



Publication: Daily News - Main
Title: More than R130 million paid to suspended civil servants
Publish date: 07 Nov 2022
Page: 4

Reach: 23508
AVE: R 12991.44
Author: Staff Reporter

MANAGEMENT MESS

More than R130 million paid to suspended civil servants

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TAXPAYERS are coughing up more than R130 million for the salaries of 305 suspended civil servants, including 57 senior managers, who are sitting idle at home.

This emerged in parliamentary responses by Acting Public Service and Administration Minister Thulas Nxesi, to questions posed by DA MP Mimmy Gondwe.

In his response, Nxesi said there were 305 civil servants who were on suspension with full pay and the cost to the government was over R130 million (R130 964 676) as at June.

"The number of senior public servants on precautionary suspension is 57," he said.

Nxesi's responses showed that 226 civil servants were on suspension in the nine provinces and taxpayers were paying close to R100 million (R90 707 330) million towards their salaries.

The national departments were paying R40 257 345 million in salaries of 79 civil servants on suspension.

Gondwe said the written reply reflected a number of gaps in terms of

the costs of some of these suspensions.

A closer look at the response shows that the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is paying R2.3m each to two officials at salary level 14 and another R309 095 in the same salary band.

One official has been paid R3.1m by the Department of International Relations and Co-operation and 12 others were paid a collective R2.5m in the Department of Higher Education.

The Department of Public Service and Administration coughed up R4.9m to one official in salary level 15 while Public Works paid its level 16 officials a total of R3.9m.

Gondwe said the written reply was also indicative of the discipline management crisis in the public service.

Responding to a separate set of questions, Nxesi said 2 525 officials were fired in 2019-20, 2295 the following year and 3 003 as at the end of the financial year ending in March 2022.

Some of the reasons for dismissals included desertion, dishonourable discharge, and falsifying documents.

There were 6106 instances of dismissal where types of misconduct were not indicated.