

MEDIA RELEASE	Human Rights Day: PSA protecting public servants' rights
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 245 000 public-sector employees, commemorates Human Rights Day by reaffirming the Union's commitment to protecting and promoting the rights of public servants across South Africa.

Human Rights Day is as a crucial reminder of the hard-won freedoms as enshrined in the South African Constitution. Despite progress, many public servants continue to face violations of their fundamental rights in the workplace. The PSA remains resolute in addressing these challenges and ensuring fair and just treatment for government employees.

The PSA continues to challenge unfair wage policies and advocate for inflation-aligned salary increases to ensure that public servants earn a wage that reflects their contributions to the country. Recent negotiations have secured a 5.5% salary increase for the 2025/26-financial year, with future adjustments aligned with the Consumer Price Index between 4% and 6%. An increase in the housing allowance was also secured. Danger, special danger allowances, and service allowances for police officers will be adjusted. The right to collective bargaining is, however, under threat with attempts to undermine these structures and jeopardising the ability of public servants to negotiate fair working conditions. The PSA is actively opposing unilateral decisions that bypass these processes and will continue to use protect public-sector employees' rights.

Ensuring a safe and healthy work environment remains a key priority, as many public servants, particularly those in healthcare, education, and law enforcement, work under unsafe conditions. The PSA is actively pursuing improved workplace safety measures, provision of adequate resources, and urgent infrastructure upgrades for government buildings. Job security is another pressing issue, as the increasing trend of outsourcing, retrenchments, and the non-filling of public-sector positions place immense strain on employees and service delivery.

Workplace bullying, discrimination, and victimisation remain prevalent issues. The PSA is committed to ensuring that all public servants are treated with dignity and that grievances are addressed fairly and transparently. The PSA is also guarding public servants' medical-aid benefits by opposing excessive Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) increases. The Union is demanding more transparency and accountability in GEMS pricing structures to ensure affordability for members.

The PSA will continue the Union's efforts to ensure that all public servants are in a position to own a house and will explore all possibilities and mechanisms to achieve this. The PSA has negotiated increases in the housing allowance and also ensured that employees who leave the service is able to access their housing savings. The PSA will further closely monitor proposed amendments by Nedlac in respect of South Africa's labour laws to ensure that hard-won gains by trade unions to protect the rights and interests of employees are not eroded.

The PSA continues to drive projects that highlight the importance of the right to access to healthcare, education, safety, and security. Currently, the Union is assisting clinics across the country with various upgrades including, water tanks and much-needed repairs as part of the Union's ongoing social investment programmes that focus on key developmental challenges.

On Human Rights Day, the PSA calls on government to honour its commitment to upholding the rights of those who serve the nation. Public servants carry society, and their rights must be respected and protected to ensure quality service delivery for South Africans. The PSA urges public servants to stand united in defending their rights and to report any workplace injustices.

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