

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS (DHA) - PRETORIA AREA

14-10-2024

PSA intervenes to ensure re-instatement of suspended stipends for Home Affairs Digitisation candidates

Silverton Post Office Depot

The PSA received numerous complaints relating to non-payments of hundreds of stipends for DHA's Digitisation Project contractors for September 2024. Realising the urgency of the matter and its undesirable implications, the PSA immediately engaged the employer after gathering sufficient information from affected individuals. Following the PSA's intervention, dozens of stipends were re-instated within three days, with the first batch of payments being made on 3 October 2024.

In a meeting between the PSA, the employer, and *Phetogo Digital Transformation* at Silverton Digitisation Hub on 8 October 2024, it was revealed that a total of 442 stipends had been suspended owing to abscondment. According to the Department, a substantial number of contractors failed to report for duty at various sites despite instructions being issued to individual employees to report at specific Digitisation sites. However, contrary to the employer's assertions, the PSA presented evidence that the Department had erroneously suspended the stipends of those who had complied with the instructions as well as those who had been on approved leave, including maternity leave, sick leave, and vacation leave. Whilst noting that each case had to be dealt with on its merit, the PSA vehemently questioned the employer's decision to suspend the stipends without following the prescribed processes in terms of the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act*.

Parties agreed that further investigation will be expedited as a matter of urgency to ensure that all outstanding disputes are resolved amicably. The PSA will continue to engage with the employer and affected individuals as and when cases are reported. Feedback will be shared accordingly. Other outstanding concerns that were previously reported, including concerns about occupational health and safety issues, working conditions, disciplinary issues, *etc.*, are receiving attention and notable improvements have been observed in some areas.

Employees who wish to join the PSA in Pretoria area can contact Madimetja Mautla on 078 455 6166 / Madimetja.mautla@psa.co.za.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER