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**Author:** Siphso Mabena

# Suspended officials are paid millions

**Siphso Mabena**

The Mpumalanga government has failed to respond to damning allegations that more than R9 million of taxpayer's money has been used to pay the salaries of officials sitting at home on suspension.

Last August, then Acting Minister of Public Service and Administration Thulas Nxesi said government had spent R131.2 million on salaries for suspended officials over the past two years.

This excluded data from the department of defence and the State Security Agency.

During this period, civil servants on suspension had been paid for an average of 86 days – salaries

being paid for three months of no work being done.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in the province revealed that six departments had splurged millions of rands on salaries for 47 officials who had been sitting at home for more than 60 days.

The provincial department of health accounts for the bulk of the wastage, with more than R5.9 million spent on 25 officials on suspension for over a year, with the public works, roads and transport department following at R870 588 spent on five officials on suspension for 137 days.

The department of education had spent R701 601 paying 12 officials on suspension for over 90 days, and premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane's office had cost taxpayers R602 306 on two officials suspended for more than 210 days.

One official at the province's department of social development had been paid R507 395 whilst sitting at home for 270 days and another official, this one at the agriculture, rural development, land and environmental affairs department, had cost taxpayers R400 916 for 49 days at home.

## R5.9m

**paid to suspended worker by health department.**

"This is a total of R9 000 697.06 spent on officials who are sitting at home doing nothing," said the DA leader in the province, Jane Sithole. "Having officials suspended well over 60 days is a violation of the Disciplinary Codes and Procedure for Public Service Policy and the DPSA [Department of Public Service and Administration] Public Service Precautionary Suspensions Guide – which stipulates the period of a precautionary suspension should not exceed 60 days."

With huge service delivery shortages in the province, it was concerning that since 2016, spending on precautionary suspension had almost tripled from just over R3.4 million a year.