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| **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY****WRITTEN REPLY****QUESTION 2871 / NW3344E****MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:****Ms A Steyn (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:****QUESTION** |

1. **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**
2. What process is followed when deciding on placements;
3. Are graduates able to appeal their placement; if not, why not; if so, how does a student go about appealing a placement?                 NW3344E

**REPLY**

1. It should be noted that in terms of the contemplated regulations, the Minister shall make a final decision with the regard to the place where a CCS veterinarian shall perform compulsory community service, criteria for the selection of places where Compulsory Community Service (CCS) is to be performed and the placement of veterinary graduates are based on key strategic objectives of the Compulsory Community Service (CCS), namely:
2. To promote accessibility of veterinary services particularly in under-served and resource poor areas,
3. To distribute veterinary profession in an equitable manner thereby rectifying the current state of distribution of veterinary personnel and;
4. To provide an opportunity for CCS veterinarians to acquire knowledge, critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will help their professional development.
5. The processes followed for the placement of CCS Veterinarians is complex; this is to ensure that applicants are placed in a fair and equitable manner and to ensure that the aforementioned CCS strategic objectives are realised. In this regard, a comprehensive list of selected available places where CCS is to be performed is sent to prospective graduates. In the list, each CCS place is described in detail including the nature of work.

An electronic application must be completed by prospective graduates, and shall be submitted to DAFF. Applicants are required to make a selection of five (5) provinces and three (3) CCS places of their choice per province resulting in fifteen (15) choices per applicant. The applicant must rank their 15 choices in order of preference, i.e. Choices 1 to 15 with choice 1 being the 1st preferred choice and choice 15 being the least preferred choice. The placement process is based on these fifteen (15) ranked choices.

Once all the applications are received the placement process is as follows:

**Step 1:**

Applicant’s specific choices were assessed in order of their preferred ranking.

Unique choices (meaning no other applicant has chosen that CCS place for that specific choice) will automatically be allocated to that CCS place.

Where there is more than one applicant applying for the same place within the specific choice then applicants should be randomly placed. These processes are to be repeated until all the fifteen (15) choices are exhausted per applicant.

* For the 2015 cohort, DAFF received a total number of 131 applicants and 110 (84%) applicants were placed during step 1; the rest were subjected to step 2.

**Step 2:**

“Special circumstances”, for example medical conditions, may be considered at the discretion of the placement committee once all the applicant’s fifteen (15) choices are exhausted. Applicants who are not placed after this process are subjected to step 3.

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* For the 2015 cohort, 5 (4%) applicants were considered for “special circumstances” and the remaining applicants were subjected to step 3.

**Step 3:**

For applicants that were not placed from the steps above i.e. from their 15 ranked choices, a list of available CCS places are to be sent to the remaining unallocated applicants. Applicants should reapply and rank places according to order of preference. Applicants that are not placed after this process are to be subjected to step 4.

* For the 2015 cohort, 14 (11%) applicants were considered for special circumstances and the rest were subjected to step 4.

**Step 4**:

Applicants who are not placed during step 1 to 3, if any, are to be placed randomly to the remaining CCS places. This means that the placement committee will allocate all the remaining applicants to all remaining CCS places without awarding them a chance to choose.

* For the 2015 cohort 2 (1%) applicants were considered for special circumstances and rest were subjected to step 4.

**Step 5:**

All applicants are to be informed by DAFF about their placement and should be given a period of one (1) month to swap their placement with a fellow applicant. This provision should be done in writing using a DAFF standard form. Both applicants are expected to give consent and this marks the end of the placement process.

**(3)** Since the placement process was mostly done by a random selection process based on the number of available CCS posts, as a result, most of the students are placed by chance or if they selected a CCS place that they are not competing with anyone which was also by chance. Based on the above there was no provision for an appeals process because this will disadvantage other students who have already accepted placements that are least suitable to their needs. Step 5 was designed to alleviate any dissatisfaction among the applicants.