

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

14-05-2020

COVID-19: Compliance with Safety Regulations

Polokwane Place of Safety

Members will recall that the PSA previously issued an *Informus*, regarding non-compliance with level 4 Safety Regulations by the Department of Social Development, at the Polokwane Place of Safety. The PSA pointed out that the employer was not providing adequate PPE masks, as well as screening of employees amongst other things, which was disputed by the employer.

The PSA was however not satisfied with the level of compliance by the employer and approached the Department of Employment and Labour, to conduct an inspection in terms of Section 29 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*. Subsequently, the inspection was conducted on 13 May 2020, wherein the following findings were made:

- The employees were not being screened when they get to work, to ascertain if they have symptoms related to COVID-19;
- The PPE provided were: Face shields for the nurses, surgical masks were used instead of cloth masks. Only a few employees had cloth masks and it was explained that the masks are being sewn in house by inmates and would be available by 15 May 2020;
- Sanitisers were available; at the gate, reception, homes, and employees were provided with their own bottles;
- The employees work on a rotational basis to minimise exposure.

The employer was found to be in contravention of the COVID-19 Regulations. Thus, a contravention notice was served, as the employer failed to conduct a risk assessment and to screen employees when they report for work. An improvement notice was served for the lack of adequate cloth masks as employees need to be provided with 2 cloth masks. The employer is reminded that the subjecting of employees to work in an unsafe and unhealthy workplace is contravening Section 8 of *OHSA* that places a legal burden and obligation to provide and maintain safe workstations without risks to employees.

Further, members are urged to report all non-compliance to patricia.matlhadisa@psa.co.za or 076 983 9852.

Members will be kept informed of new developments.

GENERAL MANAGER