

Feedback: Departmental Chamber meeting - 16 February 2021

Port Health Services

The matter was registered at the Chamber in relation to outstanding payments of PMDS, overtime, shift allowance and vehicle claims that were owed to Port Health Officials by Provincial Departments. The employer previously presented reports that were not a true reflection, particularly in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. Labour requested that the matter be retained and stated that they will escalate the issue to MANLAB since the Department failed to pay all outstanding mentioned payments in spite of workers still requested to work.

Matters and processes: Move from Civitas to AB Xuma Building

The employer is expected to submit a written presentation to labour on the planned move from Civitas Building by next Tuesday. The matter will then be discussed in the next meeting, where it is expected of the Relocation Task Team to table a report on its deliberations.

Social Development: New Organisational Structure

The employer made a presentation regarding a proposed new organisational structure for consultation with labour. The presentation was noted and labour requested time to report back to members for inputs and mandating. The item will remain in the agenda and a response will be given by labour at the next DBC. Members can contact Gracia Rikhotso (PSA National Negotiator) on gracia.rikhotso@psa.co.za or Velucia Maluleke at veluca.maluleke@psa.co.za on or before 5 March 2021. Copies of the organisational structure will be submitted to the PSA on or before 26 February 2021 through the Secretariat at the PHSDSBC.

Non-compliance by employer: Uniform for Security Staff

This matter has been long outstanding. At the last Chamber meeting, the employer tabled a report for engagement. Labour, however, noted that the report was unsigned and requested that an official signed report be tabled to avoid it being unmandated. Once the final report has been tabled, members will be consulted.

NDOH Bereavement Policy

A draft policy was circulated for discussion. Labour noted the policy and requested time for consultation owing to the fact that employees are no longer accessible at the workplace since the closure of the Civitas Building and the Covid 19 epidemic. Members are thus requested to provide input on the draft policy by no later than **5 March 2021** to Gracia Rikhotso (gracia.rikhotso@psa.co.za) or Velucia Maluleke (velucia.maluleke@psa.co.za) after receiving the presented document from the Chamber Secretariat.

Integration: NDOH employees

The employer was supposed to circulate a project plan to labour, but this was not circulated yet. Parties agreed that the matter will be retained on the agenda and that the employer should circulate the report before the next Chamber meeting for engagement. It was also agreed that a task team be constituted to meet before the next Chamber meeting. The Task Team will consist of two representatives from each union and two from the employer.

Prevention and protection of Health Workers: COVID-19

Labour previously raised a concern regarding the this matter and wanted confirmation on whether this information as discussed in other structures is the same as reports discussed in the Chamber. Questions of clarity were raised. The employer committed to engage an expert to present the information required by labour regarding COVID statistics, resurgence, the vaccination program plan and hospital admissions both at public and private hospitals, as none of the members of the management team in the Chamber are experts in the field. The item will remain on the agenda until the expert has been secured to make the presentation.

Guidelines: Working from home, leave management during COVID-19

The guidelines were discussed at a special Chamber meeting. Labour submitted inputs and requested that the policy should accommodate the relocation, occupational health and safety, as well as the closure of Civitas building. Labour also requested that working hours should be applicable after the move to the building. A request was further made that those employees who can work from home should be assisted with working tools to continue providing services. Senior Managers must be allocated tasks on business continuity, whilst the guidelines are finalised and the implementation thereof are prioritised. The employer noted labour's inputs and will ensure that it gets a mandate to respond at the next meeting.

Transfer: FCL to NHLS

Labour made a presentation to the employer on responses from the feedback sessions convened across the four offices. It also presented a detailed list of questions, clarities, and proposals in writing. Labour requested that it needs to be involved in discussions with other stakeholders as it is aware that there are discussions on the move, which includes NDOH, NHLS. The employer acknowledged the presentation and indicated that it will send a written response to labour after engaging other stakeholders involved in the proposed move shortly.

Transport allowance: Employees moving to new building

Labour made proposals and forwarded these to the employer through the Relocation Task Team. Parties also had a bilateral on the matter. The employer undertook to submit a written response on the proposal and committed to prioritise the issue after getting a mandate from its principals. The matter will remain on the agenda pending a response from the employer.

Resolution 1/2009 (OSD for Social Services Professionals (PHSDSBC) on normal grade progression)

The item was referred to the Chamber for further discussion by the PHSDSBC. The employer was requested to provide data on how the implementation was done. It was stated that verification is ongoing in other Councils and a Task Team was established. A report was shared with the DBC, which was implemented by the Department of Social Development as follows: 142 employees benefitted from this process out of 196 and 54 employees are outstanding to be processed. Labour noted the presentation and will convene a meeting with shop stewards to verify the information for a response at the next meeting. The employer stated that it will verify and check the information. It will provide a response and share the outcome of its verification with labour for further engagement at the next meeting.

Implementation: PHSDSBC Resolution 3/2019

The issue relates to the Annual Registration for Health and Social Development Professionals (Nurses and Social Workers). The employer provided an update on the implementation of the resolution. Labour demanded that the employer should consider funding the registration on behalf of employees. It is further suggested that the employer must backdate the implementation as in the case in other Chambers. The employer is set to forward the written report on the implementation process to labour on or before 26 February 2021. The employer stated that it will fastrack the circulation of the report to the Chamber Secretariat and, where necessary, will propose a special meeting before the next DBC. The matter will remain on the agenda.

Continuous Professional Development: EMS personnel

The employer was requested to provide a written report confirming that it does not have employees who fall in this category of Professionals in the Department of Health. A template was developed on how the information is to be provided for report at Council level. The employer responded that it does not have any employees from EMS who fall in the said category. Labour requested a written response to that effect, which will be further discussed in the next meeting.

Provision of tools of trade: Social Development employees

A presentation was shared with parties to appraise them on the status of provision of tools of trade in the DSD. Labour noted the presentation and requested it in writing. Once received, it will be circulated amongst members for input and discussion at the next meeting. The employer will through the DBC Secretariat circulate the presentation on or before 26 February 2021.

COVID-19 vaccine rollout

A detailed plan regarding the rollout of the vaccine for the first phase was shared with parties. It was emphasised that vaccination is not compulsory for employees who choose not to vaccinate. Road shows are planned to educate health workers on the importance of being vaccinated. Training of staff who will be expected to vaccinate patients will be given by the Department at the identified vaccination sites. Labour representatives will be allowed to sit in as observers during the said training. The details of the training will be obtained from representatives of labour serving in the PHSDSBC.

GENERAL MANAGER