

MEDIA RELEASE	The PSA is concerned about the water crisis at Mmamethlake Hospital in the Mpumalanga province
DATE	8 January 2025
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association of South Africa is deeply concerned about the ongoing water shortage at Mmamethlake Hospital in Mpumalanga. This shortage has severely impacted the delivery of health services and represents a significant violation of human rights. A consistent water supply is essential for infection control and the proper implementation of acceptable health practices. The lack of water in this facility poses a serious risk to the health and safety of both patients and staff.

The PSA recently held discussions with the Acting District Manager and the Acting CEO of Mmamethlake Hospital regarding the persistent water supply issue. Unfortunately, hospital management indicated that they rely on the municipality for assistance, as the water supply is under municipal jurisdiction. While they committed to finding a solution to this crisis, the plans they presented to the PSA do not provide a permanent resolution. The employer's proposal suggested that staff members carry water buckets from the Jojo tanks to their offices. The PSA rejected this suggestion and requested the intervention of Occupational Health and Safety Inspectors from the Department of Employment and Labor (DEL) to advocate for the staff's release from this task. Nevertheless, management has stated that they are actively working on a permanent solution, with a team of specialists from the province expected to assist them before the end of the business day.

The Mpumalanga Department of Health continues to jeopardize the health and safety of employees by expecting them to work in unsafe conditions, and the PSA cannot accept this situation as this poses a significant risk not only to PSA members and staff but also to patients and the wider community due to the associated health risks. The PSA is very concerned about the lack of urgency surrounding this issue, and in the meantime, our members and others remain exposed to these dangers.

The PSA in Mpumalanga will continue to engage with the Department of Health Provincial Management regarding this matter, and we will follow up on the process. The intervention of DEL is crucial as this issue must be thoroughly investigated, and if necessary, a prohibition order should be issued until the water crisis is resolved.

END