, calculate them number applied and the percentage and present to the School Governing Body meeting.
 - 6.4 The school Governing Body must assess whether teaching and learning will be affected by the absence of either teachers or learners on the day based on the percentage to be absent.
 - 6.5 If, based on their assessment, they feel there will be no qualitative teaching and learning, an application for the closure of the school for the day must be made to the Head of Department using the attached template. Each school is required to submit only one list for the whole year.
 - 6.6 The conditions as captured in clause 6.9 of the Provincial Policy Framework on Special Leave apply. The contents of the policy must be made accessible to all employees at school.
 - 6.7 The applications must be done by either parents of learners or individual teachers to the principal in September for the following year.
 - 6.8 If the percentage warrants that the school be closed for a particular day, an application must be submitted to the Circuit Manager by the 30th of November for the following year.
 - 6.9 The response must be given to the school by the end of February in order to allow principals sufficient time to communicate with parents that there will be no school on the approved day.
7. The conditions above are applicable for all applications for 2023 onwards.
8. **For the 2022 school year:**
 - 8.1 Applications for the religious holidays must be submitted to the Circuit Managers by the 06th of May 2022. **Late applications will not be accepted** as such applications should have been done last year for this year.



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- 8.2 Leave forms for Teachers who apply for the Special Leave - Time Off for Religious observance and the extract of the minutes of the SGB approving time off for Learners must be attached.
- 8.3 Responses must be given to schools that will submit applications by the 20th of May 2022.
9. We believe and trust that one of our values, honesty will be applied as applications are made.
10. Your co-operation is highly appreciated.

Mr GN Ngcobo

Head of Department: KZN Education

Date: 26/4/22