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| MEDIA RELEASE | PSA calls for transparency and accountability in Mpumalanga Department of Education housing allowance fraud |
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| EMBARGO | None |
| ENQUIRIES | communication@psa.co.za |

The Public Servants Association (PSA) has noted with concern the confirmation by the Mpumalanga Department of Education that two officials have been suspended following allegations of fraud related to the manipulation of the housing allowance payment system.

According to the Department, a criminal case has been registered at Kanyamazane Police Station after it emerged that public funds, meant for housing allowances, were unlawfully accessed and distributed to officials and educators across multiple districts between July and November 2024. Internal investigations reportedly revealed a deliberate and unauthorised bypass of official Persal distribution codes, which enabled irregular payments to be processed without proper approvals or adherence to established procedures.

The PSA is alarmed by these developments as any abuse of public funds, particularly by entrusted administrators, erodes public trust and damages the integrity of the public service. It is especially concerning that the alleged scheme appears to have benefited the implicated officials and other persons in the Education sector.

The PSA commends the Department for taking action by suspending the implicated officials and initiating disciplinary and criminal proceedings. The PSA urges the Department to ensure that these processes are conducted transparently, with full accountability, and within the ambit of relevant legislation. The PSA further cautions against scapegoating or selective accountability and calls for all persons who knowingly participated in, or benefited from the fraudulent scheme, to be held equally accountable, irrespective of their job title or position.

The PSA supports efforts to recover all unlawfully disbursed funds and stresses the urgent need for stronger internal controls to prevent similar breaches. The PSA is committed to promoting ethical standards in the public service and will continue to advocate for clean, transparent, and accountable governance in the interest of all South Africans.

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