



MEDIA RELEASE: **COVID-19: PSA concerned about Gauteng Department of Education's recall of staff with co-morbidities**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of educators, has noted with disappointment the immediate recall of employees with co-morbidities to the workplace by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE).

The President recently announced that South Africa will be moving to COVID-19 Alert Level 1 from 21 September 2020. The reason for the movement to Level-1 was that the South African Health system can now handle the number of COVID-19 infected patients better. The move to Level-1 does not, however, mean that the risk of COVID-19 is over. The risk for people with co-morbidities, in fact, remains the same as on Level-5.

The normal process when moving to a lower level is to obtain guidelines from the Department of Public Service and Administrations (DPSA) and then to consult with labour on measures put in place to protect employees against COVID-19 infection. The GDE, instead, prematurely instructed that all staff with co-morbidities should return to work on 21 September 2020. Without the necessary measurements in place, the GDE is exposing employees to infection.

The PSA has requested the GDE to recall the memo and to await the DPSA guidelines before consulting with labour on the recalling of staff to workplaces.

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