

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomed the Public Service Commission call for Limpopo government to reinstate officials suspended longer than 60 days.
DATE	01 June 2020
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcome the stance of Public Service Commission (PSC) that the government of Limpopo must abide by 60-day rule and reinstate suspended officials. Limpopo Provincial Departments have tendency to suspend the employees for period longer than 60 days despite the Disciplinary Code and Procedure providing that the employer should hold a disciplinary hearing within a month or 60 days. These prolonged suspensions are either caused by the abuse of power wherein the employees are suspended for no justifiable cause or lack of capacity to conduct proper investigation.

The PSA have indicated in the past that the failure to dispense disciplinary processes by departments, causes inefficiencies in the administration of public service. It must be noted that the departments have applied a subtle moratorium wherein only critical posts are filled leaving the employees stretched to do the work of those who left the services of the employer and those suspended. This increased workload for employees does not only causes burn out and strain on the employees, but also make them prone to errors which lead to them being charged for misconduct. Subsequently, suspended, thus becomes vicious cycle and travesty of justice which has potential to paralyse the efficiency of the Public Service. Limpopo Government is paying millions of Rands to employees without rendering service which is tantamount to wasteful expenditure as there is no value for money.

The observation by the PSC that there is generally non-compliance with prescripts relating to the 60-day rule in Limpopo, is correct and confirms long held view by the PSA that the employer is using precautionary suspension as a tool to purge the employees. The validity or legality of these suspensions is questionable as they are in contravention with the Disciplinary Code and have not been decided by the Chairperson. What is even worse is that in some cases, the employees were told that their suspension is lifted but must stay at

home, a clear abuse of power and disregard of law. The intervention by the PSC is welcomed and will relieve the employees of pressure to execute the duties of colleagues who are receiving salaries whilst staying at home. Further, it will ensure dispensation of justice to the employees who are the victims of injustice and power abuse.

The lack of consequence management has exacerbated this illegal practise despite the continuous call by the Auditor General and labour to desist from wastage of taxpayers' money by paying huge salaries to employees without lifting even a finger. This practice has caused huge prejudice on the employees who could not receive their benefits such as grade progression and performance bonuses due to unjustifiable and reckless suspensions by the Managers who thinks that they are law unto themselves. The PSA welcomes the decisiveness of the PSC to put a stop this lawlessness in the Province of Limpopo.

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