

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT - LIMPOPO

24-04-2020

COVID-19 containment/management: Various Courts and Offices

The President announced measures to combat the COVID-19 epidemic, followed by Circular 7 of 2020 by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the Department of Employment and Labour Guidelines dealing with COVID-19 at workplaces which supported World Health Organisation Guidelines.

The Department of Justice in Limpopo is, however, failing to comply with the regulatory framework in that most courts are not provided with PPE to ensure safety of employees. The Department is failing to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace as per section 8 of *OHS Act* which places the burden and legal obligations on the employer to provide such. Courts and offices in Mahwelereng, Praktiseer, Nebo, Groblersdal, Mookgophong, Belabela, Phalaborwa, Namakgale, Lulekani, Polokwane, Praktiseer, Moutse, Lebowakgomo, and Skinnoord are not provided with adequate PPE whilst employees are expected to work in such environments.

In some offices, employees are even told to wash gloves so that they reuse them owing to shortage whilst gloves are meant for once-off usage. Some officials are buying sanitisers for themselves, which is not acceptable. The Department must provide frontline officials with Personal Protective Equipment such as hand sanitisers/washers, soap, gloves, masks and safety gear to ensure their protection.

The PSA cannot allow its members to be exposed to danger by the employer which is oblivious of the impact of the pandemic. Members are advised to demand PPE before they can perform their duties. Members must note that no employer can force employees to work in dangerous, unhealthy, unsafe and uncondusive work conditions. It is the right of employees to work in a safe and healthy work environment. The PSA is doing everything in its power to protect the rights of members and will engage the employer to ensure that matter is immediately resolved. Members can report non-compliance on 082 880 8967.

GENERAL MANAGER