

MEDIA RELEASE PSA concerned about deteriorating health and safety conditions at Bloemfontein Government Mortuary

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the Department of Employment and Labour's intervention following serious occupational health and safety concerns at the Bloemfontein Government Mortuary in the Free State.

The PSA met with Forensic Pathology Officers on 13 July 2026 after employees raised concerns about unsafe working conditions at the facility. Employees reported that although one dissection hall was allowed to reopen following the Mortuary's closure in 2024, conditions remained unsuitable for safe operations. Key concerns include a non-functional ventilation system, extreme temperatures in the dissection hall, a lack of hot and warm water for hygiene and operational purposes, and faulty electrical wiring that prevents the safe use of equipment.

Following the PSA's engagement with management and the Department of Employment and Labour, a Labour Inspector confirmed on 15 July 2026 that the original prohibition order issued in 2024 remained in force. After assessing the current conditions, the Department ordered the immediate closure of the operational dissection hall, whilst the administration block remains open.

The PSA supports this decision and maintains that no employee should be required to work in conditions that endanger their health, safety, and wellbeing. To ensure continuity of services, labour, employees, and management have agreed on temporary measures. These include the use of the Botshabelo Hospital dissection hall, the provision of appropriate personal protective equipment, and a temporary operational arrangement to be implemented whilst corrective measures are implemented.

The PSA welcomes the commitment to establish a dedicated forum to address workplace challenges proactively and will continue engaging all stakeholders to ensure that the identified health and safety shortcomings are urgently resolved.

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