

Update: Commuted overtime for Medical Doctors in Eastern Cape

The PSA would like to update members on recent developments regarding commuted overtime for Medical Doctors in the Eastern Cape. On 19 September 2024, the Head of Department (HOD) of the Eastern Cape Department of Health called a meeting with labour to consult on the implementation of the National Department of Health (NDOH) policy on commuted overtime. During the meeting, the HOD admitted that the Eastern Cape had not correctly implemented the NDOH policy and that steps would be taken to ensure full compliance.

Labour raised serious concerns and demanded that all relevant documents regarding the matter be shared. Labour also insisted that no decisions be made regarding the recovery of monies from those who allegedly benefited from commuted overtime until proper consultation had taken place. Labour further called for the halting of any decision to stop commuted overtime payments and objected to the proposed implementation date of October 2024.

A follow-up meeting was held on 27 September 2024, where the HOD emphasised her legal obligation to correct previous errors and ensure proper payment of commuted overtime according to the NDOH policy. Labour responded with disappointment, raising several concerns:

- Labour was not consulted before the decisions were made.
- Labour rejected both the proposed recovery process and the October implementation date for roadshows to inform workers.
- Labour objected to being excluded from key task team meetings where these decisions were made.
- The document presented by the employer was disputed by labour, as no reasons were given for excluding labour in the initial process.

In response, the employer acknowledged several points:

- Some employees were incorrectly paid both commuted overtime and claimed overtime for callouts, which violated the policy.
- The Department admitted to mismanaging the implementation of the commuted overtime policy and was unable to provide details on the amounts paid and what should be recovered.

- The employer committed to implementing the correct policy going forward to prevent the accumulation of further debt for affected employees. It also agreed to place any recovery of monies on hold.

The PSA urges members affected by this issue to immediately contact the PSA through Mxolisi Nyandu at mxolisi.nyandu@psa.co.za or via WhatsApp at 072 118 3076. Please report any attempts to recover monies from you to allow the PSA to assist. The PSA is committed to ensuring that your rights are protected throughout this process.

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GENERAL MANAGER