

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

03-03-2023

Serious violation of occupational health and safety standards – DSD Maclear

The PSA was informed of a serious violation of occupational health and safety standards at the Department of Social Development (DSD) in Maclear. The Department terminated the cleaning services contract owing to budgetary constraints.

The PSA subsequently visited the Maclear office on 2 March 2023 and found a dirty office with stinking carpets as a result of a roof leak and overflowing sewerage, a keyless emergency door and only one fire extinguisher for the entire office. The employer confirmed the situation, with relief being planned for the new financial year. Currently, to combat the situation, employees are allowed leave the office at 13:00 daily and return to the same dirty office the following day. The situation is dire, and members opted to voluntarily clean their own offices. By doing so, they are putting themselves at risk of unpaid injury on duty, in case of an accident.

Section 8 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* places an obligation on the employer to provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and without risk for employees. The Maclear DSD office ignored this rule and subjected employees to a serious health hazard, a situation that the PSA condemns. In addressing the matter, the PSA opted for the following:

- Urgently brought the matter to the attention of the Head of Department for intervention.
- Escalated the unhygienic office to the Department of Employment and Labour for inspection.
- Tabled a demand at the Eastern Cape's Chamber of the Public Health and Social Development Sectoral Bargaining Council for abolishment of cleaning services and permanently appoint cleaners in the Department.

Members will be informed of developments. The PSA calls on members at the DSD and other departments who are affected by such challenges to urgently bring these to the attention of the PSA at Samkelo.mzuku@psa.co.za (Mthatha area) and Riaan.vosloo@psa.co.za (Gqeberha area).

GENERAL MANAGER