

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

31-05-2022

Feedback: Meeting with Director-General – 26 May 2022

100% Return to work

Members are aware that individual managers issued various circulars aimed at recalling all employees in their branches to return to work. The matter was brought to the attention of the PSA as members were of the view that the Department is not ready for such a move. The move compromises the health and safety of employees and violates COVID-19 regulations. It was also concerning that there was inconsistency as there is no central communication pertaining to the return to work as it had happened since the beginning of the pandemic. Further, the Project Steering Committee had concluded that the Department was not ready to receive all employees and recommended the maintenance of 75% employees, given the various challenges to accommodate 100% of employees. Subsequently, labour requested the meeting with the Director-General (DG), which was held on 26 May 2022.

Labour lambasted the employer for the unilateral decision and placing employees' lives at risk when it is fully aware of the challenges faced by the Department and the recommendation of the Committee where the employer is also represented. It was subsequently resolved that the Committee must embark on a full assessment wherein it must conduct a 'floor-by-floor' inspection before employees could be recalled. The floor-by-floor walkabout will be conducted on 31 May 2022. The Committee will then discuss the outcomes of the walkabout in the next meeting. The Department is considering to recall all employees before the end of June 2022 but this will only be applicable for the branches that do not have space and ventilation challenges. The DG also stressed the importance of taking into account the nature of jobs when making such decision as some employees are field workers and do not necessarily need to be in the office to do their work.

Members will be advised of developments once the floor inspection has been concluded, reports discussed, and the Committee submitted the recommendations. The safety of members cannot be compromised.

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