

MEDIA RELEASE	COVID-19: PSA calls for provision of PPE at Limpopo Courts and Justice Offices
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EMBARGO	None
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is disturbed about reported non-compliance with COVID-19 Regulations and the Department of Employments and Labour’s Guidelines to ensure safe and healthy work practices for employees of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development in Limpopo.

The Department, as custodian of constitutional values and human rights, should not make itself guilty of violating the rights of its own employees by subjecting them to dangerous and unsafe working conditions. The Department despite endeavouring to provide justice for all in South Africa, seems to be excluding its own employees in Limpopo by not providing them with personal protective equipment (PPE) to limit exposure to COVID-19 infection. Courts and offices in Mahwelereng, Praktiseer, Nebo, Groblersdal, Mookgophong, Belabela, Phalaborwa, Namakgale, Lulekani, Polokwane, Praktiseer, Moutse, Lebowakgomo, are Schoonord have not been provided with adequate PPE but employees are expected to perform their duties. It is further alleged that some officials are expected to wash and re-use single-use disposable gloves and must purchase sanitisers themselves.

Despite the increasing rate of infection reported by the Department of Health, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Developments seems to be oblivious of the danger its employees are exposed to. In addition, section 8 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* places an obligation on all employers to provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and without risk to the health of employees.

The PSA’s interventions at local level have failed to resolve the problem and the Union therefore calls upon the Accounting Officer of the Department to intervene and ensure immediate compliance. Should this matter not be resolved, the PSA will be forced to turn to explore the options to protect its members’ rights, including litigation.

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