

# NEHAWU Mpumalanga Welcomes The Disposal of Surplus State-Owned Houses And Standard Operating Procedures For Security Services At All Mpumalanga Provincial Government Sites



**Tuesday December 10, 2024**

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] in Mpumalanga welcomes the disposal of the surplus state-owned houses and the Standard Operating Procedures for security services at Mpumalanga Provincial Government sites which is a milestone scored by the union in the province.

We welcome the resolution of the 7th Administration Executive Council to dispose the surplus State-Owned houses to employees who are legal occupants at a discounted price of 20% and 10% respectively. The process benefits a total number of 1 493 employees as homeowners. NEHAWU in the province will closely monitor the disposal of these houses by participating in the Provincial Task Team to ensure that workers are beneficiaries, and they are not prejudiced. This will include ensuring that the houses to be disposed of and vacant land belonging to the government have been properly audited. We further call upon the government to consider disposing of the remaining unoccupied open residential land belonging to the state spreading across all different municipalities for the benefit of the working class at large.

The union through its programme of action has been calling for the disposal of state-owned houses to legal occupants by government at a discounted price depending on their salary levels and affordability since the year 2016 to date. We are satisfied that finally, the matter is finding expression following the previous attempts which were hampered by several factors, including the court case. In processing this matter in a just and fair manner, it is our view that the government should enter into payment arrangements agreements with the current legal occupants which will enable workers to be homeowners considering their financial situations which they are confronted with and the current prevailing economic situations in the country. We agree that should the current legal occupants decline to purchase these houses, the process can then be subjected to an open market.

Equally, NEHAWU welcomes the quest to mitigate the scale of safety and security challenges by the Provincial Government by developing the Standard Operating Procedures [SOPs] which places the safety of employees, the community, and assets within the premises of state facilities following the number of incidences in the province wherein employees are attacked and robbed off their belonging by thugs while on duty.



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The union has been calling for the strengthening of safety and security services in all Mpumalanga Provincial Government sites. This call was informed by the prevalent cases wherein workers are continuously attacked by thugs and robbed of their belongings in the place of duty while rendering quality services to members of the community in line with the service delivery charter. The number of incidents of hijackings of government vehicles has escalated in the province wherein workers, the community, and state assets have become a target for criminals. Some workers have sustained injuries, permanent disabilities, and psychological trauma while in their place of duty as a result of these attacks. The union is very much concerned that there is still an employee who has been missing with the government vehicle since the 09th December 2023, he was employed by the Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Health at Evander Hospital, and it is strange and worrisome that there is still no trace of his whereabouts including the government vehicle which he was driving.

We are concerned that most of the incidents involving the theft and hijacking of state vehicles take place outside work premises when transporting patients within and outside the province for specialized care services, personnel, linen and laundry services, documents, Forensic Pathology, and Emergency Services. In this regard, we call upon the Provincial Government to strengthen security measures in all government vehicles, and this will include among other things branding, installation of specialized quality tracking devices and panic batons to be used by drivers when confronted with some life-threatening situations. In ensuring that safety and security are strengthened in government facilities, we further call for the following:

- The visibility of the South African Police Service in healthcare facilities and schools should also be prioritized.
- Insourcing of security services and other outsourced services.
- Appointment and deployment of well-trained and qualified Security Officers in all public schools and strengthening of all other security measures.
- Full implementation of all the recommendations on the safety and security of personnel, citizens, and government assets from the benchmarking process which was conducted by the employer and organized labour in Gauteng Healthcare facilities during the 2018/2019 Financial Year.





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- Psychosocial Support to employees who are victims of such attacks on a regular basis, including their family members.

Similarly, we call upon the Provincial Government to expedite the processes of permanent absorption of Community Healthcare Workers [5 347], Data Capturers [398], HTS Counsellors [682], NHI Registered Counsellors [19], Sports Contract Workers [58], and all contract workers in spheres of government including public entities for the purposes of job security, decent work, and improved quality services to the people. This is part of building a developmental state which is capable of providing services to its citizens.

We remain committed to our demand for the establishment of a State-Owned Pharmaceutical Company in Mpumalanga province and the complete insourcing of pharmaceutical employees. We call upon the Department of Health and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government to finalize all the modalities towards the insourcing of the Provincial Pharmaceutical Services when the current service provider's contract ends by May 2025. This can be made possible by considering the Task Team Report and recommendations on insourcing following the benchmarking process which was undertaken in Gauteng, Free State, and Limpopo provinces respectively.

Lastly, as NEHAWU, we shall continue to implement our public service delivery campaign across all sectors where we organise.

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