



MEDIA RELEASE **PSA calls for immediate suspension of Department of Employment and Labour's Limpopo Provincial Head amidst allegations of assault**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) was shocked to have learnt that the Chief Director Provincial Operations (CDPO) of the Department of Employment and Labour in Limpopo was involved in the alleged manhandling and assault of a junior staff member.

The employee subsequently laid criminal charges and a grievance against the CDPO, the Deputy Director: LMIS and security officers who participated in the assault. The CDPO and the DD were arrested and appeared briefly in court on 12 July 2021 on charges of theft and fraud. The matter was postponed to 20 August 2021.

The incident took place more than a month ago, but the Department has to date not acted on the employee's grievance. The CDPO, as Provincial Head, is the most senior employee and is expected to uphold law and should know that manhandling and assaulting fellow employees is not only tantamount to misconduct but are also criminal offenses. The PSA's view that the CDPO's continued presence in the workplace is sending a wrong message that law is only applicable where junior employees are involved. This is a clear abuse of power, and it cannot be accepted that an employee can be assaulted without consequence management. The PSA has on numerous occasions raised the CDPO's behaviour and escalated the matter to the Head Office. Head Office's failure to act is resulting in the unwarranted behaviour continuing.

The PSA demands that the assaulted employee who is traumatised and humiliated be assisted through the wellness section. Employees have a right to fair labour practice and dignity whilst the employer has a legal obligation to provide safe workplace. The PSA thus calls upon the Director-General to immediately place the implicated officials on precautionary suspension, properly investigate the matter and bring to book those who participated in this despicable act. Failure to ensure consequence management will promote the abuse of power and instil fear amongst employees, which is unacceptable in a democratic dispensation.

END

