

MEDIA RELEASE	CCMA budget cuts: PSA warns of detrimental impact on dispute resolution
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), as the second largest trade union in the Public Service and representing some 240 000 members, is extremely disturbed about the impact of budget cuts for the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) on dispute resolution and workers in South Africa.

The CCMA is facing a massive budget cut, which poses a significant risk for to speedy dispute resolution. The CCMA is governed by rules that regulate the dispute resolution process and ensure resolution within a specific time frame. Budget cuts will render it nearly impossible to comply with the set of standards as permanent Commissioners are overloaded with the current case backlog cases, with new cases being lodged daily.

This overwhelming caseload is set to negatively impact on affected employees as they could be coerced into settlement agreements in an effort to cope with the case load. The most vulnerable of workers rely on the CCMA to ensure that they are not treated unfairly by employers and that they obtain speedy relief. The budget cuts will have a detrimental impact on these workers. In terms of the rules, CCMA awards must be made 14 days after the matter was heard. The shortage of Commissioners will severely compromise this rule and will impact especially on unfair dismissal matters where employees are seeking reinstatement.

The PSA calls on Government to assist the CCMA to ensure that it can comply with the Constitutional obligation in resolving disputes effectively and efficiently in the interest of upholding workers' rights to fair labour practices and justice.

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