MEDIA RELEASE **COVID-19: PSA extends condolences to family of deceased SASSA employee**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than over 5 300 employees of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), has learned with sadness about the death of a SASSA employee in the Eastern Cape after testing positive for COVID-19.

The employee, a Grant Administrator at Zwide Local Office in Port Elizabeth, was a dedicated official who availed herself to render services to grant beneficiaries during the lockdown period. She was part of the SASSA team that distributed social relief distress food parcels in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan area and assisted with monitoring the April 2020 payment cycle at various ATMs and merchants.

The PSA expresses condolences with the family and colleagues of the deceased employee. A life lost in the line of duty is always one too many, and employers are urged to take all possible precautionary measures to protect employees from becoming statistics of the COVID-19 pandemic. The PSA calls on Minister Lindiwe Zulu and the SASSA Chief Executive Officer to ensure that the lives of employees tasked with serving vulnerable citizens are not placed at risk by provided the necessary personal protective equipment. The PSA also cautions SASSA regarding rushing to reopen its offices or recall employees to work should the necessary safety measures not be in place to prevent further tragedies.

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