MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA welcomes closure of Government Mortuary in Bloemfontein for non-compliance with occupational health and safety regulations**
DATE	23 October 2024
EMBARGO	None
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the decisive action to close the Government Mortuary in Bloemfontein, Free State, owing to a serious failure to meet occupational health and safety (OHS) standards.

This closure highlights the critical need to uphold health and safety regulations to protect employees and the community. The PSA has repeatedly warned the Free State Department of Health about the blatant disregard for OHS compliance in these facilities. The continued failure to address dangerous conditions endangered the health and safety of employees and damaged the integrity of public service delivery. The PSA expects inspectors from the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) to investigate this matter thoroughly and lay charges against the accounting officer responsible for non-compliance with OHS regulations. Accountability must be enforced, and those neglecting their duties should face appropriate consequences.

This closure should function as a turning point, prompting immediate reform and the strengthening of OHS standards across all government facilities. It is unacceptable for public servants to be subjected to unsafe working conditions, and this matter was brought to the attention of the Head of Department. Unfortunately, the response was disappointing, as the Head of Department cited budget constraints without addressing the legitimate health and safety concerns or the working conditions employees have been forced to endure.

The PSA also called on the MEC to intervene in this critical issue, but to date, no response has been received. The closure of the mortuary followed swift action by the PSA in reporting the matter to the DEL. The PSA is committed to advocating for the rights and safety of public servants. The PSA will continue to hold management accountable for its obligations, as the health and safety of employees are not negotiable. The PSA will persist in ensuring a safe and compliant working environment for all public servants.

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