

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for measures to protect workers against erosion of income as real salaries decline
DATE	25 June 2026
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) noted with extreme concern recent reports indicating that real salaries in South Africa have declined to a two-year low as inflation continues to outstrip wage growth.

This development confirms what public-sector employees have been experiencing for some time. A steady erosion of purchasing power has made it increasingly difficult for workers to meet their basic needs. Rising costs of food, transport, electricity, and other essential goods are placing unbearable pressure on households, whilst wage increases remain insufficient to keep pace with inflation.

The PSA emphasises that public-sector employees are effectively earning less in real terms, despite nominal salary adjustments. The decline in real wages undermines morale, productivity, and service delivery in the public sector. Continued financial strain on workers has broader socio-economic implications, including increased debt levels and reduced economic participation. The PSA's calls for hybrid work thus remain more relevant than ever as part of measures to protect workers against the erosion of income.

Public servants play a critical role in ensuring the delivery of essential services to citizens. It is therefore unacceptable that these workers continue to bear the brunt of economic pressures without adequate support. Employers must prioritise meaningful wage increases that are aligned with inflation and the rising cost of living, engage in good faith collective bargaining that recognises the financial realities facing workers, and implement measures to protect workers against the erosion of income. The current trend of declining real wages is unsustainable. Urgent intervention is required to safeguard workers and stabilise the public sector.

END