



Magazine

1/2023

FREE TO PSA MEMBERS



Inside:
RECRUIT & KICK-START 2023*
2023 PSA pull-out calendar

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VISION

Enhancing the PSA's position as a politically independent trade union that is recognised and respected in both South Africa and the global labour market for its dominance and professionalism in the broader public sector, distinguished by its organisational agility, innovation, and responsiveness to labour and socio-economic issues.

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Continue to ensure the sustainability of the PSA as a Union and employer of Choice through ensuring effective member structures, Board, and Administration, expanding value-adding partnerships to protect the rights and to promote the interests of members on the relevant communication platforms.

The following values guide our conduct aimed at achieving the PSA's mission:

**Loyalty, transparency,
respect, ethical conduct,
consistency, and
service excellence**

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Inside

Editorial	3
PSA: 2023 and beyond	7
Public Service 2023: Looking ahead	8
New PSA Member Portal: Enhancing service-delivery to members	11
YOU are important to the PSA!	13
#Need to know: Workplace grievances	14
RECRUIT & KICK-START 2023*	21
Spotlight on: Community Health Workers	25
Fringe benefits for members	33

For easy access to the PSA's website,
use the PSA QR Code by following these easy steps:

1. Open the QR Code reader or camera on your smartphone.
2. Hold your device over the QR Code so that it is clearly visible on the phone's screen.
3. Your smartphone will read the code and navigate you to the website.



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Towards the end of 2022, the PSA embarked on nationwide industrial action in the public service, including marches across the country, as wage negotiations failed to yield results. Government offered a meagre 3% and a continued R1 000 cash gratuity only until 31 March 2023. This was rejected as an insult by employees who last received a salary increase in 2019.

Following this impasse, the PSA made its intentions clear that the Union will not accept anything that does not benefit workers. Various marches in key centres saw thousands of PSA members and workers taking to the streets, despite government's blatant, unilateral implementation of a rejected offer and the threat of no-work, no-pay. Public servants are increasingly agitated whilst struggling to make ends meet and sinking into debt owing to steep increases in the cost of food, transport, electricity, school fees, and repeated interest rates hikes.

Despite government's utterances that public servants were receiving a 7.5%-wage increase, proper calculations reveal a real increase of only 3%. Ironically, government previously withdrew this very same offer at the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC). The Minister of Public Service and Administration blatantly lied to the public regarding the extent of the increase, despite knowing the truth.

Over the past three years, public servants have had to deal with poor working conditions, COVID-19, and unfair remuneration in addition to the many other issues that they were already dealing with. These include poor infrastructure and a lack of resources. Whilst the public service has more than 45 000 vacancies, public servants are expected to shoulder these responsibilities whilst providing effective service delivery and in the absence of any recognition for these efforts. Filling vacancies will enable the proper functioning of the public service as thousands of employees are still in acting positions or on long suspensions, with a direct detrimental effect on service delivery. Permanently employing Police Reservists, Community Health Workers, and Educators' Assistants, currently earning a meagre R3 500 per month with no other benefits, will go a long way in restoring trust in government and its services.

Capacitating the public service with proper, functional working tools is the only way to eliminate public anger. To save taxpayers' money, government could look at employing technicians and artisans to address infrastructure development at schools, government buildings, roads, and other maintenance at a fraction of the cost of current service providers. Offering a meaningful salary increase of 10% would have helped cover for the period where no salary increases were effected.

The continued attack on collective bargaining is also extremely worrying, especially following the unilateral implementation of a salary increase without an agreement with labour. The ruthless attack on trade unionism and collective bargaining further fuels workers' rage and creates a fire that government will not be able to contain. This was further fueled by reckless comments by President Cyril Ramaphosa regarding how public servants are to be remunerated. Collective bargaining and negotiations are the only ways to fairly discuss and work on creating favourable employment conditions, as regulated by properly established bodies such as the PSCBC.

Ahead of what is destined to be another challenging year for public servants, the PSA calls for the scrapping of the Ministerial Handbook, which is a licence for luxury for parliamentarians at the expense of tax payers and citizens who are increasingly being subjected to poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Ministers do not pay for housing, amongst others, whilst public servants can barely afford to buy a house, do not qualify for RDP homes, and have to start choosing between paying municipal bills and sustaining their families. The PSA further warns government to stop the threat of retrenching public servants whilst workers continue to pay a high price for corruption by politicians and their allies.

The past year saw PSA members rising against ongoing abuse by an uncaring employer. The PSA applauds all members who participated in lunch time-pickets and marches. These actions demonstrated the power of a non-politically affiliated Union and highlighted the PSA's ability to disagree with government's conduct and act in the best interest of workers. The PSA will remain committed to this cause, as mandated by the Union of Choice's growing membership!

ACTING GENERAL MANAGER

MEET the PSA Board of Directors



Dr Lufuno Mulaudzi
President

Dr Mulaudzi is employed at the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture and holds a BA Degree, a Post-graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies, and a Masters Degree in Heritage Studies. He was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in History by the University of Pretoria in 2020.



Justice Shiburi
Vice-President

Mr Shiburi is currently employed at the Department of Labour and Employment. He holds a BA Degree and a Certificate in Marketing and Customer Centricity.



Pierre Snyman
Chairperson

Mr Snyman is employed by the Department of Correctional Services. He holds a Diploma in DCS Management. He also holds Post-graduate Diploma qualifications in Labour Law and Advanced Labour Law as well as the Pension Governance Program Certificate from the University of Toronto.



Mosala Seelamo
Vice-Chairperson

Mr Seelamo is employed by Statistics South Africa. He holds a BSc degree (Applied Maths, Stats, and Operations Research) and a Post-graduate Diploma in Management (Purchasing and Materials).

Following the PSA's Annual General Meeting in September 2022, four new Directors were elected to the PSA Board. The Board is responsible for the management of the Union to ensure that the rights and interests of members are protected and promoted. The PSA Board of Directors consist of the following elected members:



Refitlhile Baloyi
Director

Mr Baloyi is a Lecturer at Orbit TVET College. He holds a B Tech Professional Certificate (Planning and Delivering Vocational Qualifications), a National Certificate: Occupationally Directed Education Training and Development, and a Higher Certificate in Education.



Noah Bodiba
Director

Mr Bodiba is employed by the Department of Health. He holds a Diploma in Human Resource Management, a Diploma in Education, and also acquired various Certificates in Customer Services, Local Government and Administration, Labour Relations, and Managing Employment Relations.



Anadele Coetzee
Director

Ms Coetzee is employed by the Department of Defence. She attempted a BSc Degree at the University of Stellenbosch where she completed BSc I and II and later completed several empowerment programmes and skills development courses.



Ncedisa Mahala
Director

Mr Mahala is employed by the Department of Minerals and Energy. He holds a MSc Degree in Mineral Economics, a BSc (Honours) Geology, and a BSc Geology.



Nondumiso Mvubu
Director

Ms Mvubu is employed by the Department of Social Development. She holds a Degree in Social Work and an Advanced Diploma in Project Management.



Adv Jeno Singh
Director

Adv Singh is employed by the Public Protector. He holds a LLB (Law) Degree, B Tech Degree in Forensic Investigations, a Post-graduate Diploma in Law (Forensic Investigation and Criminal Justice), and a Diploma in Policing. He also qualified as an International Certified Fraud Examiner and completed courses in Advanced Project Management and Procurement.



For more information on the Board, scan the QR code



The background of the advertisement is a textured, light brown surface. On the left side, there are several stems of white lily of the valley flowers with green leaves. At the bottom of the image, there are several lit candles, their flames glowing in shades of yellow and orange.

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of death**

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PSA: 2023 and beyond

The PSA is highly aware of the demands by the Union's members and other stakeholders to ensure the growth and sustainability of the organisation. The PSA and broader trade-union movement operate in an environment characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, which has an impact on members and the PSA's operations. This requires continuous adaptation of the PSA's responses.

At the start of 2023, the PSA would like to thank members for their continued trust in the Union of Choice and, in service of members, confirms its vision and mission.

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Loyalty

The state or quality of being loyal; faithfulness to commitments or obligations

Transparency

Free from pretense or deceit, easily detected or seen through readily understood, characterised by visibility or accessibility of information, especially concerning business practices

Respect

To refrain from interfering with (respect privacy)

Ethical Conduct

Principles of fairness, good faith, and respect consistent with laws and regulations

Consistency

Agreement or harmony of parts or features to one another or a whole

Service Excellence

The ability of service providers to consistently meet and even exceed customers' expectations

Source: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

World Cancer Day

*Cancer cannot cripple love,
it cannot shatter hope, it
cannot conquer the spirit."*
- Unknown -

4 February

International Day of Girls and Women in Science

*Science is not limited
to one gender, rather it is
an opportunity for every
human to learn and
contribute to science.*
- Unknown -

11 February

World Social Work Day

*Life's most urgent question
is: What are you doing
for others?*
- Unknown -

21 March

Human Rights Day

*It means a great deal to those
who are oppressed to know
that they are not alone. Never
let anyone tell you that what
you are doing is insignificant.*
- Desmond Tutu -

21 March

Public Service 2023: LOOKING AHEAD

The Public Service has experienced worrying changes over the past three years, with the major issue being the blatant attack on collective bargaining.

Since 2020, public servants have not had a fair wage increase. This came after government as the employer decided not to meet its obligations in terms of the signed three-year wage agreement reached and implemented in 2018. The year 2020 also saw the arrival of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, which placed the lives of hundreds of thousands of public servants in direct danger – some 21 000 public servants were impacted by the strain of cases and more than 1 300 health workers lost their lives. Those at the frontlines often had to manage without appropriate personal protective equipment or support, whilst the country was battling to contain the spread of the virus.

According to the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), public servants were already under intense strain before the pandemic. Staff shortages, lack of resources, abuse by the public as well as financial pressure to survive with wages provided by government contributed. SADAG research also found that public servants, especially those working at the frontline, often deal with higher levels of depression, anxiety, stress, burn-out, and trauma owing to the nature of their work. Many healthcare workers and educators are quitting their jobs and police officers are now considered a high suicide risk. Additional pressure was placed on public servants with government denying its employees their negotiated salary increase in 2020 and starting a brazen attack on collective bargaining.

In view of these realities and to understand what the Public Service may look like in 2023, it is important that every employee understands what collective bargaining is, what the role of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) entails, workers' rights as enshrined in the *South African Constitution*, the *Labour Relations Act*, and the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act*, which offer protection to all workers. Collective bargaining is the process of negotiation between employers and employees, aimed at reaching agreement on issues that affect them in the workplace. These agreements are scrutinised and negotiated at the PSCBC, a Council which the PSA helped to establish in 1995.

Following what transpired in 2020, many public servants were apprehensive and frustrated going into wage negotiations for 2021 and 2022. And rightfully so, as the wage offer in 2021 was below CPI as was the 3%-wage offer by government in 2022, which is regarded as an insult to public servants. This resulted in various forms of industrial action by the PSA and various unions and federations from November 2022. Government decided to unilaterally implement its 3% offer, despite the deadlock in talks and the majority of unions rejecting the offer. The unilateral implementation did not mean that the dispute was resolved.

Additionally, the PSA raised further concerns after President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that an independent body would be established to determine the salaries of public servants. With the trust deficit between government and unions at an all-time low, such reckless statements aggravate the situation. The PSA continuously advised the President to allow properly established bodies such as the PSCBC to determine and agree on salaries and other terms and conditions of service for public servants.



Despite many blaming public servants for poor service delivery, the country is continuously reminded of the fraud and corruption in government, which have kept the poor in poverty and denied workers a decent living that matches the cost of living.

During a briefing in Parliament, the Auditor-General of South Africa revealed that in 2022, 21 government departments were found to have consistently incurred fruitless and wasteful expenditure over the past five years. These include the Departments of Treasury, Basic Education, and Defence, which were deemed as the worst offenders. In the past five years, R1.52 billion was lost by government owing to fruitless and wasteful expenditure. This does not include the R1 trillion stolen during the period of state capture.

Government's failures from 2020 have severely dented the effectiveness of collective bargaining. Utterances by the President and other Ministers do nothing to restore the damage done to collective bargaining and rebuilding workers' trust in the process. The unilateral implementation of the meagre salary increase for public servants goes against the gains made by labour and tramples on the rights of all South African workers. Collective bargaining is clearly in danger, especially after the Constitutional Court supported government on its decision to renege on an agreement. Government continues to blame the wage bill, ignoring the fact that its employees have not received an above-inflation increase since 2019, despite the continued sharp increase in the cost of living. The 3% implemented in 2022 plunged workers into poverty, with some workers only receiving a R150 increase.

Staff shortages will remain a reality in 2023. Additionally, the number of employees on long-term suspensions is worrying. The PSA discovered in 2022 that government paid R131 million in salaries for 1 062 employees who were placed on precautionary suspension over the past two years. These employees should have returned to work after the employer failed to conclude a hearing within 60 calendar days. The situation is worsened by government's inability to fill vacant positions owing to cost-containment measures despite the PSA's call for the filling of these posts to ensure quality and professional service to the public. Departments are failing to conclude disciplinary processes within prescribed time frames as per disciplinary codes and procedures. Whilst it is provided that the period of precautionary suspension must be reasonable and justifiable, it should not exceed 60 calendar days. Departments have failed dismally to comply with the code without justification or accountability.

Following a few turbulent years in labour, the PSA continues to encourage members to support the Union and recruit more members to ensure the strengthening of the Union's voice as an established, well-functioning, and professional Unions that has the rights and interests of public-sector employees as well as the future of South Africa at heart.

Source
<https://www.iol.co.za/ios/news/public-servants-in-grip-of-despair-4a2935f9-1db1-482a-936c-a871ef-4d4ccc>
<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-09-07-more-than-1300-healthcare-workers-in-south-africa-have-died-of-covid-19>
<https://www.lrs.org.za/2022/09/20/the-essentials-of-collective-bargaining-in-south-africa>
<https://www.news24.com/fin24/economy/these-government-departments-waste-the-most-money-auditor-general-20220826>
 PSA Collective Bargaining



#Preparing for a new year in your working life

Take control!



By **Mphutlane Bofelo**

All of us have complaints and regrets about our working life. We often experience a sense of lack of satisfaction and accomplishment, either about our productivity and performance or about the lack of recognition and valuing of our productivity and performance at the workplace by different stakeholders (e.g., fellow employees, subordinates, superiors, and clients or customers, etc.). Often, we feel that there is a disparity between what we put in at the workplace and what we get or how our productivity and performance are valued or judged by others. If we go from one year to another with a high feeling of despondency about our working life, there is a high likelihood that the new year will resemble the year before and that this will repeat itself every year of our life. Thus, it is important that individually, we take stock of the year that is gone and prepare for the year ahead, focusing more on what is within our ability to either control or influence.

The point of entry in preparing for the new year in relation to your working life is to deeply and sincerely reflect on progress and achievements as well as any missteps and failures in the previous year. Also explore a course of action you can take to build on progress and achievements, correct missteps, and avert the failures in the year ahead. This process includes identifying what worked and why it worked, what did not work and why it did not work for you to explore how you can improve on what worked and how you can change or replace what did not work with what could work. It is important to focus on both the negative and positive actions of yourself and positive and negative actions of others in the workplace and the impact on your working life. Remember, you have more control over your positive and negative actions than those of other people. Therefore, concentrate on how you can consolidate your actions that bear positive results in your working life and self-corrective, self-improvement, self-development, and remedial measures that you can take to deal with the positive action. This could include readings, short-courses, meditation, and physical exercises aimed at improving your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being and at improving skills and competencies that are relevant for your productivity and performance at the workplace.

Your working life cannot be divorced from your social life. Therefore, it is important to also scrutinise aspects of your social life that positively or negatively impact on your working life. This could include your general social skills, family and social relationships, management of personal finances, emotions, time, and interpersonal relationships at the workplace and outside the world of work. It is important to decide on corrective and remedial actions to improve your social skills in the workplace and outside of the workplace and to alleviate aspects of your social life that impact negatively on your working life.

This may require behavioural change, seeking for advice and therapy or joining a support group of people who are battling with a similar problem (e.g., debts and personal finances, anger, stress, anxiety, addiction to gambling or drugs and alcohol, abuse, or violent behaviour) or taking up a course or a hobby. Also examine internal and external factors such as changes in the workplace, the world of work, and in the socio-economic and political environment. But in doing this, it is important to differentiate between things that fall within the circle of concern (i.e., wide range of concerns you have about your work and life, health, family, finances, socio-economic situation, etc.), things that fall within your circle of influence (i.e., things that concern you that you can do something about), and things that are within your circle of control (things that you have direct control over).

Thoroughly look at your job description, particularly your roles and responsibilities, performance outcomes and indicators. Read and understand the Performance Management Development Scheme (PMDS), policies, and procedures of your workplace. Set up your own personal impact-driven goals of what you will do to achieve maximum productivity and performance in your work. Identify the enablers and barriers or disenablers and what you are going to do within your means to utilise the enablers and address the barriers. Identify what is outside of your control but requires the intervention of the employer. Communicate this openly but politely to the relevant persons. Properly document your self-development and self-improvement measures and your personal plans towards improvement of your performance and productivity as well as your self-evaluation and monitoring mechanisms. This will enable you to participate in conversations and processes related to PMDS from a position of preparedness and also give you evidential and written information that you have constructed in advance to challenge whatever you consider as improper evaluation or recognition of your performance and productivity at the workplace.

In looking at the year ahead, it is important to make a list of all the things about the past year or coming year that you are grateful about. Gratitude serves to generate positivity, confidence and goodwill that are helpful for you to enter the new year with hope and vitality. Importantly, do not enter the new year with garbage and clutter. Declutter by removing anything that is unnecessary, redundant, and not useful in your working and social life. This includes identifying lifestyle, working methods, work arrangement, utilities, and relationships that you must either dump, revamp or replace for your growth and development in the new year. Among others, decluttering entails clearing your wardrobe, library, desktop, etc., of anything you don't need, recycling paper, donating clothes, and rearranging your workplace. Lastly, it is very important to develop your own schedule for the year ahead. Draw up a personal budget and savings plan and a list of the readings, programmes, and resources that you need for your personal growth, progress, and development in the year ahead. **Make 2023 the best year yet!**

New PSA Member Portal:

Enhancing service-delivery to members

In step with the enhancement of service delivery to members, the PSA developed an online Member Portal that launched to members in November 2022. The portal will make interacting with the Union easier and faster for PSA members. This platform will also assist members with keeping updated on Union activities, their individual matters, and requests for assistance for all labour-related issues.

Members will be able to access the member portal through the PSA website (www.psa.co.za). The “MEMBER PORTAL LOGIN” button is active on the home page, below the “JOIN NOW” button.

Members can manage their membership through the following four main functions available via the Member Portal:

- **Member profile**: Members can view their membership and update member information.
- **Membership**: Members can request proof of membership, electronic membership cards, certificates of membership recognition, and proof of indemnity for qualifying members.
- **Cross-transfer**: Members can register a cross-transfer request and view available cross-transfer information.
- **Connect**: Members can lodge enquiries.

For more information on the Member Portal as well as how to register and login to the Member Portal, visit www.psa.co.za or contact your nearest PSA Provincial Office.



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In Limpopo, a *member** approached the PSA after he received a letter placing him on precautionary suspension from 2019, pending an investigation into alleged misconduct.

The employer eventually served the member with allegations of misconduct for gross dishonesty, gross negligence, and contraventions of some acts. A notice to attend a disciplinary hearing from 2020 was served but could not continue. The matter took longer than anticipated as COVID-19 measures contributed to the delay in finalising the matter.

The employer repeatedly postponed the matter until the PSA declared a dispute with the CCMA in 2022. The employer will set a date for the disciplinary hearing, but the matter did not continue, hence the dispute of unfair suspension. The matter could not be resolved during conciliation and the member remained on precautionary suspension. The PSA further referred the matter for arbitration in 2022. The PSA was ready to argue the unfairness of the precautionary suspension and the prejudice the member suffered, further noting that the suspension was contrary to the disciplinary code and procedure. The employer then settled the matter. A settlement agreement was signed, uplifting the member's precautionary suspension. The member was happy to return to work even though the employer was to continue with the allegations of misconduct. The disciplinary hearing was subsequently set down and the PSA represented the member. The member eventually received a sanction of one month's suspension without salary and then returned to work.

"I am writing this letter with sincere gratitude on how my matter was handled by 'The Union of Choice'. I am humbled and grateful for your assistance in obtaining the sanction to my favourable and pleasant verdict. I am impressed by the professionalism of the PSA and always making sure that I am well represented. I cannot express how thankful I am for giving my case your undivided attention until to its final day. Thank you so much." - **MM Ngobeni**

Since 1920: Still driven by
SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The PSA Members' Rights Unit is a core component of the PSA, seeking to promote and protect members' rights through representation by PSA officials and union representatives in disputes, including providing legal assistance. Members are represented in the Public Service and various state-owned entities, in disciplinary enquiries, grievance meetings, at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA), and at public-sector councils. The PSA is proud of its service excellence to members in this regard as reflected in various recent cases highlighted.

The PSA welcomed the outcome of an arbitration award reinstating one of the Union's shop stewards at the WF Knobel Hospital under the Limpopo Department of Health, following his dismissal in April 2021. The *shop steward** was precautionarily suspended, subjected to a disciplinary hearing, and subsequently dismissed from the Public Service, based on alleged incitement with an alternative allegation of gross insolence. The shop steward allegedly informed cleaning staff and ward attendants not to obey an instruction by management. The PSA appealed the sanction of dismissal, which was confirmed by the appeal authority. The PSA then declared a dispute of unfair dismissal with the Public Health and Social Development Sectoral Bargaining Council. The Department of Health made an application that it be represented by the State Attorney. The PSA objected to this request and the Commissioner ruled in favour of the PSA, resulting in the Department being represented in the arbitration by its labour relations section. The arbitrator found that the shop steward's dismissal was substantively unfair. He further found that "there was an ulterior motive behind the dismissal of the shop steward". The Department was therefore ordered to reinstate the shop steward with full benefits from the date of dismissal.

The PSA vowed at the time of the dismissal that it would stop at nothing to ensure that the rights and interests of members are protected. The PSA remains committed to oppose injustices in the workplace as victimisation of those who stand for the truth. Leaving such injustices unchallenged will paralyse labour and reverse the gains for workers. The PSA applauds this ruling as a victory for fair labour practices.

"It was a very long and difficult journey since the entire executive of the Limpopo Department of Health, under the leadership of the MEC, wanted me out of the Public Service. Being a member of the PSA is a blessing on its own because they are principled individuals who stood by my side during this time. I was supported by the entire PSA staff of the Limpopo Provincial Office. I would like to thank Patricia Mathladisa and John Teffo for being supportive, transparent, and resilient in fighting for me." - **Kenneth Makoko Nkadimeng** - PSA shop steward

#Needtoknow Workplace grievances

The right to fair labour practices is provided for in section 23(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* and sections 185 and 186(2) of the *Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995*. This right inherently includes the right to a process that brings to the attention of the employer, management, and relevant forum, experiences, circumstances, and conditions that one believes amount to unfair and unjust treatment or unfair and unjust labour practices. This feeling of discontent, unfairness, or injustice that an employee may have in respect of work conditions, a manager or supervisor or fellow worker is referred to as a grievance when brought to the attention of management.

Grievances may be related to a right or an interest. A grievance of right occurs when employees claim that the employer has not given them what they are entitled to (by legislation, collective agreements, conditions of service, employment contract, established practice, etc.) or an employer has not respected or has infringed a right they have. A grievance of interest occurs when employees have no entitlement to a claim in law against the employer but feel that they are entitled to it.

Unfair conduct includes instances where:

- One person or group of people is favoured over another based on irrelevant criteria.
- People are treated arbitrarily – i.e., not in accordance with established rules.
- People are treated irrationally – i.e., based on unproven or untested views and suppositions.
- People are penalised or denied an advantage without being able to state their case.

Grievances may arise from problems and issues of an individual or small groups and problems and issues of all workers. Individual problems are often unfair treatment complaints such as abusive language by supervisors, warnings, dismissals, and victimisation.

Collective issues are those that affect all workers. It may arise from problems such as low wages, victimisation, harassment, and refusal of organisational rights, etc., or an issue that workers use to extend their rights, e.g., rights of full-time shop stewards and the right to negotiate on health, safety, and environment issues.

Employees and their representatives should familiarise themselves with the general principles and contents of a grievance procedure that applies to their specific workplace. Generally, the purpose of a grievance procedure is to promote sound labour relations in the workplace through consistency, transparency, and fairness in the handling of workplace problems and complaints. Therefore, the objectives of a grievance procedure includes:

- Creating an opportunity for the employee to communicate with management.
- Ensuring that complaints are effectively dealt with by management.
- Prevent disputes in the workplace
- Rendering disciplinary proceeding more acceptable as employees also have the means of objecting to management performance.
- Creating awareness of employee problems or problem areas that management needs to address.

General principles of grievance procedure

- Employees should be entitled to bring their grievance to the attention of management, even if it is done in stages.
- An employee should be allowed representation by a colleague or union.
- Management must consider the grievance carefully and make genuine attempts to resolve the grievance.
- The grievance will not be resolved until the employee indicates such.
- Time limits should be established for each of the steps in the procedure.
- Should the grievance remain unresolved, an employee has the right to declare a dispute.



Shop stewards note

The first step a shop steward must take in handling a grievance is to investigate and analyse each problem thoroughly to determine whether it is an individual or small group grievance, a collective issue, a disciplinary issue, an issue that can be resolved with some advice or an issue that requires a long-term strategic intervention (e.g., introduction or review of a policy, procedure or standard of operation or that requires a sustained campaign from the union). This must be followed by a determination of whether it is a genuine and honest problem, a possible or impossible problem, a complaint against a fellow worker that can be addressed without involving management or a complex issue that needs a long-term solution. The questions that are important to ask to elicit relevant information about the issue are:

- Who are the people involved and how are they involved?
- Where did the problem occur?
- What is the nature of the problem?

In investigating the problem, it is important to identify potential witnesses, documents required from the employer and other sources, relevant collective agreements, and workplace-based agreements, as well as relevant laws, policies, and procedures. Site visits are important aspects of investigation. It is also important to solicit advice from other shop stewards and union officials. Before engaging the employer, it is important to thoroughly think about the recourse, the demand, and the remedy sought and plan the argument to be presented in support of the “case” and the information that backs up the argument. Using law and science (data, evidence, **etc.**) to put the “case” across is important. It is also very important to ensure continuous communication with members involved.

Sources
Shop Stewards Manual - Workers World Media Production
Handling grievances and disciplinary hearings - PSA Training Unit
Image: Pexels - Darlene Alderson

- Grievances should generally be managed by line management, however, other staff, e.g., Human Resources Manager, may act in an advisory capacity.

Important points to look for in a grievance procedure are:

1. A grievance procedure must have a small number of stages and short time limits in stages. If there are too many stages and long time limits in each stage in the procedure, this could be used as delaying tactics to frustrate employees.
2. Shop stewards must be involved in all stages. Excluding or minimising union participation is an erosion on the right of an employee to representation and the right of shop stewards and unions to represent their members.
3. The final stage in a grievance procedure must be a dispute - management's word must not be final.

Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 14/2000 provides that:

- The employer must ensure that the grievance is dealt with in a fair, impartial, and unbiased manner and that the principles of natural justice are observed.
- An employee must not be victimised or prejudiced directly or indirectly because of lodging a grievance.
- A grievance must be lodged in writing with an employee designated to facilitate the grievance resolution in the department within 90 days from the date on which the employee became aware of the official act or omission that adversely affected him/her.
- An employee may be assisted by a fellow employee or a representative or official from a recognised trade union.
- The employer must deal with the grievance within 30 days unless parties mutually agree in writing to extend the timeframe.
- The designated employee must liaise with the relevant structures of authority of the department which has the requisite authority to resolve the grievance.
- If the employer fails to respond to a grievance within the stipulated period, the employee may lodge the grievance with the Commission, PSCBC, or relevant Bargaining Council.
- A grievance process should not be used as a parallel mechanism to appeal or review complaints or feeling of injustices that arise out of a disciplinary process. If the employee is unhappy about the outcome of a disciplinary process, he/she may internally appeal against such outcome (short of dismissal) and if the appeal is unsuccessful, declare an unfair labour practice dispute directly with the CCMA or relevant Bargaining Council.

Public School Terms 2023

TERM 1: 11 Jan – 24 Mar (18 Jan – 31 Mar Coastal Schools)

TERM 2: 12 Apr – 23 Jun

TERM 3: 18 Jul – 29 Sept

TERM 4: 10 Oct – 13 Dec

2023

January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2 Public Holiday	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 National Police Day*	28
29	30	31				

February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 World Cancer Day*
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 International Day of Girls and Women in Science*
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Special School Holiday	21 Human Rights Day	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 World Health Day*	8
9	10 Family Day	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 Earth Day*
23	24	25 World Malaria Day*	26	27 Freedom Day	28 Special School Holiday	29
30						

May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Workers' Day	2	3 World Press Freedom Day*	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 International Nurses' Day*	13
14 Mother's Day*	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Africa Day*	26	27
28	29	30	31			

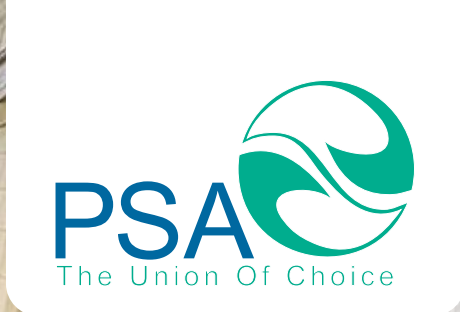
June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 World Environment Day*	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Youth Day	17
18 Father's Day*	19	20	21	22	23 Public Service Day*	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

www.psa.co.za



*Not public holidays



July 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 PSA Day*	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Mandela Day*	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 National Women's Day	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Administrative Professionals Day*	7	8	9
10	11	12 Grandparents Day*	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Heritage Day	25 Public Holiday	26	27 World Tourism Day*	28	29	30

October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 International Day of Older Persons Day*	2 International Day of Non-Violence*	3	4	5 Teachers' Day*	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Children's Day*
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 16 Days of Activism for no violence against women and children*
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 World Aids Day*	2
3 International Day of Disabled Persons*	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Day of Reconciliation
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Christmas Day	26 Day of Goodwill	27	28	29	30
31						

0861 452 452

Source: <https://www.generalblue.com/calendar>
Images: Unsplash.com, Freepik, Pexels



20 VERY GOOD REASONS WHY THE PSA SHOULD BE YOUR LABOUR HOME

The PSA, a registered trade union, is the largest, politically non-affiliated, fully-representative Union in the Public Service and State-Owned Entities, with a proud history of more than a century of service to members. THE PSA...

1. **Is a growing Union** with 230 000+ members served by Provincial Offices across the country.
2. **Attends to members' individual disputes FREE** of charge.
3. **Negotiates fair terms of remuneration** and represents members' interests in bargaining structures.
4. **Protects members' service benefits** (including medical aid, pension schemes, and housing subsidies).
5. **Addresses issues** such as fair and reasonable working conditions, hours of work, and leave.
6. **Is the only Union in the Public Service that serves Public Service pensioners.**
7. **Is financially stable** (complies with the *Companies Act* and *Labour Relations Act*).
8. **Assists beneficiaries and communities throughout South Africa as part of the Union's corporate social investment programs.**
9. **Protects members' rights** and defends them in unfair labour practices or infringements of constitutional rights and legislation (*Labour Relations Act, 1996, Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, and Employment Equity Act, 1998*). Disputes are resolved at the CCMA, Labour Court, and Labour Appeal Court. In the Public Service, the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), Safety and Security Sectoral Bargaining Council (SSSBC), Public Health and Social Development Sectoral Bargaining Council (PHSDSBC), and General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC) provide dispute resolution functions. With the promotion of interests, rights are also established with collective agreements - non-compliance with such rights is being taken care of by these institutions.
10. **Employs professional, dedicated and competent staff** to support member structures in service of members.
11. **Promotes members' interests** during collective bargaining in bargaining forums with employers.
12. **Is admitted to the various bargaining councils**, which enables the Union to resolve workplace problems in these councils, saving cost and time.
13. **Acts only on members' mandate** (mandates on collective issues are obtained from member structures).
14. **Has country-wide, extensive member structures** (national and sectoral) that are the link between the Union and members. These structures mirror the structures for collective bargaining and ensure the protection and promotion of members' rights and interests. Structures are active in all provinces to promote the organisation of members, obtain mandates and improve communication. For information on your PSA representative and structure, contact your local PSA Provincial Office.
15. **Has an impressive success rate in resolving cases** by the Union's full-time staff and thousands of democratically elected, trained shop stewards.
16. **Offers fringe benefits to members, including FREE membership of PSACLUB!**
Other benefits include an exclusive PSA short-term insurance scheme, insurance benefits, funeral schemes, and assistance with debt and personal loans.
17. **Provides FREE financial assistance with funeral costs at a member's death.**
18. **Provides FREE professional indemnity insurance cover** for identified groupings of members (R1 million, per member, per year with no limitation in the aggregate).
19. **Holiday Resort** offers holiday accommodation at discounted rates.
20. **Magazine and workplace-specific newsletters** are issued to members **FREE** of charge - Update your contact details with the PSA's Membership Section (updateinfo@psa.co.za) to ensure that you receive all news.

The PSA effectively represents the full spectrum of the South African population and lives by the values of **LOYALTY, TRANSPARENCY, RESPECT, ETHICAL CONDUCT, CONSISTENCY** and **SERVICE EXCELLENCE!**

www.psa.co.za | ask@psa.co.za | 0861 452 452

PSA
The Union Of Choice

PSA membership application

Public Servants Association of South Africa (NPC)

Reg No 1942/015415/08

In terms of the POPI Act, 4 of 2013, the PSA will only use the information provided on this application form for the intended purpose related to membership management

The PSA Privacy Policy is available on the PSA website (www.psa.co.za).

By taking up membership, I agree to the said Policy.



* COMPULSORY FIELDS

PERSONAL INFORMATION

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHOICE WITH A ☒

DEPARTMENT / EMPLOYER *
TITLE (DR, MR, MRS, MS) * PERSAL / SALARY NUMBER *
SURNAME * INITIALS
FIRST NAMES * GENDER ☐ M ☐ F

CORRESPONDENCE *
ADDRESS POSTAL CODE

JOB TITLE DATE OF BIRTH D D M M Y Y Y Y

IDENTITY NUMBER * TAX NO

CELL PHONE * TELEPHONE FAX NO

EMAIL ADDRESS

METHOD OF PAYMENT * ☐ STOP ORDER (SALARY DEDUCTION) ☐ DEBIT ORDER (BANK DEDUCTION) (Noting that the Agency Fee will also be payable in this instance)

DATE OF MEMBERSHIP * D D M M Y Y Y Y

MEMBER'S BANKING DETAILS

BANK NAME BRANCH CODE
ACCOUNT NO ACCOUNT TYPE
ACCOUNT HOLDER

CONSENT

I consent to the PSA marketing products, services and special offers to me. The PSA may share my personal information, within the PSA and the businesses that provide special advantages to PSA members, for marketing purposes. The PSA may also contact me for research purposes.

☐ YES ☐ NO

SALARY STOP-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership of the PSA (Public Servants Association of South Africa) and authorise and request the Accounting Officer of my employer to deduct the applicable PSA Membership Fee (as approved by the PSA Board of Directors) from my salary as membership fee, starting from the STOP-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE, and thereafter to continue such monthly deductions until my further written notice.

I UNDERSTAND THAT IN TERMS OF SECTION 13(3) OF THE LABOUR RELATIONS ACT, 1995 THIS STOP-ORDER MAY ONLY BE REVOKED BY THE GIVING OF THREE MONTHS' (ONE MONTH IN THE CASE OF NON-PUBLIC SERVANTS) WRITTEN NOTICE TO MY EMPLOYER AND THE PSA.

I understand that membership fees are due to and collectable by the PSA while I am a member of the PSA.

BANK DEBIT-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership of the PSA (Public Servants Association of South Africa) requesting and authorising you at the same time to deduct from my account at the above bank the applicable PSA Membership Fee (as approved by the PSA Board of Directors), which covers my membership fee to the PSA, starting from the DEBIT-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE and continue deducting said amount monthly on the ...th day of each month thereafter until further my written notice.

SIGNATURE *

DATE *

RECRUITER (NOT PSA STAFF MEMBER)

PSA MEMBERSHIP NO * TAX NO *
IDENTITY NO * CELL PHONE
INITIALS & SURNAME
POSTAL ADDRESS POSTAL CODE
EMAIL ADDRESS
BANK NAME * BRANCH CODE
ACCOUNT NO * ACCOUNT TYPE
ACCOUNT HOLDER

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO HONORARIUM CAN BE PAID WITHOUT A VALID TAX NUMBER. THE HONORARIUM WILL BE PAID DIRECTLY INTO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT.

NOTE: THE PSA WILL ASSIST MEMBERS (REPRESENTATION, FINANCIALLY, OTHERWISE) ON CONDITION THAT THE CAUSE OF ACTION FOR WHICH ASSISTANCE IS SOUGHT AROSE AFTER THE PSA'S ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

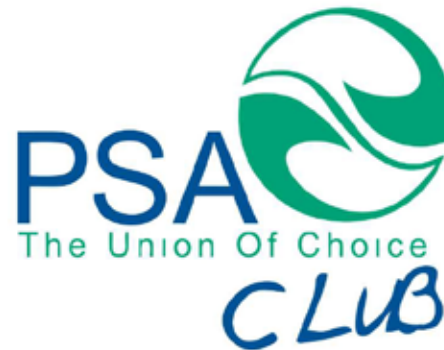
WEEK NO *

OFFICE DATE STAMP

WEEKLY REPORT ID

PSA CLUB LINE:

0860 021 067



UPDATE MY DETAILS:

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHOICE WITH A ☒

☐ POSTAL ADDRESS ☐ CELL PHONE NUMBER ☐ EMAIL ADDRESS ☐ NEW PSA MEMBERSHIP CARD*

*Will be posted to address indicated by member on this form

PSA MEMBERSHIP No.	<input type="text"/>	ID No.	<input type="text"/>
PERSAL / EMPLOYEE NUMBER	<input type="text"/>	DEPARTMENT	<input type="text"/>
INITIALS	<input type="text"/>	SURNAME	<input type="text"/>
CELL PHONE NUMBER	<input type="text"/>	EMAIL	<input type="text"/>
POSTAL ADDRESS	<input type="text"/>		

www.psaclub.mobi | info@psaclub.mobi | *120*960#

Understanding your PSA structure

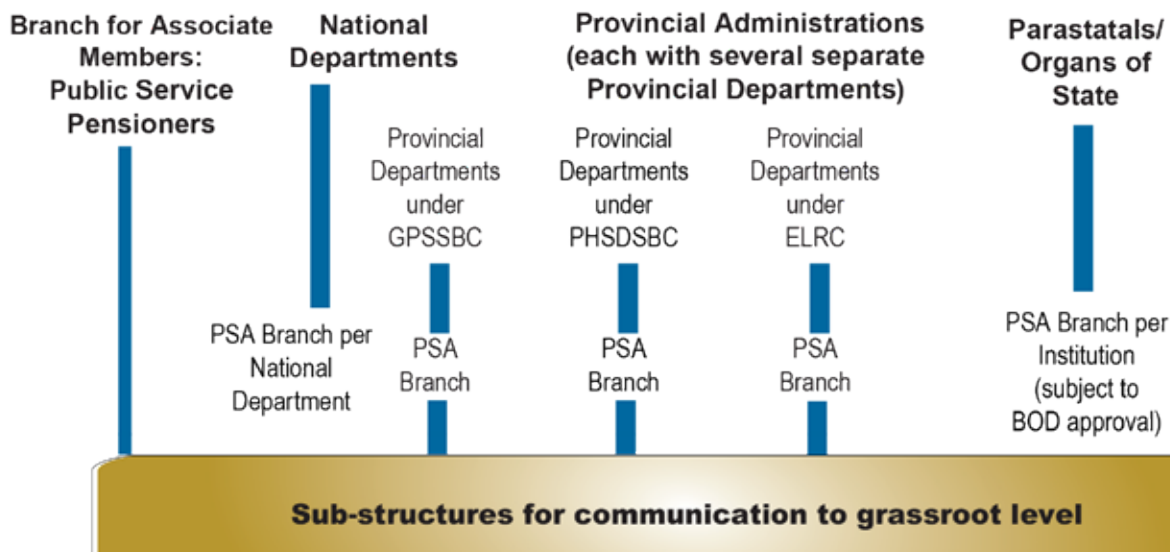
Country-wide member structures (on national and sectoral level) are the link between the PSA and its members. These structures mirror the current structures for collective bargaining and offer direction, thereby ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of members.

The PSA's Board of Directors (BOD) on 29 March 2017 resolved that in terms of the *Labour Relations Act* or an Organisational Rights agreement, a group will be entitled to elect five shop stewards. The Board may, on good cause shown, establish such a group as a branch.

These structures have been established in all provinces to promote the organisation of members, obtaining their mandates, and improving communication with members.

Details of this extensive network of committees and branches are available from the PSA Head Office as well as any of the twelve PSA Provincial Offices.

It is important to understand PSA member structures. In addition, you should be involved in these structures as active members can provide timeous, informed mandates, and ensure that skilled workplace representatives are elected.



join today

www.psa.co.za

ask@psa.co.za

0861 452 452

RECRUIT & KICK-START 2023*

WIN R2 023 towards OUTSTANDING BILLS of your choice + a CAMERA valued at R5 000 from your UNION of CHOICE!

Recruit a minimum of **23** new members for the PSA between **1 January 2023** and **24 March 2023** to be entered in the competition.

The **TOP RECRUITER** will be the **WINNER!**



Image example only
Photo: Yoann Siloine on Unsplash & Freepik

HOW TO ENTER?

Recruit a minimum of 23 new members (*excluding pensioner members*) for the PSA between 1 January 2023 and 24 March 2023 and submit the fully-completed, signed application forms to your PSA Provincial Office or email to competition@psa.co.za by **12:00** on **24 March 2023** to secure your entry. Only entries submitted as stipulated above and received by the PSA by the closing date, will be considered.

*Competition open for PSA members only / Entries subject to standard terms and conditions and verification of membership
In the event of a tie, the PSA General Manager will draw a winner / The winner will be contacted by 12 April 2023
Prizes not claimed within 30 days will be forfeited / Prize not exchangeable for cash

The PSA provides
**PROFESSIONAL
INDEMNITY INSURANCE**
cover for Health-sector members.
The PSA, as the proud Union
of Choice of thousands of
employees in the PHSDSBC,
is pleased to announce that
the Union's Professional
Indemnity Cover of R1 million
per member per year
**(at no additional cost as part of
the PSA membership fee)**
covers members in the
following occupational groups:

Ambulance and Related Workers
Chemists
Chiropodists and Other Related Workers
Dental Technicians
Dental Therapists
Dieticians and Nutritionists
Home-Based Personal Care Workers
Medical Research and Related Professionals
Medical Technicians/Technologists
Nursing Assistants
Occupational Therapists
Optometrists and Opticians

Oral Hygienists
Pharmaceutical Assistants
Pharmacists
Physiotherapists
Professional Nurses
Psychologists and Vocational Counselors
Radiographers
Speech Therapists and Audiologists
Staff Nurses and Pupil Nurses
Student Nurses
Supplementary Diagnostic Radiographers

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Steve Biko Hospital achievement on stroke management

The Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Gauteng is officially the first hospital in South Africa to have been awarded an international award for introducing new techniques and support systems for improved management of stroke patients.

The Diamond Stroke Award was awarded to the hospital at the 2022-International European Stroke Congress by an international stroke treatment advocacy group, Angels. The hospital was recognised for its excellence in acute stroke care.

The Angels initiative is a unique healthcare initiative that helps hospitals around the world become “stroke-ready” so that patients who have just suffered a stroke are treated as quickly and effectively as possible. The initiative seeks to significantly reduce the burden of strokes for countless patients by working with hospitals to build an innovative network of stroke-ready hospitals worldwide, to reduce treatment delays and provide patients with the best acute stroke care.

The hospital has managed to reduce treatment times for patients from eight hours to just 15 minutes - a move that has earned it the prestigious international award. The award recognises the strides the hospital has made in reducing the disability effects of strokes and preventing deaths caused by strokes. The new treatment approach means patients are more likely to be independent and remain economically active after a stroke.

In addition to speeding up patient treatment times, the hospital has increased training for junior healthcare workers to help them identify stroke patients quickly in the emergency room and has implemented a system to better store data for research purposes.

Steve Biko Hospital CEO, Dr Mathabo Mathebula, said it was an honour for the hospital to be bestowed with such an award. “It is a great honour to be awarded Diamond Status for stroke management by the World Stroke Organisation. This achievement has been a milestone in our journey and is a reflection of the relentless work our doctors have been doing to provide the best care to our patients at an international standard. We are committed to improving outcomes of stroke by ensuring that every patient admitted into our facility gets access to stroke care that will optimise their survival and recovery,” said Mathabo.

“Our team aims to deliver continuous enhancements, and therefore we have implemented training and aligned with international standards to ensure better care and support to reduce the burden of stroke that affects our communities,” says Professor Mandisa Kakaza, Head of neurology at Steve Biko Hospital.

The PSA would like to congratulate Steve Biko Hospital for this achievement. The award reflects that the health sector is working towards success and improvement of people’s lives.

Sources

<https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2022-07-13-steve-biko-the-first-hospital-in-sa-to-receive-top-award-in-stroke-care/>

<https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/pretoria-hospital-bags-award-for-reducing-stroke-patient-treatment-time-to-15-minutes-20220729>

Image: Freepik





DIFFERENT WAYS TO RESTRUCTURE YOUR DEBT

Debt counselling

The Debt Review process is intended to assist over-indebted consumers struggling with debt, through budget advice, negotiation with credit providers for reduced payments and restructuring of debts.

Debt consolidation

With debt consolidation, you'll take out a new loan or line of credit to pay off your current debts. In doing so, you're replacing your old debt with a new debt, ideally with different terms like a lower interest rate. A longer repayment period would also lower your monthly payments in exchange for higher overall interest charges.

Debt administration

Debt Administration is a legal process that will reduce your installments and extend the repayment terms of your debt, if your total liability does not exceed R50 000

Debt mediation

Talk to a financial coach or a debt counselor. They can negotiate with your creditors on your behalf, and may be able to arrange a debt management plan. Generally, these are available for unsecured debts such as credit cards, and the counselor may be able to negotiate lower interest rates, lower payments, and bring your past-due accounts current.

Bankruptcy

Bankruptcy is a legal process through which people or other entities who cannot repay debts to creditors may seek relief from some or all of their debts. Bankruptcy will remain on your credit report for 7-10 years, affecting your ability to open credit card accounts and get approved for loans with favorable rates.

For more info contact:

Tel: 011 234 2435
email: psa@financialjourney.co.za
SMS 'Debt Assist' to 32606

**Debt
Assist!**

Spotlight on Community Health Workers

A frontline worker who is committed to providing high-quality health care to the local community – meet a Community Health Worker (CHW). CHWs' goal is to improve the quality and availability of health-care for underserved communities as they have a link to available health facilities, clinics, and other resources. Their close relationship with those they serve cultivates trust, which gives their health recommendations, diagnoses, and referrals additional authority.

Most vulnerable populations lack access to local health care, and even where available, the quality of care is typically low. CHWs can thus provide communities with essential care. In poor communities, health care is always lacking. The community's access to pertinent health information grows and improves thanks to home visits by CHWs.

The primary objective of CHWs is to increase community access to primary care. They play one or more of the following roles to accomplish this:

- Connecting the community to resources and services
- Disseminating health information
- Motivating individuals to identify their health needs and take control of their own health
- Raising disease awareness and engaging in health-promotion activities
- Identifying and treating minor ailments and referring chronic illnesses for treatment
- Acting as an agent of change for development
- Engaging in specialist activities in areas such as the control of malaria and tuberculosis, rehabilitation, hypertension, and diabetes

Challenges for CHWs

Even though the CHW model looks like a promising way to provide healthcare to underserved communities, CHWs experience many problems in their day-to-day work. The nature of these obstacles will depend on factors such as location, funding, and personnel history, but typically fall into one of the following categories:

Training

CHWs must be well-trained in both medical and administrative aspects of their work to improve care, quality, and speed. Unfortunately, CHWs frequently lack the necessary skills to fulfil their potential for reasons such as inadequate training material, low literacy or education levels, inconsistent refresher training, etc.

Distance

Although CHWs are responsible for the communities in which they live, their work radius can extend substantially. These places frequently have low infrastructure, resulting in significantly longer travel times.

Low or no pay

Some programs provide stipends, but very few pay these employees a salary. When they do, it's usually not enough to live on. These critical workers must be able to support themselves and provide for their families.

Medical supplies

CHWs must obtain the medical supplies they need from local facilities. This becomes problematic when supplies are out of stock.

Limited medical records and patient documentation

Patients rarely have access to their medical histories owing to the lack of medical infrastructure in the regions where CHWs work. This impacts on the quality of care and the ability to follow up.

Understanding of culture and community

A CHW's role as a liaison to a country's medical system can be misunderstood by patients who do not understand or trust the services from a CHW as genuine.

The PSA values the work done by the country's CHW and recognises their sacrifices and circumstances. In view of this, the PSA is pleased to offer stipend receivers a 50% reduced PSA membership fee. This decision is based on the plight of employees who are appointed in positions such as CHWs and other positions being paid a stipend for their services, rather than receiving a substantive salary and benefits in accordance with a contract of employment.

The PSA identified existing members who receive such a stipend and automatically reduced their membership fee by 50% from October 2022. Affected members experiencing any problems in this regard, are requested to contact their local PSA Provincial Office for assistance.

The reduced membership fee will also enable stipend receivers who are not PSA members yet to join the Union of Choice, to benefit from its professional services in the protection and promotion of their rights and interests. These members will also enjoy all PSA fringe benefits, including free funeral assistance and free membership of PSAClub, offering discounts on a range of goods and services.

Image: Freepik



In Limpopo, the PSA assisted Itireleng Community Creche as part of the Union's corporate social responsibility projects in communities. The Chairperson of the PSA's GPSSBC Limpopo Branch, the Creche's Principal and some staff members attended the ceremony.



Monte Schoonwyk is a PSA shop steward at Universitas Hospital in the Free State. He has been serving the members since 2008 and was also a winner in a recent *PSA* magazine school-fee recruitment competition



The PSA recently handed a donation of R5 000 to *Wheat*, an organisation in the Western Cape that supports and empowers women to achieve economic and social justice. *Wheat* was nominated by the PSA's Cape Peninsula Pensioner Committee as part of the PSA annual assistance to welfare organisations.



PSA MOMENTS



The PSA in North West celebrated Heritage Day and incorporated this with a celebration for Mogomotsi Mosheshe who recently received PSA awards for Exceptional Shop Steward Services and Recruitment.





Public Service Industrial Action 2022

PSA members rise up!





National Police Day: PSA calls for more support

National Police Day is observed annually on 27 January to pay homage to the men and women who dedicate their lives to serving and protecting communities. The PSA calls on communities and government to do more to support and protect police officers. The PSA is concerned about the high number of police officers who die in the line of duty and soaring crime levels that strain the human resource capacity of the South African Police Service (SAPS).

It was reported that more than 33 police officers died on duty in 2022. Explaining the circumstances surrounding police killings, PSA National Branch Chairperson said the brutal deaths of police officers were the result of being targeted by criminals for their firearms, shootouts with criminals, or being run over by reckless drivers who failed to stop when pulled over. The prevailing poor socio-economic conditions in many communities and behavioural patterns of criminals also present challenges for SAPS employees. Police are under capacitated to deal with these circumstances, which impacts on their safety. The cold-blooded, brutal way in which officers are killed by attackers by being shot in the head whilst still inside police vehicles demands implementation of drastic measures for police safety. Operationally, police officers are being severely stretched owing to the size of communities that must be served, being outnumbered, and risking their lives.

Communities must mobilise against the killing of police officers. No morally responsible society can remain silent when criminals have clearly declared war on police officers. Our men and women in blue represent the authority of the state, and any attack on them is a direct confrontation and attack on the state. Determined steps need to be taken to address multiple factors affecting police officers in a democratic society as law enforcers are tasked with the prevention of crime, the apprehension of offenders, and the maintenance of peace and security in communities, which are key to all citizens. The irresponsible utilisation of the SAPS for settlement of political scores is condemned the strongest terms, as police officers are suffering because of the sector's failure to prevent crime and neglect to improve their terms and conditions of service.

The PSA represents thousands of SAPS employees and has noted attempts by the SAPS to ensure the safety of officers. These include the adoption of a strategic plan aimed at making the killing of police officers a priority for Justice, Crime Prevention, and Security.

The PSA, however, calls for more stringent measures to be implemented to not only assist and capacitate police officers on duty, but to also manage their job-related stresses. According to the Branch, crimes detected because of police action such as illegal possession of firearms and ammunition, drug-related crimes, driving under influence of alcohol or drugs, and sexual offenses were proof that visible policing is showing positive results. This requires more trained and equipped police officers to start achieving the results that have been promised to South Africans for years, by urgently filling vacant posts and creating posts to enhance capacity.

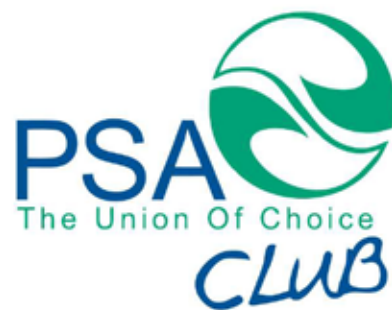
Police officers also need assistance of other stakeholders such as the justice system to ensure that criminals are convicted, and the country needs competent police officers to ensure maximum investigation of cases. The SAPS needs to intensify the community policing partnership, expand the eyes and ears of law enforcement on the ground, and ensure a united approach against crime at all levels of society, including support by police reservists, and community police forums. Communities are encouraged to work with the police and provide information that can assist in police investigations. Improvement in quality service provided by police at station level to the communities they serve and protect is key in crime prevention. The private sector and communities are key partners and should be part of the solutions.

Continued mismanagement, maladministration, and corruption in all spheres of government and municipalities at the expense of creating more posts for preventing crime cannot be tolerated. A lack of funding impacts severely on operations, which adds to police officers' frustrations and strain. The PSA repeats its ongoing calls on SAPS management to address the dire needs to improve police officers' conditions of service and capacitate the work force amidst rampant crime, including murder, and poor results in crime prevention. An unclear approach to the best future model of improving crime prevention and the career mobility of SAPS employees adds to the general uncertainty and anxiety amongst these workers and contributes to the loss of life of police officers.

The PSA pays tribute to all officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty as well as those who were disabled. The PSA gives thanks to all SAPS employees for the tireless and selfless efforts in combating the scourge of crime in pursuit of ensuring a safe environment in South Africa.



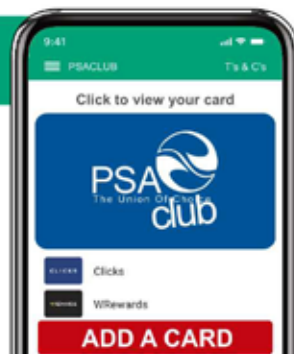
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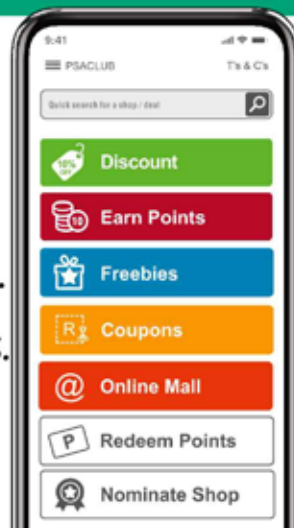
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6. **Burn points** for instant rewards and store vouchers.



PSA pensioner members **ACTIVE**

The PSA's Branch Associated Members: Public Service Pensioners is an active component of the Union and held its annual General Members' Meeting in November 2022. The meeting was well attended.

A message on behalf of the PSA was delivered by PSA National Manager, Andries du Plessis. He gave more information on the PSA's industrial action in support of members' salary demands as well as the fact is that government is wasting money and does not honour commitments. The PSA has some 240 000 members and still experiences a strong growth in membership. This includes 2 413 associated members (pensioners) with concerted efforts being made to recruit retiring public service members as members of the Union. The PSA is further committed to ensuring the interests of pensioners and improvements in benefits. Presently, all PSA branches are supporting

a proposal for a 75% benefit in comparison to the present 50% for widows. This item has been tabled at the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council. Mr Du Plessis thanked the Branch for the commitment and hard work being put in to nurture the interests of pensioners and their widows

The Branch was also honoured by the presence and address by Brian Karidza from the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) as guest speaker. He addressed the meeting on the following most-recent issues encountered by pensioners:

Delays in payment of pensions: The GEPF has a target to ensure that pension payments are made within 60 days following the retirement date. He acknowledged that delays do occur and the GEPF's focus to eliminate inefficiencies in the administration. Pensioners should get their pension payment within the first or second month after retirement. He highlighted the most common problem was that documentation is delayed by departments, taking up to 45 days before reaching the GEPF. The GEPF is engaging with the various departments to shorten the communication route.

High SARS tax deductions: The GEPF is legally bound to do the deductions from pension payments as prescribed by SARS. It applies to pensioners who have additional sources of income apart from the pension benefits, which when their submissions to SARS are handed in caused those pensioners to owe tax to SARS. By instruction from SARS, the deduction from pension earnings had to be increased. The sudden high deductions resulted from a back-dated deduction leaving some pensioners in a difficult financial situation. Pensioners have the option to apply to remain on the original formula if they prefer to do so. SARS has not agreed to refund the out of ordinary high deductions to pensioners yet and it will most probably realise when next the taxpayers submit their SARS tax submissions.

Funding of Eskom and other enterprises to cover deficits: Assurance was again given that the GEPF falls outside government

structures and is not a bail-out institution and has not been approached in this regard. The investments of the GEPF take place under the instruction of the GEPF Board. Strict investment mandates are to be followed and must generate profits in bankable projects. The GEPF will hold bonds in enterprises, but no capital will be forwarded to such organisations. Last year the Fund performed well above the inflation mark and made a 11.2% profit.



Steinhoff saga: Presently, certain settlement offers are in progress. The GEPF was an 8% shareholder, and it needs to be accepted that shareholders stand last in line when it comes to pay-outs in such cases and the GEPF will not recover the full amount of the investment in the company.

A positive spin-off from Mr Karidza's presentation was his invitation to take the liberty to contact him personally if any pensioner or widow encounters difficulty in the processing of their pension applications.

Pensioners are also reminded that they are free to contact the appointed Ombud should they encounter difficulties in getting the required assistance from the GEPF: E-mail address: enquiries@gepo.co.za.

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Dangers of social media and risks for WhatsApp administrators

Many organisations rely heavily on social media to communicate with customers instantaneously. Social media is a useful tool for sharing knowledge, connecting with consumers, and increasing brand visibility. Many companies are, however, coming under scrutiny for social media blunders. One of the best ways to avoid this is to have social media policies and procedures in place to prevent the misuse of corporate social accounts.

The social media policy should guide stakeholders on the protection of sensitive information, contributing to the community, and protecting the reputation of the organisation. Remember that everything on the Internet is permanent and has the possibility of being shared very quickly. Internet users have the ability to save, print, or screenshot information. Once posted on the world wide web the damage has already been done. Before posting anything online, here are a few things to keep in mind: Consider how other people will react? Is the post controversial? You can be sued for tweeting a statement that could cause harm to others. Using someone's images without permission is theft. You can also face disciplinary action by your employer for posts on your personal social media profiles.

WhatsApp change could lead to legal trouble for group admins in South Africa

An update to *WhatsApp* began rolling out to users on 1 September 2022, giving group admins more power and control over content being shared on *WhatsApp*. Admins who have the update activated will be able to long press on any message sent in the group and "delete for all," adding stronger moderation tools. Previously, only those who sent the message were able to delete them. The time limit for these deletions to take place has also been extended from a few hours to a couple of days. In the South African context and law, if you can delete something, and choose not to, you become legally responsible for the content. If the admin of a *WhatsApp* group where members are sending hate speech, threats, incitement, or any other content that is illegal and does not delete such content, the admin can be held liable.

Risk of defamation

Legal implications from what is put out on social media have shown that whilst we are granted freedom of expression, we cannot quite say whatever we want and think we can get away with it. The legal definition of defamation is something written or said that is made public with the intention to harm or damage someone's good name or reputation. The Supreme Court of Appeal found that social media platforms such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* have given the public publishing reach that exceeds that of print and broadcast media. There is no question that the capacity to instantly share one's opinions with a big audience and the rise in defamation actions, both domestically and globally, go hand in hand.

POPI Act and social media

The *Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)* aims to protect an individual's right to privacy by offering protection against the unlawful collection, retention, dissemination, and use of personal information. The consequences of being considered a 'responsible party' in terms of the *POPIA* are substantial and include the requirement for a responsible party to comply with the eight conditions of lawful processing of personal information. **The conditions include a requirement to obtain the consent of the data subject prior to posting a photograph or the views of that data subject on a social media platform.**

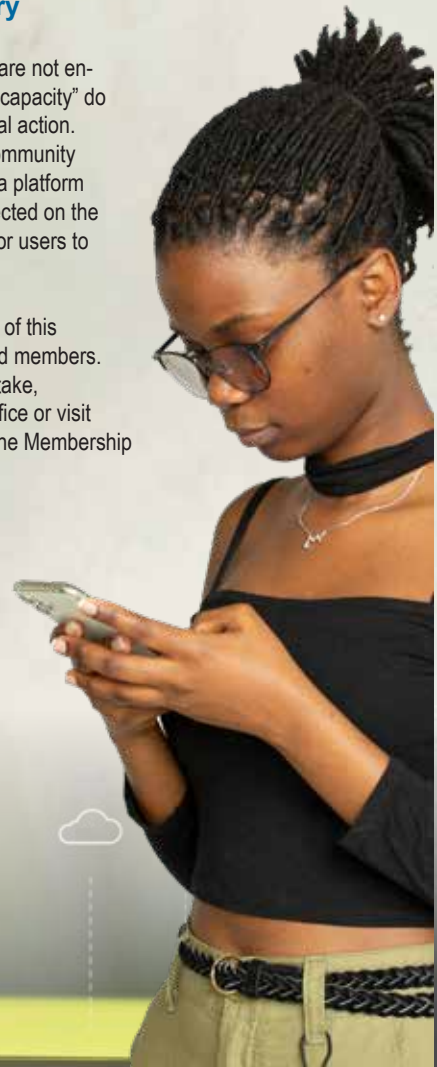
The responsible party will also be required to appoint an information officer and publish and comply with a *POPIA* manual as read with section 51 of the *Promotion of Access to Information Act*. The application of the *POPIA* in the above circumstances will lead to an absurd result where every individual who posts photos, memes, videos, or the views of another person, is considered a responsible party who must comply with onerous conditions. To prevent such a situation, section 6(1)(a) of the *POPIA* states that the *Act* does not apply to the processing of personal information during a purely personal or household activity.

Summary

General disclaimers such as "retweets are not endorsements" or "I tweet in my personal capacity" do not indemnify people from potential legal action. Make sure that you are following the community guidelines created by each social media platform to ensure a standard of behaviour expected on the platform to create a safe environment for users to interact and have fun.

The PSA has encountered many cases of this nature and is available to assist affected members. If you need guidance on what steps to take, contact your nearest PSA Provincial Office or visit www.psa.co.za and log your query on the Membership Portal (see page 11).

Source
<https://businessstech.co.za/news/technology/622933/new-whatsapp-change-could-lead-to-legal-trouble-for-group-admins-in-south-africa/>
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