

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT - LIMPOPO**

16-10-2023

Update: Unconducive working conditions at Bela-Bela Magistrates Court

A meeting was held with the Court Manager on 11 October 2023 to discuss the above-mentioned matter. Members are aware that the PSA visited Bela-Bela Magistrates Court on 22 September 2023 after being alerted by members of the poor working conditions. The PSA inspected the building, which revealed that the building was not in compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*. The PSA discovered that the Court is housed in an old, dilapidated, and neglected building with asbestos roofing. Only one toilet available to members of the public is in working order. Males and females are forced to use one toilet. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in June 2021. Air conditioners are not working, particularly in the mobile office that is extremely hot with the penetrating sun. Roofs resting on cracked walls are leaking, windows are broken and most of them cannot open. Gutters are rusty and unkept. Offices have peeling paint and dirty mats.

Subsequently, a meeting was arranged with the employer on 11 October 2023 to raise these issues. The employer acknowledged that the problems are known. The issues were escalated to the office of the District Manager who had also engaged the Department of Public Works. However, nothing was done to address the situation. Apparently, the building was earmarked for renovation as far back as 2012 but this never happened. The PSA had no choice but to escalate the matter to the Department of Employment and Labour to conduct an inspection as the building is not in a condition to house employees. Further, the PSA wrote a letter to the Office of the Director: Court Management for immediate intervention. The PSA does not want to entertain the blame game by the two Departments. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, as the employer, has the legal obligation to provide a workplace that is safe and without risk to employees. The PSA will continue to ensure that the safety of employees is prioritised.

Shop stewards and members are urged to constantly assess the working environment and to immediately report any non-compliance to the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500 / queen.seema@psa.co.za.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER