

FOR PSA MEMBERS: SAPHRAH

02-07-2020

Feedback: Labour Forum Meeting

The following items were discussed:

Payment: Transport allowance

Labour raised a concern, after noting that the employer stopped paying employees transport allowance post the implementation of Level-5 by President Ramaphosa, citing that employees were no longer coming to work. Furthermore, that they can only pay travelling allowance to employees who were coming to the office. After noting that the employer is providing blanket responses to the proposals made, a meeting was requested with the CEO. The PSA has also subsequently sent a letter to the CEO requesting their audience to resolve the above matter speedily.

Re-opening: Opt-out process

Labour made a follow up on the above after it was brought to its attention, that almost 96 Administrators have not been allocated any work, since they were taken over from the National Department of Health (NDOH) through the process of Section 197 of the *Labour Relations Act*. As a result of the frustration, the employer through the transfer agreement agreed to give the employees an option of opting out of the transfer to SAPHRAH and remain with National Health. The employer responded by saying that they have escalated the matter to the Director-General of the Health Department and were awaiting a response, after the Director-General referred the matter for advice to the Legal Department. Labour further stated that whilst waiting for the DG to respond, there should be a moratorium on all vacancies within NDOH and SAPHRAH. Labour further requested to form part of the consultation with the DG and be afforded an opportunity to engage with the DG, when such a follow up meeting is scheduled. The employer said they will confirm if labour can be allowed to form part of the meeting and a response will be given at the meeting with the CEO, which is now confirmed for 8 July 2020.

OHS Committee: COVID-19

It has come to labour's attention, that there is no OHS committee in-line with Circular 7. It is a requirement for the employer to have a steering committee, which will be responsible for OHS in relation to COVID-19, as well as to ensure that proper training is conducted to empower the committee to respond to COVID-19. Labour further demanded that no employee be allowed to go to the office until the employer complies with requirements as contained in Circular 7. The employer indicated that they would respond to labour's demand after obtaining a mandate.

Structure and employees benefits

It was reported that Human Resources met with the NDOH team and the report on finalising employee benefits will be tabled at the next meeting with payroll at NDOH. The meeting is scheduled to take place before end June 2020 and feedback will be provided to labour at the next meeting.

Leave forfeiture for 2019

The employer encouraged employees to take leave for 2019, to ensure that they do not forfeit it based on the agreement at DPSA, where employees were given an extension to keep their outstanding leave for 2019 until December 2020.

Support for shop stewards who are working from home

The employer indicated that there is a shortage of computers based on the challenges of service delivery during the pandemic and lockdown. The employer encouraged shop stewards to contact IT for assistance with Data, during the period of lockdown and labour was requested to forward names of shop stewards who require such assistance, for them to participate in meetings.

Bursaries for staff

The employer tabled the accommodation policy for consultation. The policy aims to provide a framework for the allocation and management of official accommodation in the Department of Correctional Services. It consolidates all policy prescripts regarding the provision. It has however, come to labour's attention that the employer is refusing to give employees bursaries, stating that there is no policy to award such. The employer said they have continued to give bursaries to those employees who had been previously awarded bursaries to continue with their studies but could not consider new requests. Labour reminded the employer, that in the absence of a SAPHRA Policy during this period of Section 197, the conditions of service which the employees enjoyed whilst employed by NDOH will continue to be applicable. It was demanded that the letters be withdrawn by sending individual letters to those employees who have applied in-line with the applicable policy at NDOH. The response from the employer stated that they think there was an interpretation issue on the Policy of the NDOH. Parties agreed to have a bilateral meeting to resolve the matter.

Policies

The employer submitted the Overtime Policy for input by Labour. Labour requested some time as they to get inputs from members who are currently working from home. The employer agreed to give labour time to consult with their members and will be expecting feedback before the next Labour Forum meeting.

The meeting was closed, and the next meeting will be on 10 July 2020.

GENERAL MANAGER