**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE WELCOMES DEVELOPMENT OF NEW DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 24 August 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration today received a briefing from the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation on the management of disciplinary cases against senior managers and heads of department in the public service, as well as the challenges encountered in implementing the discipline management strategy.

The committee heard that the backlog in misconduct cases and precautionary suspensions has increased. The total cost to the state for precautionary suspensions stabilised at around R82 million for provinces and R25 million for national departments. However, this data only reflects information captured on PERSAL.

Committee members were concerned about the sharp increase in misconduct cases in both national and provincial departments. In national departments, such cases increased from 651 in March 2021 to 1 890 in March 2022, while in the same period in provincial departments, cases increased from 2 004 to 2 517.

The department responded by holding one-on-one sessions with Ministers and Directors-General and provided technical assistance to address shortcomings. Departments were assisted to record all cases and were required to provide monthly progress reports to the DPSA. This intervention contributed to 71 per cent of national departments finalising their disciplinary cases by the end of the fourth quarter in 2021. However, the committee noted that this improvement was not sustained in 2022.

The committee further noted that 204 Senior Management Service cases were completed during the period 1 January 2018 to 31 July 2022. It was also concerned by the lengthy time it takes to resolve disciplinary cases, saying effective management of disciplinary measures and consequence management is lacking. The committee raised concerns about some departments not referring cases to their internal labour relations units. Further that their human resource management units are not able to capture disciplinary cases on PERSAL which delays the process to finalise the cases. Officials who are unable to capture information on PERSAL must be retrained and if they are unable to perform this responsibility, their respective departments must apply consequence management.

To advance service delivery, the department must reduce the time taken for senior management disciplinary cases, as they cost the public service millions. The senior officials know how to delay by playing the system to their advantage, said the Chairperson of the committee, Mr Tyotyo James. The committee welcomes the development of a new discipline management strategy for the public service, which will focus on a review of legislation and address the DPSA’s implementation challenges.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE, MR TYOTYO JAMES**

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