

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	PSA urges government to implement hybrid-work model to assist public servants amidst escalating living pressures
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) calls on government to urgently consider the proposal tabled by the PSA at the recent Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) meeting for the implementation of a hybrid-work model across the public service.

This proposal is based on the fact that public servants are facing unprecedented financial pressure owing to continuous increases in fuel prices, rising medical-aid contributions, escalating food prices, electricity costs, and other living expenses. These increases are significantly eroding the purchasing power of public servants who recently received a salary adjustment of only 4%, falling far short of addressing the realities of the current cost-of-living crisis.

The introduction of a structured hybrid work-from-home policy, where operationally feasible, can provide immediate relief to thousands of public servants who are forced to absorb increasing transport costs simply to report for duty. Every month, employees are required to spend a substantial portion of their salaries on fuel and commuting expenses, placing immense strain on household finances. The COVID-19 pandemic proved beyond doubt that remote and hybrid-work arrangements are practical and effective. During that period, public servants continued to provide critical services whilst working remotely, proving that productivity and service delivery can be maintained through flexible work arrangements where the nature of work permits.

The implementation of a hybrid-work model would not only benefit employees but would also generate significant savings for government. Reduced occupancy of office buildings would lower expenditure on electricity, water consumption, office maintenance, and other operational costs associated with leased office space. This makes the proposal a cost-neutral intervention that can be implemented without placing additional financial pressure on government. The PSA acknowledges that certain categories of employees, particularly frontline and essential service workers, may not be able to benefit from hybrid-work arrangements as the nature of their duties requires physical presence in the workplace. In such instances, government should engage organised labour to explore alternative measures aimed at alleviating the financial burden on these employees. These measures could include additional leave days, transport support mechanisms, or other appropriate forms of compensation.



The PSA calls on all trade unions operating in the public service to unite behind this initiative and collectively advocate for practical solutions that will assist employees in coping with rising fuel prices and the increasing cost of living. Organised labour must present a united front in ensuring that the welfare and financial wellbeing of public servants remain a priority.

Government has an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to employee wellbeing by embracing innovative and practical workplace solutions that have already proven successful. The PSA is committed to constructive engagement on this matter and urges government to place this issue on the agenda for urgent consideration.

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