

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**COVID-19: PSA condemns Limpopo Department of Employment and Labour's lack of leadership in ensuring employees' health and safety**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) was shocked to learn that two employees of the Limpopo Department of Employment and Labour tested positive for COVID-19 and that this was not communicated to other employees. In addition, the Department did not disinfect the workplace.

It is expected of a responsible employer to ensure that COVID-19 positive cases are communicated to employees to avoid panic and ensure implementation of safety measures. The attitude of the Chief Director: Provincial Office (CDPO) is condemned. The CDPO failed to establish a COVID-19 committee where the employer and labour should engage on issues related to the safety of employees. Instead, union representatives are bullied and harassed for demanding that the employer complies with health and safety regulations. The CDPO is marginalising unions and the PSA will escalate the matter to the relevant superiors.

Despite the employer being aware of the positive infections on Friday, 4 September 2020 and Monday, 7 September 2020 respectively, it did not move to ensure that the spread of the virus is contained. The Department is at the centre of safety in the workplace and its failure to demonstrate exemplary leadership provides an opportunity for other departments' non-compliance. This also explains the Department's failure to respond to numerous requests to conduct labour inspections where employees' safety is at stake.

The PSA condemns the CDPO's failure to ensure that the Department provides a workplace that is safe and without risks to employees. The PSA will engage the Department to ensure that employees' safety is not compromised by a manager's conduct.

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