

Update: Victory for PSA in Limpopo

Department of Health: EMS

A member appointed as a Paramedic approached the PSA for assistance when the employer refused to pay his commuted overtime claims for the period December 2021 to March 2022. The claims could not be processed as the Shift Leader failed to recommend payment. The member was assisted during protracted grievance proceedings where the employer insisted that copies of attendance registers had to be attached to claims to be processed. The attendance register could not be found, and the member subsequently provided copies of an "occurrence register". The PSA assisted the member in declaring a dispute during which the matter could not be resolved at conciliation. The PSA thus referred the matter for arbitration where the PSA exposed the unfairness of the employer with strong arguments, which left it with no choice but to settle the matter. A settlement agreement was concluded, resulting in the member being paid all his outstanding claims for four months amounting to R20 000.

Department of Social Development

The PSA represented a member appointed as a Social Worker in a disciplinary hearing after being accused of having absconded for ten days. The member requested a transfer to another workstation, which was approved by the employer. Upon arrival at the new workstation, the member decided that she would rather return to her previous station as the conditions were not favourable to her. She abandoned her office without informing the employer. After having been called to meet with management, she was instructed to return to the office she had been transferred to, which she refused, and then requested the PSA for assistance. The allegations had serious implications and could have led to her being dismissed or charged with misconduct. Following PSA-initiated meetings with the employer, the PSA succeeded in having the letter accusing her of having absconded be withdrawn. The member returned to her initial workstation and is not facing any disciplinary process.

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure

A member who was precautionarily transferred pending disciplinary proceedings, requested the PSA's assistance when he received a letter "uplifting his precautionary transfer". This followed his precautionary transfer and finalisation of a disciplinary hearing more than three years ago, where he had been found guilty and handed a sanction of two months' suspension without pay. The PSA argued that the decision by the employer to transfer him after three years could not be viewed as an upliftment of a precautionary suspension and the member should have been consulted. The employer agreed to accommodate the member in an alternative section, as the transfer back to the section where the disciplinary action emanated from would be demoralising and embarrassing for the member.

Department of Education

A School Principal was suspended from the school amidst an allegation of misappropriation of school funds and ordered to report at the circuit office. During the investigation, the Department maliciously removed and hid important documents from his office at the school without engaging him. The PSA fought for the upliftment of his suspension, and he returned to school. During his absence, the Department prepared charges of misconduct where he was charged with three charges consisting of 30 counts for approving several payments to various service providers without supporting documents. The overall amount for irregular payment was R170 882.33. In addition, there was another allegation by the employer that he did not account for R180 00 that was deposited by a private company. It was further alleged that he entered into a lease agreement with a monthly rental of R1 500, for which he failed to show how and what the rental money was for. The PSA represented the member in a disciplinary hearing. The case was finalised in December 2022 and the chairperson finalised his verdict in March 2023, but the Department did not inform the member that he was found not guilty on all allegations. The PSA followed up with the chairperson who indicated that the Department could not prove its case and the member was acquitted on all allegations. The PSA engaged the Department and ensured that the member received an acquittal letter.

Employees who wish to join the PSA can contact Lawrence Muvhango on 082 880 8995, Paulina Moloto on 082 880 8957 or the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500.

GENERAL MANAGER