

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) - 13 May 2022

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The COVID-19 steerco meeting was held on 7 April 2022. There were no COVID-19 cases reported. The employer committed to submit a draft readiness plan to manage 10% return to work. The employer continued to provide PPE. Health and safety measures are implemented. The PSA raised a concern about employees who continue to share offices without social distancing measures being applied. The PSA further urged the employer to fill up empty sanitiser containers. A special meeting will be convened on 27 May 2022 to resolve the challenges raised.

Vacancy report

The employer reported that there are 31 vacant, funded posts - 21 posts are vacant for less than three months, one post over three months, and nine posts over six months. The Department has a 11,1% vacancy rate. The PSA urged the employer to develop a plan to reduce the vacancy rate to less than the 10%-target rate.

Additional security and cleaners employment

The employer reported that the process to fill cleaner posts in the Northern Cape and Eastern Cape was underway. The contract post of security at Head Office was extended until September 2022. The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to fast track the processes to fill critical posts in all provinces.

Contract workers appointment

There are four contract posts in the Department. The posts will be advertised permanently upon receipt of approval and concurrence from the DPSA and Treasury. The employer will further advertise 36 internship positions to provide experience and knowledge to the youth with qualifications.

OPSC committees

The employer reported that labour cannot serve as observers during bid-adjudication committee meetings. The employer will allow labour to participate in departmental committees, which discuss issues related to the employment conditions of employees interests.

Office accommodation

The employer reported that it was awaiting the certificate of occupancy for Head Office. It requested the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to fast track the process. The employer further reported there were incidences of OHS non-compliance at the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal offices. The meeting resolved that a DBC task team and the labour inspectors should visit the affected offices as a matter of urgency for assessment and inspection. Members will be updated on developments.

The PSA wants to take this opportunity to wish all employees who are unwell owing to COVID-19 a safe and speedy recovery.

GENERAL MANAGER