MEDIA RELEASE **COVID-19 Level 4: PSA demands KZN compliance with lockdown rules**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) in KwaZulu-Natal is inundated with calls from concerned public servants who fear for their safety when returning to work in the wake the risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 23 April 2020.

The strategy referred to as “Level 4” seeks to relax some measures that were implemented to prevent the spread of COVID-19, permitted retail and service operations to commence with effect from 1 May 2020.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993*, requires the employer to provide and maintain a conducive work environment, which is safe and risk free to the health of employees. The employer must also ensure that the workplace is free of hazardous conditions and substances which can cause injury or diseases.

With KwaZulu-Natal having a high level of COVID-19 infections, the PSA demands that all Departmental building are disinfected/fumigated by 3 May 2020 before the return of employees on 4 May 2020 to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements. Departments must ensure that face masks, sanitisers and gloves are available for all employees when they report for duty and sitting arrangements must be assessed to ensure social distancing. These measures must also apply for the number of people in lifts and members of the public accessing offices. Departments must procure adequate screening devices per building to be available at every entrance and prevent access without. Every employee must be screened daily. Occupational health and safety representatives must be trained on the use of the screening devices or local health authorities should be approached for assistance.

The PSA has written a letter to the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Sihle Zikalala, requesting his intervention in ensuring that Departments in the province adhere to the restriction on the number of employees at a workplace, being a third of the staff complement, in compliance with the rules of lockdown level 4.

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