

**MEDIA RELEASE** Department of Labour declares Civitas building unsafe

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**EMBARGO** None

**ENQUIRIES** communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the recommendation by the Chief Inspector of the Department of Labour to evacuate Department of Health employees from Civitas Building in Pretoria until the building is safe to work in.

Following a meeting with the Chief Inspector representative on 29 October 2018, a prohibition notice was issued against the Department of Health at Civitas. The notice prohibits the Department of Health from allowing employees to continue occupying Civitas building as it continues to be unsafe and unhealthy for employees.

“The PSA represents most of the employees stationed at the Civitas building and has since April 2018 been engaging the Department of Health about the state of the building, which is affecting the health of employees. This continuous intervention resulted in the PSA approaching the Chief Inspector,” said PSA General Manager, Ivan Fredericks

Owing to the scale of repairs still outstanding, the Department of Labour has finally declared that employees should immediately vacate the building until it is safe for human occupation. “This is exactly what the PSA has been advocating for the past months as the building does not meet the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*,” said Mr Fredericks.

The prohibition notice states that the ventilation systems, activators and sprinkler systems in the building are not working. The representative of the Chief Inspector further indicated that urgent work needs to be done on structural repairs relating to, amongst others, water proofing that has been identified as having both safety and health effects on employees. Adjustment settings must also be fixed for air conditions to allow employees to control office temperatures.

“This outcome is a victory for employees at Civitas, ensuring that appropriate attention will now be given to ensure that the building meets occupational health and safety standards. This will also set a standard for other departments to ensure compliance,” said Mr Fredericks.

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