

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

23-02-2024

Non-compliance with *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*- Letaba TVET College

The PSA received a complaint from members who had recently been relocated from Modjadji TVET Campus offices to 5 residential houses on the same campus, whilst the employer is busy with renovations to their offices.

As part of PSA's service delivery to members, an on-site inspection was conducted on 20 February 2024, and it was discovered that employees are subjected to ghastly and unconducive conditions at work, which are in clear contravention of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*. The PSA learnt that members had requested the employer to consider placing them at alternative stations because they were aware of the state of the residential houses that were to be used as temporary offices, but their pleas fell on deaf ears.

Despite the *OHSA* providing that the employer has a legal obligation to provide a safe workplace without risk to employees, members are expected to render services in makeshift offices where the following were found:

- 2 of the "houses" are in critical condition; there is no water supply, one of which has no electricity supply or toilet.
- Officials are expected to share one toilet in each "house", some toilets are leaking water on the floor and pose risks of employees slipping and falling and spreading germs.
- The pit toilets utilised on the campus by members of the public are situated close to the "houses" and the stench from these toilets is unbearable. Some employees are already showing symptoms of prolonged exposure to this "sewer gas" which is known to cause eye irritation, nausea, and headaches.
- Severe structural damage to walls and floors
- Severe water damage to walls and ceilings, causing mould and risk of collapse.
- Windows and some entry doors are broken causing snakes and insects to easily enter the buildings. There is a spider infestation in several "houses".
- Security is compromised because of broken doors and windows and some entry doors do not even have keys.
- No signs indicating emergency, exit or assembly points.
- Bushy and unkept gardens/yards exposing employees to reptiles.

The PSA has set up a meeting with the District Director on 26 February 2024 although the Department of Employment and Labour will be engaged on an urgent basis, as the PSA cannot allow members to work under such conditions that impact their health and safety. Members who are working in dilapidated, unsafe, and unhygienic buildings must report this to queen.seema@psa.co.za or call the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500.

Employees who wish to join the PSA can contact Lawrence Muvhango on 082 880 8995, Paulina Moloto on 082 880 8957 or contact the PSA Provincial Office.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER