

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT - EASTERN CAPE

16-07-2021

Update: Mthatha High Court - COVID-19 non-compliance

The PSA was alerted to a COVID-19 suspected case where an employee after not feeling well was allowed to consult the doctor on 12 July 2021. Sadly, the news broke on 14 July 2021 that the employee had passed away. The same office had an official who fell ill whilst at work on 9 July 2021 and results confirmed COVID-19 positive. On 15 July 2021, two more officials received their results, which confirmed positive COVID-19. It was reported that the Department only cleaned the affected areas but failed to subject the close contacts to testing nor allowing the employees to quarantine as clearly stated in the DPSA guidelines and regulations.

This caused panic amongst members and they contacted the PSA for intervention on 16 July 2021. The PSA telephonically engaged the Court Manager who, at first, displayed arrogance and advised the PSA to air its grievance in writing. The PSA advised the Manager that it is willing to do so but the consequences will be dire as non-compliance with COVID-19 is regarded as crime. The Manager realised what is at stake and complied with the PSA where a resolution was taken to immediately subject the close contacts to self-isolation pending the outcome of the results, decontaminate the building and contact the Department of Health for testing as some employees do not have medical aid to carry the costs. It was agreed that the Department of Health will be approached on 19 July 2021 and staff members were released to go home at 13:00. This was confirmed by shop stewards.

The PSA condemns the disregard of COVID-19 regulations and occupation and health standards by most government departments thus subjecting employees to unwarranted illnesses and warns that it will continue to ensure that departments comply with regulations.

The PSA extends condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the deceased and wishes infected employees a speedy recovery.

Members are urged to be vigilant and contact the PSA for interventions on (047) 501 2500 or email samkelo.mzuku@psa.co.za.

GENERAL MANAGER