

■ BENEFITS

MPs' perks curbed in ministerial handbook

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SECURITY upgrades to the private residences of ministers and unlimited flights for Cabinet members are some of the things that have been scrapped from the ministerial handbook.

This is according to Public Service and Administration Minister Senzo Mchunu, who last week briefed the portfolio committee. The review of the ministerial handbook has been nine years in the making.

The minister said President Cyril Ramaphosa had formed a task team consisting of himself, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni and Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Patricia de Lille to review the ministerial handbook.

"That process got completed about a month ago or so we handed the outcome of our work to the president for consideration," Mchunu said, adding that there was also a conversation with Cabinet. Mchunu said they have recommended that two types of category of staff should be employed in the



Senzo Mchunu

ministers, premiers and MECs' offices.

These included employees an office-bearer could hire to assist with his or her duties and permanent officers seconded to their offices by the department.

"In terms of current proposals, we are saying for the first category will be nine staff to the office of ministers unless the president changes it."

The staff for a deputy minister, premier and MECs were reduced. Mchunu also said the permanent staff

for ministers would be four, including an administrative secretary, among others, who will be seconded by the department. Mchunu said the cost of the ministerial vehicle would be up to R700 000. "If you use your car, you can use your own, but not with a claim as provided for in the old handbook."

Mchunu also said ministers and their deputies would be expected to travel economy class on their domestic flights, but this relaxed to business class on international travel.

He said the government will only pay R5 000 for services at ministerial houses. "If you use more than R5 000 the member will take responsibility."

Security upgrades at private residences of ministers would be discontinued. Mchunu said former ministers and deputies won't enjoy unlimited flights anymore. "Tickets for former ministers are covered by Parliament.

"It should not be in the ministerial handbook." According to Mchunu, the reviewed ministerial handbook was submitted to Ramaphosa last week for signing.