

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes closure of Department of Education Circuit Offices in Capricorn District
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the closure of Mogoshi and Moletjie Circuit Offices in the Department of Education's Capricorn District by a Labour Inspector based on poor working conditions.

Following an alert by concerned members regarding the poor working conditions, the PSA escalated the matter to the Department of Employment and Labour for intervention. A Labour Inspector then conducted an inspection in terms of section 29 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and issued a contravention notice. The employer must provide the Labour Inspector proof of appointment of health and safety representatives at these offices. Furthermore, prohibition notices were issued for allowing employees to work on a premises with exposed electrical cables, which may cause a fire in the building. These must be inspected and repaired.

It is unacceptable for employees to work in a facility that lacks basic amenities such as running water and proper sanitation. The Labour Inspector also issued a further prohibition notice to the employer for allowing employees to work in an environment without water and with all toilets being out of order. The third prohibition notice was issued owing to a leaking roof and objects falling from the broken ceiling.

The PSA welcomes the occupational health prohibition notice issued by the Department of Employment and Labour as a positive step towards addressing the concerns. The PSA believes that all workers have the right to a safe and healthy working environment and will continue to advocate for improved working conditions for public servants.

The PSA supports the decision to close these offices until the required repairs and upgrades have been completed to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. The closure of the offices could, however, have been avoided had the Department dealt with the problems timeously or sought measures to prevent the situation. The PSA urges the Department of Education to prioritise the repairs and upgrades as employees' health and safety should never be compromised in pursuit of service delivery. The PSA further urges the Department to ensure that alternative measures, such as water tanks, are put in place to address current water shortage and ensure that employees' safety is not compromised. The PSA will continue to monitor the situation and work with the relevant authorities to ensure that the rights and well-being of the Union's members are protected.

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