

HOUSING

Looming SAPS evictions

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SAPS members and their families residing at a police barracks in Wynberg are not happy about their upcoming eviction.

Tina Mnqwazi, wife of one of the police officers, said they had been living in the barracks for three years.

“Before coming to live here, we were living in Khayelitsha, but we had to leave because my husband was being targeted by thugs.”

She said staff living in the barracks were there for different reasons – some because of injury and others because of safety issues resulting from threats received in their former communities

Mnqwazi said they reapplied for their (three-year) lease before it expired in December, but the application was unsuccessful.

“We tried to find out why our application was unsuccessful ... and earlier this month we were given eviction notices which state we must be out by May 31,” she said.

She said they were told that they would be forcefully removed if they did not leave.

Mnqwazi said they had nowhere to go and if they had to go back to where they came from, their lives would be in danger.

“The treatment we are getting is not fair; most families have been here for a very long time, and where are they expected to go?” she said.

A police sergeant, who did not want to be named, said she lived in Khayelitsha before moving to the barracks.



TINA Mnqwazi is upset because she is being evicted from Servamus police barracks. | **BRENDAN MAGAAR** African News Agency (ANA)

“I had to move because my life and that of my family were threatened. Thugs wanted my work firearm – to a point where my car was even shot at,” she said.

She said she spoke to her superiors about her situation and was told to apply for a place in the barracks.

“I don’t know where I will go if we are removed from here after receiving the notice, because my financial state doesn’t allow me to buy my own home somewhere safe,” she said.

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure spokesperson Lunga Mahlangu said the property in question was state-owned and allocated to the SAPS.

“Therefore it is not leased. As such, there is no eviction by a landlord.”

Police spokesperson Colonel André Traut said the evictions were part of SAPS housing policy, a transparent and fair process where tenants of police accommodation were rotated on a three-year basis. He added that it was an internal matter.