

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA applauds reinstatement of shop steward at WF Knobel Hospital in Limpopo**

DATE 14 June 2022

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the outcome of an arbitration award reinstating one of the Union's shop stewards at the WF Knobel Hospital in Limpopo, 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/ward attendants not to obey an instruction from 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 by the Department of Health was substantively unfair. The arbitrator 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 shop steward's 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 will paralyse labour and reverse the gains for workers, if left unchallenged.

The PSA applauds this ruling as a victory for fair labour practices and cautions the Department of Health that it will not rest until justice for the shop steward is served in implementing the arbitration award.

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