



MEDIA RELEASE **PSA welcomes closure of Musina Magistrate Court in Limpopo**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the closure of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development's Musina Magistrate Court by an inspector of the Department of Employment and Labour.

The PSA regarded the building as a death trap and the closure is a relief. The closure comes after a long battle with the Department as employees were subjected to an unsafe work environment that was in contravention of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Employees were accommodated in a building that was in danger of collapsing owing to structure support failure.

The PSA raised the matter of employees' safety and visited the building in May 2021. After unsuccessful engagement with the employer, the matter was escalated to the Department of Employment and Labour, leading to a visit by an inspector on 26 July 2021. The PSA hoped that the employer would attend to the issues as the Department was issued with a contravention notice in September 2020 regarding general safety regulations, construction regulations, and electrical installation regulations. Consequently, a prohibition notice was issued owing to the unsafe building and the use of damaged electrical extension cords posing an immediate danger of overheating and fire.

The PSA welcomes the closure of the building, noting that the closure could have been avoided had the Department attended to the issues raised in the contravention notice. The PSA has on numerous occasions called upon the Limpopo Provincial Government to ensure that the safety of employees is prioritised, especially in view of the many rented unsafe buildings. Employees' safety cannot be compromised by the failure to ensure due diligence by those entrusted with the responsibility of securing safe buildings. The PSA is of the view that many buildings housing government departments are unsafe and dilapidated and advised the Department of Public Works to conduct a full audit on the safety of buildings. This will not only ensure the safety of employees and members of the public but will eliminate wasteful expenditure.

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