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JOINT-STATEMENT

MINISTER MACPHERSON HANDS OVER FIVE PUBLIC WORKS PROPERTIES TO GAUTENG GOVERNMENT FOR USE AS GBV SHELTERS

- The Minister of Public Works & Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, handed over five properties in Gauteng, to be used to shelter victims of gender-based violence to Gauteng Social Development MEC Faith Mazibuko.
- Minister Macpherson said it is important that at a time of gender-based violence crisis, it is important that unused state properties are used to help address it head on.
- Minister of Social Development, Nokuzola Tolashe, said she will work with Minister Macpherson to establish shelters in all 52 districts of South Africa.
- Between 2019 and 2025, only two public works buildings had been made available to fight GBV. Today five buildings were made available signalling a big shift in policy for the department.

During a handover ceremony on Tuesday morning, 8 April 2025, the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, handed over five properties belonging to the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure in Waterkloof, Pretoria, to the Gauteng Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Social Development, Faith Mazibuko. These properties will serve as shelters for victims of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Minister Macpherson, joined at the ceremony by Minister of Social Development, Nokuzola Tolashe, emphasised the importance of utilising public properties for public benefit.

“For far too long, state-owned buildings such as these properties in Waterkloof, Pretoria, have stood empty, despite a pressing need for shelters for women and children who face extremely challenging circumstances. Between 2019 and 2025, only two properties were handed over to be used as shelters, but are making it a priority to hand over many more this year and the 5 today is just the start! During a time of crisis due to gender-based violence in South Africa, it is crucial that we utilise these properties to provide safe spaces for our women and children. I look forward to releasing additional unused public properties in other provinces in the coming weeks and months to further support our efforts in combating gender-based violence,” Minister Macpherson stated.

Minister Tolashe added that finding tangible solutions and combating what has been declared South Africa's "second pandemic" will involve close collaboration with Minister Macpherson, ensuring the availability of unoccupied state-owned buildings for GBV shelters. These shelters will meet basic needs such as protection, food, accommodation, and clothing, as well as offer comprehensive support including counselling, skills development, and various therapeutic interventions. Services provided will include life skills training, psychosocial support, play therapy, healing, and restoration programmes.

"Of particular concern is that women, children, persons with disabilities, and the LGBTQIA+ community disproportionately bear the brunt of GBV, often having their rights severely violated. Tragically, women and children frequently lose their lives at the hands of those closest to them. Many GBV cases remain unreported because victims may depend on their perpetrators," Minister Tolashe said.

The collaborative effort by both Ministers aims to ensure that GBV shelters are established in all 52 districts across the country. Currently, 47 districts have been covered, with the remaining five districts yet to receive shelters.

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