

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (DCS)

22-04-2020

## Update: COVID-19 and Steering Committee

Members are aware that the employer and labour created national, regional and management area steering committees to address matters raised regarding COVID-19. At the last national steering committee meeting the employer emphasized that provinces should follow the escalation approach when matters are raised. All matters should first be raised at the management area steering committee, escalated to the regional steering committee and only thereafter escalated to the national steering committee. At the last national steering committee meeting the following matters were discussed:

### Permits

With the extension of the lockdown, uncertainty was raised regarding the validity of permits issued before the extension. Current permits do not have an expiry date, but the employer indicated that members can approach their managers to issue a new permit to be compliant.

### Minister's visits to management areas

The PSA requested information on the availability of PPE as the Minister has not given a true reflection on the availability. The PSA demanded that the employer must not only provide PPE to management areas when the Minister conducts a visit. If a management area does not have the required PPE, the matter must receive attention. The employer acknowledged the PSA's input and indicated that the matter will be reported to the National Operation Center (NOC).

### Distribution of PPE

The employer indicated that a written report will be provided by close of business on 23 April 2020 that will indicate PPE available per management area. It will also include the distribution of thermal scanners.

### Community Corrections

The PSA again emphasized to the employer that it is irresponsible to request parolees to sign attendance during a monitoring exercise. This practice places officials at risk and should stop immediately. The employer agreed and reported that both Western Cape and Southern Cape regions were instructed to stop this. The employer requested that those areas that are still not complying should be reported to the Management Area and the Regional Steering Committee for urgent intervention.

### **Payment of danger allowance and deployed officials**

The PSA requested clarity on the payment of danger allowance, circumstantial allowance and payment for deployed officials. The employer confirmed that those Non-Centre Based and *Public Service Act* employees who are deployed to Correctional Centers during the lockdown will receive the additional Circumstantial Allowance. These officials will also receive an additional payment to ensure that they are paid like Centre-Based Officials working in Correctional Centers. Labour demanded that all employees who are required to report to their workstations during the lockdown should receive the Circumstantial Allowance. The employer has taken this up with the NOC and will provide feedback in subsequent meetings. The circumstantial allowance for students performing work during this period will also receive attention.

### **Transfer of offenders**

Labour demanded that the employer should refrain from transferring offenders during the lockdown. The employer took note of labour's position and indicated that management areas must make a request to the NOC and provide reasons for transfer requests. All requests will be assessed based on motivation provided.

### **Infected officials**

The employer reported that all Management Areas were tasked to proactively identify houses that will be used to self-isolate officials should there be a need. Labour also demanded that the employer must provide catering for employees who are placed in self-isolation or quarantine. The employer reported that the demand is currently being discussed at the NOC and feedback will be provided during the next meeting.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER