

## Circular 23 of 2021

Members will recall that Circulars 43 of 2020 and 4 of 2021 caused turmoil in the Department, which resulted in a threat of industrial action and marathon meetings to push for unconditional withdrawal of these Circulars. Further, the employer issued Circulars 17 and 18 respectively purporting to amend Circulars 43 and 4, which unfortunately did not address the issues of concerns by labour and disregarded resolutions of the engagement with labour. Subsequently, labour continued pressuring the employer to withdraw the said Circulars, which led to the issuance of Circular 23 of 2021.

Circular 23 of 2021 effectively suspends Circulars 43 of 2020 and 4 of 2021 as amended by Circulars 17 and 18 respectively to allow for engagement with labour and to pilot the proposed rosters at various institutions for two months. It was further resolved that the office of the MEC will draft a programme to visit the institutions as part of the pilot and fact-finding mission together with labour representatives. The Department also invited labour to make representations on behalf of members and shop stewards that were put on precautionary suspension/transfer owing to the opposition of the implementation of the said Circulars. Members will therefore have the opportunity to engage with their supervisors to draft and pilot the preferred rosters as there will be no implementation of standardised rosters from anywhere but from the institutions themselves upon consultation.

### **Circular 21 of 2021**

The PSA noted that the employer issued the above Circular regarding early retirement without penalisation of pension benefits in terms of section 16(6) of the *Public Service Act* wherein employees who will be 55 to 59 years before 31 March 2022 must submit their applications on or before 31 May 2021. Members are urged to exercise their discretion and not allow the employer to push them or coerce them to do anything against their will and members must conduct due diligence before acting.

GENERAL MANAGER