

Local News

Gems under fire as Limpopo PSA protests fee hikes

PSA members in Limpopo staged a protest at Gems offices over rising contributions, calling the increases unaffordable and unsustainable.

🕒 21 hours ago  **Cecilia Mogashoa** 📖 1 minute read



 Members of the Public Servants Association march to the Government Employees Medical Scheme offices.

POLOKWANE – Members of the Public Servants Association (PSA) in Limpopo marched to the Government Employees Medical Scheme (Gems) offices on February 21, protesting what they describe as steep and unaffordable contribution increases.

The demonstration formed part of nationwide action by PSA members, who argue that rising medical scheme costs are placing severe financial strain on public servants and could force many to terminate their membership.

According to the union, the increases come at a time when members are already battling the rising cost of living.

PSA organising and marketing officer Lawrence Muvhango said contributions increased by 13.4% in January last year, followed by a

further 9.8% hike later in the year, bringing the total adjustment over 12 months to 23.2%.

“In the last year, despite numerous consultation meetings with them, they still went ahead and implemented the 13% as well as this year’s 9.8% increase.

“Public servants received an inflation-linked salary increase of around 5%.

“The 13% increase last year and the 9.8% this year effectively wipe out that salary adjustment,” he said.

Muvhango noted that following negotiations earlier last year, the scheme offered a 0.3% reduction.

He said this concession, however, did little to address members’ concerns.

“The 0.3% reduction was not a meaningful concession. It does not change the reality that the increase remains unaffordable,” he added.

The association warned that it is prepared to escalate the matter if its demands are not met.

“If the scheme fails to listen to the voices of its members, we will have no option but to approach the courts,” Muvhango said.

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