

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**PSA calls for intervention from the MEC of Sport, Arts and Culture after identity theft and death fraud of a PSA member**

**DATE**

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**EMBARGO**

None

**ENQUIRIES**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) urgently calls on the MEC of Sport, Arts, and Culture, Mr Mntomuhle Khawula, and the Minister of Sport, Arts, and Culture, Mr Gayton McKenzie, to intervene in an alarming case of identity theft and subsequent fraud involving a vulnerable employee and member of the PSA at the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in KwaZulu-Natal. The PSA member who was a victim of this scam, was fraudulently declared deceased on 10 September 2023 by the Department of Home Affairs, with a falsified death certificate citing an unnatural cause of death. It has been uncovered that a sophisticated criminal syndicate orchestrated this fraud, likely intending to claim life insurance policies taken out in the victim's name. Despite reporting this serious crime to the authorities and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, no effective measures have been taken to protect the member or investigate the perpetrators.

The PSA is deeply concerned by the apparent inaction from law enforcement and government departments, leaving the victim and their family in grave danger. Forced into hiding due to ongoing threats from the syndicate, the victim remains without the protection and support necessary in such a dire situation. The member furthermore suffers as his account at the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) has been frozen. The PSA, therefore, demands urgent intervention to ensure justice and safeguard the lives of those affected.

The PSA calls on the MEC and Minister to ensure a thorough investigation is launched, with the perpetrators swiftly brought to justice. Furthermore, immediate security measures must be implemented to protect the victim and their family from harm. In addition, the PSA urges the authorities to raise public awareness about the growing risk of identity theft and death fraud, emphasizing the need for vigilance and stronger protective measures.

This case highlights the urgent need for decisive action to combat the rising tide of identity-related crimes in South Africa. The PSA will continue to monitor the situation closely and remains committed to supporting the victim in their pursuit of justice. Those in positions of leadership must take swift and effective steps to prevent further exploitation of vulnerable citizens.

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