



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **GENERAL 17/2026**

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## Youth Day 2026: PSA calls for empowerment of new generation to sustain and strengthen public service

On Youth Day, the PSA emphasises the critical role of young people in shaping a capable, ethical, and people-centered public service. The future of the public service depends on its ability to attract, develop, and retain young talent. Recruiting young people into the public service is an investment in employment and a strategic imperative to ensure continuity, innovation, and institutional memory.

As experienced public servants exit the system, a new generation must be equipped to take forward the mandate of serving the people of South Africa with commitment and excellence. Young public servants must be grounded in the core principles of public service including integrity, accountability, and dedication to the public good. Meaningful contribution requires a clear understanding of governance frameworks, policy implementation, and the realities of communities.

Service delivery is measured by the experience of citizens who rely on government for essential services. The youth thus carry the responsibility and opportunity to sustain and strengthen service delivery in a changing and demanding environment. The PSA continues to advocate for the active involvement of young workers in union structures, recognising that strong representation is key to improving working conditions and ensuring that the voices of young public servants are heard. Building a united and disciplined workforce strengthens institutions and service delivery. Courage and ethical leadership remain essential. Young public servants must be empowered to speak out against inefficiency, corruption, and maladministration, whilst upholding professionalism.

The public service requires energy, innovation, and a willingness to address outdated systems. Young people bring fresh perspectives and new ideas, which are essential in driving reform and improving efficiency. This must, however, be matched with discipline, consistency, and a long-term commitment to service. Transforming the public service is an ongoing process that requires persistence and collective effort. Young public servants must see themselves as custodians of a vital national institution that must be protected, strengthened, and continuously improved for future generations.

The PSA urges young South Africans to consider a career in the public service and to play an active role in building a professional, ethical, and responsive state. The future of service delivery depends on the willingness of the youth to step forward, take responsibility, and carry the work forward.

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