

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

13-05-2020

COVID-19: Compliance with Safety Standards at Polokwane High Court

After the President announced relaxation of lockdown restriction to level 4, the Department of Public Service and Administration issued Circular 18 of 2020 and the Department of Employment and Labour issued a Covid-19 Occupational Health and Safety in Workplaces Directive dealing with safety regulations to combat the spread of Covid-19.

These Directives provided the safety measures that need to be implemented by employers such as conducting risk assessments, deep cleaning of workplaces, screening of employees, provision of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), maintenance of minimum number of employees in workplace to comply with social distance as well as consider remote work for employees from 60 years of age and those with underlying medical conditions which make them susceptible to Covid-19 infection.

The PSA was alerted by concerned members of the employer's failure to comply with safety regulations. There is inadequate provision of the PPE as employees were not provided with masks and sanitisers, poor ventilation and 100 percent of employees at work. The Safety Committee is non-existent and no appointment of Compliance Officer and no risk assessment was conducted. It must be noted that these failures contravene Section 8 of *Occupational Health and Safety Act* regarding safe workplace.

The PSA cannot allow members to be exposed to danger by the employer who is oblivious of the impact of the pandemic hence members are advised to demand PPE before they can perform their duties. Members must note that no employer will force the employees to work in dangerous, unhealthy, unsafe and un conducive work conditions. It is employees' rights to work in a safe and healthy workplace. The PSA will do everything in its power to protect the rights of members in this regard.

The PSA will engage the employer to ensure that matters are resolved. Members can report non-compliance to Phillip Maponya at Phillip.maponya@psa.co.za or on 082 880 8967.

GENERAL MANAGER