

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting - 6 October 2022

Review: Sexual Harassment Policy

The PSA tabled the matter on the agenda. The purpose was to align the policy to the provisions of the new *Code of Good Practice on Harassment* into the sexual harassment policy. The PSA emphasised that workplace bullying should be included in the policy as per the new directive. The matter was deferred to the policy task team for further deliberation.

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The employer reported that *Circular 2/2022* was issued to request TVET and CET branches to establish OHS committees. OHS representatives were issued with appointment letters. The first meeting of the OHS national committee will be held on 12 October 2022. A hygiene meeting was held on 1 August 2022 to address issues of regular cleaning of the building. The PSA noted the report and requested the employer to fast track the procurement of first-aid boxes.

Relocation process: DHET and new premises

It was previously reported that a task team was established to facilitate the relocation process to the alternative building. The task team held a meeting and agreed to consult employees on the four options of travelling methods. The task team was scheduled on 13 October 2022 to consolidate inputs from employees. The Department entered into a month-to-month agreement with the landlord until the relocation process is completed.

Organisational structure review and absorption of contract employees

The employer reported that a Project Steering Committee was established, and labour is represented. The last meeting of the committee was held on 7 September 2022. A draft macro structure was discussed, and minutes will be submitted at the next Steering Committee meeting for consideration. A business process mapping was also presented for discussion and inputs. The Project Steering Committee is consulting various branches about the draft macro structure. A service provider, Lekoko Consulting, was appointed to assist the Department to review and redesign the organisational structure. The Department will consult with the DPSA for further comments and inputs before the reviewed organisational structure is approved. A comprehensive report and project plan will be shared with parties through the administrator. The employer indicated that it would consider the absorption of contract workers after the organisational review process is completed.

Elementary staff training

The employer reported that it received complaints from elementary employees such as security officers, cleaners, and groundsmen about non-upgrading of their posts. The employer indicated that it was unable to upgrade them to next salary levels owing to the coordinated job-evaluation directive issued by the DPSA. The employer decided to embark on training programmes to improve the capacity and skills of elementary employees. Bursaries and skills programmes were established. Elementary employees further underwent on-job training for two hours a day in other functional areas to increase their opportunities for promotions. The PSA welcomed the initiative to capacitate elementary employees and urged the employer to consider them for promotional posts.

Expedited recruitment process e-Z83

The introduction of the e-Z83 system improved recruitment and selection processes. In August 2022, the Department received 87 000 applications, and these were processed accordingly. Most of the applications are now at the shortlisting stage. The Department has a 9.4% vacancy rate. The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to fast-track recruitment and selection processes to reduce the vacancy rate.

Members will be informed of developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website (www.psa.co.za), send an email to ask@psa.co.za or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

GENERAL MANAGER