

**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **Freedom Day: Public servants not enjoying financial freedom**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) remains extremely concerned that public servants rendering critical services to uphold communities and are the face of the Public Service are struggling to survive on their monthly salaries and are robbed of financial freedom.

Professions such as nurses, police officers, emergency services, and teachers are especially struggling to attract young entrants owing to poor remuneration and challenging work environments. Public servants must ensure that government's service-delivery goals are met but are lamed by the ever-increasing cost of fuel, electricity, food, and the soaring interest rates. Many public servants cannot afford to purchase a property and do not qualify for study assistance for their children. Fraud, corruption, maladministration, wasteful expenditure in government are ignored, whilst public servants are struggling to recover from the serious financial losses incurred owing to government's failure to abide by collective agreements and pay negotiated benefits. Government continues to plead poverty when its employees need to be acknowledged for their efforts whilst top managers and executives at failing state entities live in the lap of luxury are paid millions.

For many workers, the promise of a democratic South Africa, where workers are treated and compensated fairly, has become an unattainable dream. Public servants are frustrated, and under-valued while being overworked in many critical sectors. Government refuses to acknowledge this reality owing to an obsession to decrease the wage bill.

Financial freedom for public servants will offer a greater guarantee that these workers will guard against ills in the workplace and not be tempted to benefit themselves through irregular methods. As South Africa commemorates Freedom Day, the PSA calls for determined efforts to ensure a well-paid, efficient Public Service that is geared and equipped to render excellent service to citizens.

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