MEDIA RELEASE **COVID-19: PSA condemns attack on public servants by Limpopo Provincial Command Council**

DATE 1 August 2020

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) condemns the constant attack on public servants by the Limpopo Provincial Corona Command Council (PCCC). The PCCC's stance that employees skip work behind the cloak of COVID-19 is misplaced and perpetuates the impression that public servants are dishonest and lazy.

The PCCC recently attacked educators with allegations of submitting fake medical reports to stay away from work. To date, however, none of these educators were subjected to disciplinary processes to clear their names. These allegations against workers ignore the reality of the pandemic and creates tension between public servants and members of the public whilst a rotation system is in place in all departments in line with lockdown regulations.

In view of the increasing number of public officials testing positive for COVID-19, the PSA condemns the PCCC's complete disregard of lives as it is pushing for a complete return of workers. This whilst most government buildings in Limpopo are dilapidated and congested, making observation of social distancing almost impossible. In most buildings, officials are sharing offices, there is no running water, and toilets and air-conditioners are not functioning properly. Despite this dismal situation, the PCCC chooses to focus on the number of employees who are alleged to skip work.

In an effort to contain the spread of the virus, the Presidency and Department of Public Service and Administration called upon departments to ensure implementation of rotation system to minimise the number of employees in the workplace. The PCCC, however seems to be oblivious of this as well as the devastating impact of the pandemic.

The PSA regards the PCCC's conduct and allegations as opportunistic by using COVID-19 to push the agenda of reducing the number of public servants. The PCCC is now, in effect, dealing with labour issues without the involvement of labour representatives. This is improper as there are forums, including steering committees, in departments that deal with labour matters to ensure service delivery and compliance with safety protocols.

The PCCC is, however, silent on the issues such as the provisions of personal protective equipment, alleged inflated prices and collusion between service providers and corrupt employees. The PSA therefore advises the PCCC to keep its focus on eliminating corruption rather than attacking public servants.

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