

# MURANG'A COUNTY GOVERNMENT



## A DRAFT OF THE MURANG'A COUNTY RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTIONS POLICY

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## Foreword

Murang'a County is cognizant of the importance of having an effective and efficient public service. This policy outlines the framework for entry and promotion examinations within the Murang'a County Public Service, guided by the principles of Article 10 (Values and Principles of Governance) and Article 232 (Values and Principles of Public Service) of the Constitution of Kenya. These Articles emphasize patriotism, national unity, human dignity, equity, good governance, integrity, and merit as the basis for appointments and promotions. This policy aims to address past challenges related to inconsistent recruitment and promotion practices, ensuring a transparent, fair, and merit-based system.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 Background and Rationale

Murang'a County Government is cognizant of the importance of having a citizen - driven delivery workforce. The call for accountability and streamlining governments, making them accountable is taking lead and shape in the current Kenyan sphere. Great importance is placed on the need to have an accountable public workforce that recognises the needs of the citizens and delivers. This can only be achieved by a workforce that is committed to promoting transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness and professionalism within its public service.

The County Government of Murang'a is committed in its efforts to build an inclusive and professional public service workforce that stands guided by the values and Principles of Article 10 on governance and Article 232 on the Values and Principles of public service.

In the past, the recruitment process of the county government employees has faced challenges such; as lack of uniformity in criteria selection, inconsistency in procedures, and in some cases, a lack of clear focus on merit-based selection. This has led to instances where underqualified personnel have been hired, adversely affecting service delivery and creating inefficiencies within the county government's operations.

The purpose of this policy is to develop and introduce standardized entry and promotions examinations that will be a key reform aimed at addressing the challenges and ensuring that the individuals appointed to County public service positions not only are they qualified but also possess the competencies required to drive the County's development agenda.

The Murang'a County entry and promotion exams are envisioned as a means to improvement recruitment and promotion processes, ensuring that candidates possess the right technical expertise, contemporary and emerging knowledge in their disciplines and their innate ethical values needed for a growing citizen driven service delivery and effective public service.

This policy aims to improve the quality of the County's Public Service by aligning the recruitment process with the county's vision, mission and national standards, while adhering to the principles of fairness, meritocracy, and transparency.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Current recruitment and promotion processes in Murang'a County's public service have been inconsistent, lacking standardized criteria, and struggling in ensuring a merit-based selection system. This has resulted to individuals appointed to key positions and missing out on correct placement and skills alignment to the workforce. This has undermined the capacity of the public service to effectively serve the people, contributing to inefficiencies and poor service delivery.

Furthermore, the absence of a clear and transparent framework has led to concerns regarding corruption, nepotism, and favouritism in the hiring and promotion process. These challenges have fostered public dissatisfaction and poor service delivery which could hinder the county's long-term development objectives.

The incorporation of a competency-based assessment in the Murang'a County's public service recruitment and promotion process is crucial due to several factors:

- **Current Hiring Practices:** The current recruitment process may heavily rely on traditional methods like interviews and academic qualifications, which may not effectively assess the candidate's practical skills and abilities required for the job. This can lead to hiring individuals who are academically qualified but lack the necessary competencies to perform effectively in their roles.
- **Skill Gaps:** There might be a mismatch between the skills possessed by potential candidates and the actual skills required for the job. A competency-based assessment can help identify these skill gaps and ensure that the selected candidates possess the necessary skills to excel in their respective roles.
- **Need for Specialized Skills:** The County Government may require employees with specific technical or professional skills. A competency-based assessment can help evaluate the candidate's proficiency in these specialized areas,

ensuring that the County Government hires individuals with the required expertise.

- **Promoting Meritocracy:** By focusing on competencies, the recruitment and promotion process becomes more objective and merit-based. This reduces the influence of factors like personal connections or biases, ensuring that the most qualified individuals are selected for the job.
- **Enhancing Institutional Efficiency:** Hiring competent individuals leads to improved productivity, better service delivery, and overall enhanced institutional efficiency. Competent employees are more likely to be innovative, problem-solvers, and contribute positively to the organization's goals.

#### **Examples of Competency-Based Assessments:**

- **Simulations:** Candidates can be given real-life scenarios or tasks related to the job and assessed on their ability to handle them effectively. For example, a candidate for a customer service role can be given a simulated customer interaction to assess their communication and problem-solving skills.
- **Work Samples:** Candidates can be asked to provide examples of their previous work, such as; reports, presentations, or projects, to demonstrate their skills and experience.
- **Technical Tests:** For roles requiring specific technical skills, candidates can be given tests to assess their knowledge and proficiency in those areas.
- **Behavioral Interviews:** These interviews focus on assessing the candidate's past behavior in specific situations to predict their future performance. Questions like "Tell me about a time you faced a challenging situation at work" can help assess competencies like problem-solving and decision-making.

By incorporating competency-based assessments, the County Government of Murang'a will ensure a more effective and efficient recruitment and promotion process, leading to the selection of highly qualified individuals who can contribute to the growth and development of the county.

### 1.3 Justification and Importance

There is need to develop a policy framework to guide the activities to be undertaken when conducting the assessments. This will ensure provision of quality, fairness, transparency and merit-based recruitment and promotion system.

The policy also seeks to address the challenges faced currently in the recruitment process in the county by establishing a fair, transparent, and merit-based recruitment and promotion framework that utilizes standardized entry exams for all county-level public service positions.

The introduction of these exams will encourage the hiring of qualified, competent, skilled individuals who are driven with the need to serve the public and in addition,

- a. Promote transparency in recruitment,
- b. Enhance accountability in the hiring process,
- c. Ensure that public service roles are filled by the most qualified candidates,
- d. Foster a culture of professionalism in the county government workforce,
- e. Contribute to more effective governance and better service delivery.

### 1.4 Policy Objectives

The primary objective of the policy is to establish a merit-based recruitment framework that ensures that individuals appointed to public service are selected on merit, qualifications and competencies.

Other objectives supporting the framework are; -

1. To cure the challenges that come with automatic promotions where officers who are not conversant with the current developments in their disciplines are promoted.
2. To improve citizen-centered service delivery with county services aimed at building a workforce capable of providing high-quality services that meet the needs and aspirations of the public.
3. To achieve compliance with national standards by aligning the county's recruitment practices with national civil service standards and guidelines for public sector recruitment.

## 1.5 Policy Scope

This policy and actions arising from it, intends to apply to all positions within Murang'a County Public Service, including:

- **The administrative Staff:** They include; Clerical, secretarial, and support roles that contribute to daily administrative functions of the county government departments.
- **The technical Staff:** Who include; Engineers, healthcare professionals, teachers, and other specialized experts.
- **Management and Leadership positions:** They include; Departmental heads, directors, and senior management responsible for overseeing county programs and projects.
- **Support and Casual Staff:** The employees who support day-to-day operations in various County offices.
- **Temporary and Contract Employees:**
  - These are individuals employed on a temporary or contract basis.
  - Employees on temporary or contract basis who may transition into permanent roles after fulfilling certain requirements.
- **Other roles as identified:** Positions based on evolving and emerging needs of the county government.

## CHAPTER TWO: EXAM GUIDELINES AND FRAMEWORK

### 2.0 Exam Policy Guidelines

The Murang'a County Public Service Board will be in-charge of the administering the entry and promotion exams framework and will collaborate with Department of Public Service and Administration in the formulation and administration of the

exams. The process will be guided as described below to ensure fairness, transparency, inclusiveness, and merit-based:

## 2.1 Fairness and Transparency

The County Public entry and promotion exams will be conducted fairly and free from bias. Results will be publicly available on the County's online recruitment portal to promote accountability and clear timelines and procedures will be followed for the recruitment and promotion processes.

## 2.2 Merit-Based Selection

The exams criteria will select individuals based on their qualifications, skills, and competencies, ensuring that merit is prioritized over favouritism. Both recruitment and promotions will focus on technical expertise, leadership potential, and innate ethical behaviour.

## 2.3 Inclusivity and Accessibility

In line with the Constitution of Kenya provisions will be made to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities (PLWD), in line with national and international standards. Special accommodations such as; **Braille**, large print texts on exams sign **language interpreters and accommodations**, audio exams and **extended exam time** will be provided where necessary.

## 2.4 Equal Opportunity

In accordance with the Constitution, the Employment Act and other guiding laws implementation of this policy will uphold equal opportunity, ensuring that no candidate is discriminated against based on gender, race, disability, or other protected characteristics.

## 2.5 Integrity and Confidentiality

The County Public Service Board while handling the candidate's information will be expected to observe high Levels of integrity, maintain confidentiality throughout the recruitment and promotion process. The County will also deploy Strong surveillance and invigilation measures will be in place to prevent malpractices.

## 2.6 Restrictions

The County Public Service Board being in-charge of handling exams and recruitment process and applicants both for entry exams and promotions will not engage in practices that undermine the integrity of the exams, the recruitment process to gain an unfair advantage or manipulate the results

## 2.7 Exam Timeliness and Efficiency

The exam process will be efficient, with clear timelines for registration, examination, and result publication. Exams will be scheduled regularly to align with the county's staffing needs.

## 2.8 Data and Feedback mechanism

Examination results will be analysed, made public through the County's online recruitment portal, and available for feedback. The County Public Service Board will establish a grievance mechanism channel for candidates to address concerns or appeal results.

## 2.8 Cost-effectiveness and Resource Allocation

The County Government will ensure that cost effective measures are developed and applied to ensure the exams shall be conducted efficiently, with an allocated budget to cover exam development, materials, and resources putting into consideration PLWDs.

## 2.9 Alignment with National Standards

The county's recruitment and promotion exams will be aligned with the public service standards, ensuring legal and procedural compliance.

## 2.10 Periodic Review and Improvement

Both the entry and promotions examination framework will undergo a review every three years (3) to ensure their continued relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with both national and county standards, as well as emerging technological developments.

## 2.11 Examination Framework

The Murang'a County Public Service exams will assess a candidate on the following competencies:

- **General Knowledge of Governance and Public Administration:** Understanding governance principles, public service values and principles.
- **Knowledge of County's Laws and Policies:** Awareness of local governance frameworks specific to Murang'a County.
- **Technical Skills:** Subject-specific knowledge relevant to the role (e.g., engineering, medicine, education).
- **Problem-solving and Critical Thinking:** The ability to analyze complex situations and propose solutions.
- **Ethical and Leadership Qualities:** Demonstrating ethical behavior and leadership potential.
- **Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Competence in engaging with colleagues, officials, and the public.

## 2.12 Exam Structure

The exam will be divided into three stages. Each stage candidates will be expected to answer and fill all questions before proceeding to the next stage.

Evaluations and scoring will be done per stage and posted for the candidates to know whether they have passed or not. This will allow them either to proceed to the next stage.

1. **Preliminary Examination:**

- **Objective Type Questions:** This stage consists of two papers – General Studies and County Aptitude Test. One Covering general knowledge and matters related to the County and Country.
- **Purpose:** To screen candidates for the Main Examination.

2. **Main Examination:**

- **Descriptive Type Questions:** Candidates are required to write essays, general studies papers, and select an optional subject.
- **Purpose:** To assess the candidate's academic expertise and understanding of various subjects.

3. **Personality Test (Interview):**

- **Personal Interaction:** Conducted by a board to evaluate the candidate's personality, suitability for a career in public service, and general awareness.

## CHAPTER THREE: ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION PROCESS

### **3.1 Eligibility Criteria:**

All candidates who intend to undertake the exams will be expected to have first meet the minimum qualifications outlined in the job posting for each role, which will include academic qualifications, professional certifications, and relevant work experience. Once these requirements are met, candidates may proceed with the application for the examinations.

### **3.2 Application Process:**

Applications will be done through the County's official recruitment portal, ensuring that all required documentation such as; academic qualifications, professional certifications, work experience, and identification documents are accurate and complete. Upon successful submission and verification of these documents by the County Public Service Board, candidates will receive clearance to proceed with the registration for either the entry or promotion exams.

### **3.3 Exam Registration:**

Applicants will be invited to register for the entry or promotion exams through online registration or at designated county recruitment offices. Upon registration, each candidate will be assigned a unique badge number, which will be used for their exam identification number. Detailed information regarding the exam dates, registration deadlines, and timelines will be provided once the candidate has successfully met all the required registration criteria.

## **3.4 Examination Scheduling and Administration**

### **3.4.1 Examination Dates**

Exams dates will be scheduled periodically aligning with the county's recruitment cycle. Candidates will receive a minimum of 14 days and a maximum 21 calendar days' notice before the examination date.

### **3.4.2 Exam Administration**

The exams will be posted on the online recruitment portal for a period of .....days during which the Applicants will do the exams and shall be allowed to undertake once.

### **3.4.3 Examination Venue:**

Both promotion and entry exams will be conducted at designated centres within the County equipped to handle large numbers of candidates and catering to the needs of PLWDs.

### **3.4.4 Languages and Accessibility:**

The County public service entry and Promotion exams Shall be accessible in English, Kiswahili, and other technical languages depending on the departmental expertise. Provisions Shall be made for Braille and sign language to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for persons with disabilities.

### **3.4.5 Monitoring and integrity:**

The examination process will be closely monitored by the Murang'a County Public Service Board in collaboration with Department of Public Service and Administration. This shall include the deployment of invigilators and ICT surveillance measures to prevent any malpractices or interference with the online system.

## CHAPTER FOUR: SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

### 4.0 Scoring and Ranking

Each applicant's performance will be evaluated at each stage, and they will be notified whether they are eligible to proceed to the next level. Top-ranking candidates will advance to the main examination stage, where they further assessment and ranking shall be undertaken. Those who pass this stage will be notified and invited via their provided contacts to the final interview/personality assessment.

### 4.1 Interview Process

Shortlisted applicants will be expected to undergo a competency- based interview conducted by the County Public Service Board to assess their suitability for the role applied for.

### 4.2 Final Selection

The final merit list will be determined by combining the exam scores and interview results. The candidate that scores the highest in all each /category/an average high score in all categories test shall be selected for the position.

## CHAPTER FIVE: PROMOTION EXAMINATIONS

### 5.0 Promotion Examinations

Promotions within County Public Service of Murang'a aim to foster a merit-based and transparent system for advancing employees within the county public service. Promotions will be determined based on a combination of factors, including job performance appraisals, annual evaluation reports; professional development, and successful completion of relevant competency assessments in each discipline. Employees wishing to be considered for promotion must demonstrate excellence in their current roles and meet the established eligibility criteria set out in their respective departments, such as; a minimum tenure in the current position and a record of outstanding performance among others. To ensure fairness and objectivity Employees seeking promotion shall be required to sit for promotion examinations. These exams are aimed to assess a candidate's readiness for higher roles, focusing on leadership abilities, technical expertise, and decision-making skills, communication and interpersonal skills and conflict management relevant to the new position applied for.

Only applicants who meet the required scores will be shortlisted for the next phase of the promotion process, which will be the written assessment and if the applicant passes proceeds for the personality/interview.

### 5.1 Exam Promotion guidelines

The promotion framework will adhere to policy set guidelines as set out in chapter 2 in the policy and aim to ensure all employees have equal opportunities to advance within the county's public service. Through this policy, the county seeks to build a culture of professionalism and reward individuals who demonstrate the skills, commitment, and qualifications necessary to meet the evolving needs of public service.

## 5.2 Promotion Process

- **Merit-Based Promotions:**

Employees in the County will be promoted based on performance, qualifications, and successful completion of promotional exams and in accordance with existing public service guidelines and other relevant employment laws.

## 5.3 Promotional Exams:

Employees in the seeking promotion will undergo specialized exams to assess readiness for higher roles in line with the examination criteria, framework as set out in the policy.

## 5.4 Eligibility for Promotion:

Employees seeking promotions will ensure they meet experience and performance criteria for promotion eligibility set out in their various departments/ specialisations.

# CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION, TIMELINES AND FUNDING

## 6.0 Implementation and Timelines

The County Public Service Examinations framework will be implemented as below: -

1. **Phase 1 (9 months):** Policy review, consultations editing, preparation of final draft, adoption, exam framework creation, and recruitment of exam personnel.
2. **Phase 2 (4 months):** Pilot testing, feedback collection.
3. **Phase 3 (6 months):** Full implementation across all public service positions.

## 6.1 Funding

Funding for the development and implementation of the exams will be allocated from the county's budget, with dedicated funds for exam development, establishment of examination venues, payments for invigilators, online infrastructure, and the provision of Braille and sign language equipment. This budget will be managed and overseen by the Department of Public Service and Administration.

## 6.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework

The implementation of this policy will be monitored, evaluated and reported on periodically to assess achievement of the objectives. Data will be obtained from reports submitted by the County Public Service Board.

The monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework will enable the County Public Service Board implement the policy within the stipulated timelines so that meritocracy is achieved in the County public service. A framework will be prepared by the County Public Service Board in collaboration with Department of Public Service and Administration. The framework will set out the policy issues, recommended strategies, implementation timelines, performance indicators and performance outputs.

Review of the Policy will be done every three years (3) in order to address emerging issues.

### 6.3 Conclusion

Human resource plays a critical role in supporting any institution and government, to navigate through macrolevel events that impact the political social, technological, economic, environmental and legal operating environment. The introduction of the Murangá County Public Service entry and promotion exams presents a significant step towards ensuring the recruitment process captures well deserving human resource for various county public service positions. This Policy incorporates provisions of the Constitution, Public sector laws, guidelines, and other legislation that govern various aspects of relations in the Public Service. The Policy is also anchored on other policies and guidelines governing the management of the public service sector. This policy will serve as a basis for recruitment and promotion of public sector officers in the County Government of Murang'a