

**MEDIA RELEASE** COVID-19: PSA calls for rent relief for tenants

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**EMBARGO** None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) that represents more than 240 000 public sector employees, applauds the announcement made by the National Coronavirus Command Council on the new Regulations coming into effect on 1 May 2020.

Whilst the Regulations, amongst others, provide that occupants may not be evicted during the lockdown, the PSA calls on the property industry to allow tenants to make representations on affordability and grant respite during the lockdown period. Interns earning stipends and other lower paid or self-employed workers are especially vulnerable and should be allowed to use accommodation for three-month rent-free period. The income of these workers is directly dependent on them performing work, which they could not do during the lockdown. Understanding for their vulnerability and circumstances is therefore required.

In additions, many citizens who have diligently paid their monthly rent are now running into arrears because of hardships associated to the pandemic whilst still having to support their families. The PSA calls on landlords, owners, property developers and other stakeholders in the industry to follow the example set by many businesses to consider reducing their fees or granting extensions to tenants to meet their obligations. Such a gesture will represent a fitting contribution towards ensuring an unprecedented crisis whilst upholding human dignity.

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