

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes opening new offices of Department of Social Development in Impendle, KwaZulu-Natal
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EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the opening of new offices of the Department of Social Development in Impendle in KwaZulu-Natal, doing away with park homes that previously served as offices for the Department.

The PSA welcomes this development by the Department for building state-of-the-art service offices, which were officially opened by the MEC of the Department of Social Development, the Head of Department, and the uMgungundlovu Mayor. This occasion marks a significant step towards improving infrastructure and service delivery for community members of Impendle and the surrounding areas. Dignity will be restored to employees and the public as these offices will offer privacy for social workers to provide counselling, social protection, social welfare services, treatment, and skills development to those in need.

Previously, the Department had allocated land where park homes were placed and used to service the community. These facilities had little space and no privacy for proper counselling and also forced people to travel long distances to receive assistance. Some people feared approaching the park homes as they were exposed to extreme temperatures, owing to poor insulation and overcrowding. There was further no waiting area and conducive ablution facilities.

The project to build the new offices started in 2019 and the PSA commends ongoing improvements made by the Department, especially in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. The state as employer is obliged in terms of the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1993*, read together with Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations, to provide and maintain as far as reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees. The PSA commends the Department for compliance with health and safety regulations. The PSA also appeals to the community to take care of this R26 million building that was constructed for their benefit.

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