

Shut down of Witbank Provincial Office – Mpumalanga

The PSA is outraged by the continuous breach of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* by the Accounting Officer at the Mpumalanga Department of Labour (DOL), when dealing with confirmed positive cases within the Department. Inspection Reports have shown that Labour Centers such as Volkrust, Ermelo, and Mbombela to mention a few, have had previous reported Covid -19 cases and the Accounting Officer would intentionally delay the process of decontaminating, with reasons unknown and after the lapse of 72 hours would then claim the virus has “died”.

Members of the PSA at the DOL in Witbank, thus opted not to access the building until evidence that decontamination had been done. The PSA maintains that it is not embarking in any form of industrial action as portrayed in the recent media release by the employer. The PSA maintains that the unsafe working environment has resulted in employees vacating the offices and refusing to enter the premises. The PSA has written correspondences and telephonically engaged the Accounting Officer who in turn claimed to have deep cleaned the affected offices. The PSA learned that this exercise of deep cleaning was done by casual workers who were not told that they were procured to deep clean against the virus nor had they ever been trained to do so.

An urgent meeting with Senior Managers took place on 17 February 2021 where the Union demanded that no employee should access the building until the buildings are thoroughly deep cleaned and the maintenance of 50% staff capacity, as per the DPSA extended Level 3 Regulation, is adhered to. A follow up written correspondence has been forwarded to the office of the Director-General wherein the above adherence is emphasised. A follow-ups meeting will be held with Senior Managers on 19 February 2021.

Members will be kept informed.

GENERAL MANAGER