



# SOLIDARITY WITH THE FRONTLINE WORKERS!



**T**he national union salutes thousands of our members that have positively responded to national duty in response to the unfolding spread of the Coronavirus and COVID-19 sickness. We know that you too have your own personal fears and that you are breadwinners with big responsibilities to your households and families.

You have increased the respect that your professions and work deserve in how you have so bravely stepped up in the face of national agony and despair. On behalf of the rest of our members who are now at home as part of observing the declaration of the 21 days lockdown, we are sending this humble message to you, one and all. That we are fully behind you and shall encourage all our members and the community at large to stay at home in order to make the national burden that you carry lighter.

To ensure that the sacrifices that you are so valiantly making do not lead to your own personal harm and even loss of life, NEHAWU has embarked on a legal course of action to protect its members and by extension the fellow workers at the workplace. We know that already some workers have been infected but we have come out to draw the line. This must not be allowed to go on further.

Even before government declared the State of Disaster, we have been taken from pillar to post by the National Department of Health when we inquired about its plans to implement the workplace prevention measures to protect workers. The Occupation Health and Safety Act requires employers to undertake risk assessment and inform workers accordingly. Employers are required to then roll-out the health and safety measures in the workplace in order to address those risks accordingly.

Despite the lockdown, we have done all we could to reach out to our members who are facing danger at the workplace to ensure that their outcry is attended to. Managers, MECs and the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkize, have all ignored us. Instead, they have been busy meeting with other elites such as business people, traditional leaders and so on, yet the fight against the Coronavirus and COVID-19 falls squarely on the frontline workers' shoulders. We are angry at the levels of disrespect, neglect and incompetence shown by the department, towards workers in this regard. In the meantime, remember your union, NEHAWU, is fully behind you, and we shall do all we can under the circumstances to defend and protect you. Let's continue with the glorious work of saving the lives of our people, especially the working class and the poor.

Amandla!