

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA forces Department of Correctional Services to lift moratorium on payment of allowances
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) continues to relentlessly fight for the rights and interests of its members in the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). On 12 February 2025, the DCS unilaterally imposed a moratorium on the payment of overtime and associated allowances for the period of January to March 2025, deferring these payments to the new financial year commencing on 1 April 2025. This unilateral decision was taken without consultation with organised labour, in direct violation of various labour laws and agreements, including the *Labour Relations Act* 66 of 1995 (as amended), the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act* of 1997, and the Relationship Agreement outlined in GPSSBC Resolution 3 of 2006.

Additionally, the DCS's actions disregarded a Compliance Order issued by the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) in January 2025. This order was secured after the PSA sought PSCBC intervention to enforce compliance with collective agreements. On learning of this unlawful decision, the PSA immediately engaged with DCS and demanded the withdrawal of the moratorium. Despite the PSA's efforts, the Department initially refused to comply, forcing the PSA to escalate the matter by registering it at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) and ultimately declaring a dispute at the General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC).

Realising that its options were limited, the DCS issued a notice on 25 March 2025, formally lifting the moratorium on the deferment of payments. The affected allowances include overtime, standby, and shift allowances. These are payments that many employees rely on for transport, daily expenses, and basic living costs. The blatant disregard for employees' well-being demonstrates a lack of concern for the financial struggles of frontline correctional workers. The PSA is deeply concerned by the DCS's repeated pattern of unilaterally making decisions that should be subject to collective bargaining. Such actions undermine organised labour and create unnecessary tensions in the workplace. The PSA has successfully utilized all available dispute resolution mechanisms to protect its members' rights, ensuring that their hard-earned allowances were reinstated.

The PSA calls on the Minister of Correctional Services to intervene and ensure that DCS stops undermining organised labour. Failure to address these ongoing issues will severely impact employee morale and the overall functioning of the Department. The PSA remains committed to defending its members and will not tolerate any further attempts to sideline labour rights.

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