

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

10-12-2020

Poor working conditions: Mahwelereng Magistrate's Court

The PSA has received complaints from shop stewards at the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, Mahwelereng Magistrate's Court in the Waterberg District regarding uncondusive work conditions. The offices and toilets are dirty. There are no cleaners as they were relying on contract cleaners to provide cleaning services who are, owing to non-payment of their salaries, refusing to work.

This situation is contrary to Section 24 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* which states that *'everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being'*. Further, section 8 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993)* stipulates that the employer must provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of his employees.

Upon engagement with the Court Manager who did not show commitment or urgency to address the matter, the PSA escalated the matter to Area Court Manager and also referred it to the Department of Employment and Labour for intervention. It must be noted that employees cannot be expected to work in a dirty environment and the employer was cautioned of employees' rights to refuse work if they are of the view that their health and safety will be compromised. COVID-19 is still relevant and practice of good hygiene is highly recommended to ensure prevention and containment, making it reckless for the Department to ignore the seriousness of the virus and expect employees to be subjected to unnecessary danger.

Shop stewards are urged to constantly assess the working environment and to report any non-compliance immediately to the PSA Provincial Office (queen.seema@psa.co.za).

GENERAL MANAGER