

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA calls for transport allowance for workers after announcement of taxi fare prices by 172%**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), one of the largest trade Unions in the Public Sector, is worried by the impending historic taxi fare increases. Public servants, who are at the forefront in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, are already struggling to make ends meet, owing to Government's failure to implement their salary increases, due on 1 April 2020.

In addition, the escalating rise in the price of necessities like food and electricity, has already taken its toll on public servants and the country at large. To make matters worse, the recent increase in the price of petrol and Gauteng freeway etolls , has also made matters extremely difficult for employees to utilise their personal transport to commute to work, with the majority relying on taxis as a mode of transport.

The PSA will be calling a special meeting of the Public Sector Bargaining Council (PSCBC), to table an urgent demand that the state provide all critical workers on duty, during the lockdown, with assistance in the interim with transport allowance, to assist with the drastically shocking 172 % increase in taxi fares, expected to come into effect on 15 June 2020. The transport allowance should be in place until taxi fares are normalised or government has intervened. Exorbitant transport costs will likely see a majority of public servants, unable to afford daily taxi fees to get to work, thereby posing a serious challenge in the response to the fight against the pandemic.

Public servants are going to fall into a deeper financial crisis and are also adding to the number of employees seeking debt counselling and even prolonged sick leave due to medical conditions related to stress.

The PSA also calls upon the Transport Ministry to seriously engage with the taxi industry to mitigate the impending increase, which will surely become totally unaffordable to workers and the public at large .

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