

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA condemns Department of Labour and Employment's failure to uphold safety standards at building in Sandton

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EMBARGO

None

ENQUIRIES

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 250 000 public-sector employees, is shocked by conditions at the Department of Labour and Employment's office building in Sandton, Gauteng.

The building does not meet required health and safety standards as per the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This is particularly concerning given that the Department is responsible for enforcing these standards across workplaces in South Africa. Key issues identified include poor ventilation owing to inadequate ventilation and poor air quality. Insufficient fire-safety measures are in place, including a lack of clearly marked emergency exits and outdated fire extinguishers. Several structural issues have been identified, such as uneven flooring and exposed wiring, posing potential risks to employees. The building's sanitation facilities are not maintained properly, leading to unsanitary conditions.

The failure of the Department's office building to meet health and safety standards raises serious questions about its ability to enforce these standards in other workplaces. It also highlights the need for immediate corrective action to ensure the safety and well-being of employees working in the building. The PSA has been informed that the building is in such a poor condition that employees continuously fall sick because of poor ventilation and unhygienic conditions.

The PSA urges the Department to take swift action to address these issues and bring the building up to standard. This includes conducting a thorough inspection, implementing necessary repairs and upgrades, and ensuring ongoing compliance with health and safety regulations, and removing the removal of staff from the building until it meets the required standard.

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