



20 August 2019

**MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

LEGAL AID SA EMPLOYEES' STRIKE IMPACTS FUNCTIONING OF THE COURTS

A number of Legal Aid South Africa employees embarked on a strike from Monday, 19 August 2019, expressing their dissatisfaction that employee benefits have been reduced due to severe budget cuts faced by the organisation. This strike action has disrupted Legal Aid SA's court coverage plan, and therefore, a number of client's matters.

Countrywide, only 8% of the lower courts were impacted negatively by the strike. However, in Gauteng, 35% of our lower courts were negatively impacted. Legal Aid SA Local Offices did attempt to provide a skeleton service at a number of the courts that were disrupted by the strike action in order to keep the prejudice to our clients as limited as possible. With regard to the functioning of the High Courts, only the Gauteng Division of the High Court, Johannesburg was negatively affected. Cases continued smoothly at most other divisions of the High Courts.

The strike is due to continue indefinitely. Legal Aid SA continues to serve the public to the best of our ability during this time of uncertainty. Walk-in clients are still welcome at Legal Aid SA offices, and are able to access legal advice.

While the economic pressures facing South Africa are serious, Legal Aid SA remains committed to continued fruitful engagement on how best to manage the future, balancing the interests of our organisational mandate with our employees' concerns.

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Issued by the Communication Department of Legal Aid South Africa. For more information, please contact Legal Aid South Africa Communications Executive and National Spokesperson Mr Mfanafuthi Shabangu on 066 301 6935 or Media and Marketing Manager Mr Godfrey Matsobe on 066 481 6792

Visit our website at www.legal-aid.co.za

Please be reminded that the name of our organisation **Legal Aid South Africa** is correctly abbreviated as **Legal Aid SA** and not as LASA. We respectfully request that you use the correct abbreviation **Legal Aid SA** which is representative of our mission to deliver quality **legal aid** services to the poor and vulnerable in South Africa.