

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS - LIMPOPO

04-05-2020

Return to work: COVID-19 Level-4 lockdown

Members will recall that the PSA warned employers against the premature recalling of employees without necessary preparation. Sadly, the PSA's call was ignored by most of departments in Limpopo, which went ahead to recall employees even though they were not able to ensure their safety.

The PSA has called on departments to ensure compliance with the Department of Employment and Labour's Directive, which clearly articulates the responsibilities of employers before resumption of duty by employees. Giyani, Polokwane, Mokopane, Jane Furse and all Vhembe districts offices were not deep cleaned and workers are not screened. Managers are, however, forcing members to open the offices as if it is business as usual. It must be noted that failure to comply with safety regulations is not only irresponsible, but also illegal in terms of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. The PSA advises members to exercise extreme caution when executing their duties and not to enter unsafe work environments such as offices that are not deep cleaned and with no screening of employees and members of the public.

The PSA reiterates its position that departments must develop a Workplace Protocol to ensure compliance with safety regulations. The Department must assess the risks noting its dynamics, conduct deep cleaning of offices, screen workers, provide PPE (including washable three-layered cloth masks and sanitisers), and maintain a minimum staff complement to ensure social distancing.

The disregard of employees' safety is condemned in the strongest terms. The PSA is engaging with the employer to resolve this matter, failing which the PSA will be forced to explore other options to protect members' rights, including litigation. Members can report concerns and problems regarding compliance with lockdown restrictions to the PSA Provincial Office at phillip.maponya@psa.co.za or 082 880 8967.

GENERAL MANAGER