

Department to pay up for tardy transfer

Katleho Morapela

The North West department of public works and roads has to respond with a plan of action following a damning public protector's report last week.

The report indicates that Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane has found the department guilty for failing to register and transfer ownership of property to a complainant in Lichtenburg for over a decade, despite having received payment for it.

The complainant, known as Ms DC Dihemo, lodged a complaint with the office of the public protector in 2012 after approaching the provincial department for years to no avail.

According to the report, the department has unduly failed to register and transfer ownership of a property to the complainant, despite her having paid R112 000 to the department in 2008. The department has not responded to OFM News' set of questions nor indicated whether it will take the report with adverse findings against it or start implementing the remedial actions listed.

Meanwhile, time is running out for the department since some of the remedial actions have timelines.

In her report, Mkhwebane stated that Dihemo had suffered prejudice because the department had not transferred the property into her name timeously.

She added that the complainant had continuously been paying monthly occupational rent of R200 for the past 10 years and has been prohibited from effecting any alterations or any extensions to the property. A reasonable period within which the property should have been transferred into her name was six months.

Mkhwebane has ordered the head of the department to provide the office of the state attorney with all the necessary documents to enable the state attorney to register and transfer the said property into the complainant's name within 30 working days.

The department must also refund the complainant all the money paid as occupational rental, minus the rental for six months which would have been a reasonable time to register the property.

She also demanded that the head of the department send an apology to the complainant for the undue delay. – *OFM News*



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Busisiwe Mkhwebane
Public Protector