

MEDIA RELEASE **COVID-19: PSA condemns lawlessness in Limpopo**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned about the escalating disregard of law and criminal behaviour by public representatives in Limpopo that are jeopardising efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Incidents range from the deliberate disregard and contravention of lockdown regulations by councillors who are entrusted with the responsibility of governance, theft of electrical poles and cables, the sale of relief food parcels and using these for political leverage, as well as the sale of fake travel permits.

The PSA is appalled by the way food parcels are being handled. Problems with the distribution of food parcels at Moletjie, Ga-Hlahla, Nwamitwa in Giyani and Extension 73, Seshego led to the contravention of social distancing. People were called to register their names and did as instructed but food parcels are distributed to undeserving people who are not on the list are given food parcels while some on the list are omitted. This unfairness resulted in public marches and near riots, which could have been avoided. The Speaker of Maruleng Municipality is being investigated for allegedly keeping food parcels for the poor in her house. The Councillor in Makgakgapaji village was arrested for selling and issuing fake travel permits.

The Provincial Command Council (PCC) in Limpopo is fast losing its credibility as people are experiencing that its Directives are not enforced. The PCC informed Limpopo residents that councillors will not be involved in the distribution of food parcels, but the opposite is happening. These shameless leaders are allegedly also distributing food parcels at night, which is against the prescripts of the PCC and lockdown policies.

The PSA calls upon the Premier of Limpopo to urgently address this non-compliance and lawlessness. The disregard of the PCC is setting a dangerous precedent that will compromise efforts to contain the pandemic. Failure to ensure compliance with COVID-19 regulations is destined to fuel the spread of the virus as members of the public take cue from public representatives. The current low infection rate in Limpopo should not provide a false sense of security that can ultimately be catastrophic.

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