

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY (SASSA) - WESTERN CAPE**

25-10-2024

## Feedback: SASSA Western Cape Regional Consultative Forum (RFC) - 21 October 2024

### Long-service recognition

The PSA raised the concern of staff not being provided with the necessary monetary award and certificate in recognition of their years of service at SASSA as required in terms of PSCBC Resolution 1/2012. The employer informed labour that monetary compensation is automatically generated, which in turn, results in qualifying staff automatically receiving the monetary award. The issuing of certificates, however, remains a problem owing to budgetary constraints. The PSA proposed that the employer should issue a circular to staff, outlining the current challenge. The employer agreed to the proposal. The PSA also proposed that the employer should send an email to staff, acknowledging their years of service. The employer will take this proposal back to its principals and revert to the PSA at a bilateral meeting scheduled for 30 October 2024.

### Recruitment

The PSA submitted a paper in early 2024 regarding the employer's non-compliance with HCM Circular 2 of 2016 – Practice note for trade unions sitting as observers during shortlisting and interviewing processes for posts on salary levels 1-12. Clause 1.4 states, "*Union representatives will be invited to shortlisting two days before the shortlist date and four days before the interview date.*" An issue arose at Oudtshoorn local office, which the PSA requested to be reported and investigated by SASSA internal control RE- SGA interviews process for the Oudtshoorn local office to determine if SASSA has complied with clause 1.4 of the said circular and recommend corrective measures. The employer noted the concern and will respond in writing to the concern raised by 30 October 2024.

### Grade progression

PSCBC Resolution 3/2009 enables eligible employees to progress to higher grades. SASSA HCM Circular 8 of 2022 speaks to grade progression. The employer has, however, not provided the PSA with the number of qualifying officials, and the time period within which they completed grade progression. Moreover, eligible officials have not received an implementation letter confirming their grade progression, which makes it difficult for them to calculate their backpay. The PSA submitted a position paper on the issue to which the employer agreed to respond in writing.

## **Pay progression**

The PSA submitted a position paper on the employer's failure to timeously make payment of annual pay progressions to qualifying employees for the period 1 April to 31 March each year. The PSA requested the employer to provide the policy that governs the administration of pay progression and valid reasons for the constant delay in ensuring that qualifying staff receive this benefit timeously. The employer agreed to respond to the issue in writing.

## **Occupational health and safety (OHS)**

The PSA submitted a position paper in which it requested: the guiding document for all OHS issues, including that of mobile service points; a copy of the CEO infrastructure management plan to determine if mobile service points are a priority; certificates of compliance; certificates of occupation; risk assessment reports; occupational health safety report; memorandum of understanding between SASSA and the management of the facility; report of the security management unit and the contingency plan should a security threat arise; pest-control certificates; provision of personal protective equipment; the list of SHE reps, fire marshals, first aiders and appointed compliance officers as per the OHS Policy. The PSA also called for clarity on the actual role of security officials at SASSA contact points and the contingency plan in the absence of security officials. In the absence of security officials, no services can be rendered to the public. The employer indicated that the OHS Policy is the guiding document. It has agreed to respond in writing to the concerns raised by 1 November 2024. An OHS presentation will also be made at the next RCF meeting.

## **Danger allowance**

Certain occupational categories in SASSA are at safety risk during the execution of their duties. The RCF has agreed to establish a Western Cape task team, comprising of a representative from each party. The team's aim would be to investigate the feasibility of supplementing this risk with a danger allowance. Findings will be escalated to the National Bargaining Forum for consideration.

## **ICT batteries**

The PSA submitted a position paper on this matter. There are issues with the provision of AA-size batteries for ICT equipment for staff, leading to inconsistency and non-compliance. Laptops procured do not meet the needs of all SASSA Grant Administration processes. With only two USB ports available, officials have to connect several devices, including the biometric device, Bluetooth connector, small printer, and headset. The PSA calls on the Finance and ICT units to assist and give guidance to support staff at offices. The employer indicated that it will be meeting with ICT shortly and will revert to the PSA by 1 November 2024.

## **Business Processing Re-engineering (BPR - update)**

The national representative of the BPR task team and the Champion for the Western Cape Province presented labour with an update. Parties were requested to distinguish between the Automation of Systems and BPR – the two are independent processes. For now, the BPR process has been put on hold. The consultation process for the Automation of Systems is, however, currently underway.

## **Financial misconduct policy**

The current issue of staff utilising "out-of-warranty" laptops needs to be addressed urgently as the expectation of having to provide a service with these poses the risk of being financially catastrophic and resulting in punitive action against staff for the liability of these goods. The PSA requested that the

application of the prescription law to company assets be addressed in the proposed workshop. Parties agreed that the employer will present the amended policy and have it workshopped at the next RCF.

### **Outstanding matters**

The pending issue of acting in higher positions will be addressed at the next meeting, scheduled for **19 November 2024**.

Members are encouraged to notify their PSA Shop Stewards at the various SASSA offices should issues arise.

Reuben Maleka  
GENERAL MANAGER