

COVID-19 positive case: Depo Pharmaceutical

The PSA learnt of a confirmed positive case at Depo Pharmaceutical in Mthatha, of which the results were revealed on 7 July 2021. Shockingly, the employer permitted only one employee to self-isolate who was believed to have been in direct contact with the infected employee. This left members up in arms as the infected employee shared devices with almost 20 officials in proximity thus making them close contacts to the affected employee. It was reported that this institution ignored the DPSA guidelines, and the Internal Circular signed by the Superintendent General for the Eastern Cape Department of Health to allow rotation of employees.

The PSA immediately contacted the employer, requesting an urgent meeting on 9 July 2021 to address this matter. The meeting is not yet confirmed but the PSA is making all efforts to ensure that the meeting convenes on 9 July 2021. It should be noted that the infected employee received a COVID-19 jab and with this the PSA encourages members to exercise caution as it does not mean that when vaccinated one will not contract the virus.

The PSA calls upon employers to respect the DPSA guidelines and internal circulars in relation to COVID-19 as non-compliance may be viewed as a deliberate attempt to spread the virus. Employers are reminded of their Constitutional duty to safeguard the safety of the employees at the workplace as guided by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

The PSA wishes the infected employee a speedy recovery and strength to those awaiting results. Members are urged to constantly wear masks, sanitise or wash hands with soap, observe social distance, limit movements whilst on duty or away from work and avoid social gatherings and congested places. Members are advised that if they do not feel well, to immediately report this their employer and to obtain permission not to go to work and consult a doctor to be safe.

Shop stewards are urged to constantly monitor compliance with COVID-19 regulations, OHS matters and report non-compliance to the PSA for advice and intervention. Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER