

Closing of office owing COVID-19 at Mokopane, Mapela MPCC Building

Members would remember that the PSA visited Mapela MPCC Building in Mokopane, housing the Department's officials, in reaction on complaints received of poor working conditions. It was discovered that employees were working in an area without functional toilets and water supply. The workplace was filthy with employees having to walk a kilometre to access toilets at Mapela Clinic. There was no screening or sanitising at the gate, which exposed employees to possible infection. The matter was immediately reported to the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) for intervention. Employees were also sharing small offices, making observation of social distancing difficult as they are expected to consult in the cramped offices.

Whilst the inspection was awaited, a COVID-19 positive case was reported, forcing the Department to close the building to allow for disinfection and reopening on 5 July 2021. The PSA is concerned that although the Department has closed the building, failure to ensure maintenance of the visitors' register, screening of visitors and sanitising at the entrance can cause further infections and will be very difficult to ensure tracking and tracing of contacts.

The DEL was reminded to prioritise the visit of the workplace before the situation gets out of hand. A letter will also be written to the HOD for immediate intervention as the District management failed to arrest the situation.

Members with workplace challenges are urged to contact the Provincial Chairperson: Nkhensani Maluleke at Nkhensani.ny@gmail.com and/or Locan Bonisiwe Sibiyi at Sibiyi.locs@gmail.com or the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500.

Members will be updated on developments.

GENERAL MANAGER