

Northern Cape: Drug Treatment Centre in Kimberley

Labour held a bilateral with the Department of Social Development management at the Drug Treatment Centre in Kimberley on 25 October 2021. The meeting was necessitated by the number of grievances that the Union received from the institution. Members were confronted by security officials refusing them to enter offices with their cell phones, car keys and the conducting of body searches. Some employees were turned back from work by the security services. In trying to reduce unnecessary friction between the employer and employees, the following matters were tabled for discussion:

Probation status of Officials: Treatment Centre

The employer indicated that the probation of all 11 officials had been confirmed. It took the employer longer than three years to finalise their appointment.

Leave of absence during in-take of clients at Treatment Centre

The employer indicated that since its treatment programme is three months long, admissions of new clients will always be on a quarterly basis. We raised issues around administration of leave of absence, the collective agreement and the way members are bullied by supervisors regarding leave. The employer is entitled to decline leave only on operational reasons, however, officials should not lose that leave altogether. Bullying occurs when the member has already started with leave and the supervisor demands that such leave be withdrawn and the member to return to work immediately. It was agreed that where a member has started with leave of absence, the employer will proceed with skeleton staff, even during intake of clients at the Centre.

The following items were not discussed owing to pending disputes:

- Security Management and Protocols. The employer made a verbal presentation
- Grievance Handling
- DSD Policies at PHSDSBC

The meeting agreed to hold a follow-up meeting on 8 November 2021 after the employer supplied labour with the Security Management and Protocols Policy, SOP and other related documents. Members will be updated on developments.

GENERAL MANAGER