

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO PROVINCE

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## PSA 2019 highlights: Limpopo

**The PSA achieved many successes for members across the country during 2019. The Union is especially proud of its achievements in Limpopo.**

### **Trauma counselling and supply of protective clothing: Forensic Pathology Officers**

The Department of Health in Limpopo did not provide trauma counselling to Forensic Pathology Officers (FPOs) despite them working in extremely strenuous situations, causing distress to their emotional wellbeing. FPOs were not provided with counselling and debriefing since 2017. The matter was tabled at the Chamber. The PSA had to remind and force the employer to assist members as they are working in a non-conducive environment. The Department then agreed to provide trauma counselling and debriefing to FPOs. FPOs also struggled without protective clothing and uniform owing to Departmental. The matter was brought to the PSA's attention and was dealt with at Chamber level. These items were then procured and distributed to FPOs.

### **Prohibition of members to perform remunerative work outside Public Service**

The PSA was vocal regarding discrimination by the employer in preventing employees to apply for remunerative work outside the Public Service as per sections 30 and 31 of the *Public Service Act*, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994) as amended. The PSA forced the employer to issue a circular and withdraw that only certain Specialists could apply, and others should not as they would not be considered. The employer acceded to the PSA's demand that every employee should follow the process when making an application as outline in the *Act*, hence all employees can now apply.

### **Poor working conditions**

The PSA assisted members regarding safe working conditions that are contrary to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This resulted in closure of Mutale Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Venda and Raphahlelo EMS in Sekgosesse. Problems ranged from inadequate office space, lack and dysfunctional air conditions, broken furniture, no proper and flushing toilets, dilapidated buildings, bushy yards, lack of clean and drinkable water and risks to confidential documents. Members were moved to a safe environment with adequate resources and safe working conditions. At Musina Magistrate Court, air conditioners and toilets were dysfunctional. After the PSA's intervention, these problems were resolved in line with the *Occupational and Health Safety Act*.

### **Compulsory retirement age in terms of *Public Service Act***

The Limpopo Department of Health caused uproar when issuing 60-year-old employees with three months' notice to retire from the Public Service, which was contrary to the *Public Service Act*. Upon engagement of the DPSA and the Department, the Department had no choice but to withdraw the

notices, resulting in members exercising their choice of whether to retire at 65 or the age of their choice without being pressured.

### **Social Workers: Working tools**

The PSA tabled the matter regarding challenges faced by Social Workers who were expected to work without tools. This created uncondusive working conditions and barriers to optimum performance by employees. Upon engagement in the Chamber, working tools amounting to R25 million were procured to the relief of Social Workers.

### **Outsourcing: Management, Warehousing Medical and Surgical Sundries**

Employees at Seshego Depot were shocked when they saw a tender bulletin for the outsourcing of the Depot without any consultation or information. The PSA demanded that the tender be put on hold pending consultation as the PSA was of the view that the outsourcing will negatively affect employees. Subsequently, the Department put the process on hold to allow for proper engagement with labour.

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