



Date: 19 February 2021

Via email: pinkyn@sassa.gov.za, lintonm@dsd.gov.za,

Cc: lintonm@dsd.gov.za

Busisiwe Memela-Khambula
SASSA House
501 Prodinsa Building
Cnr Steve Biko & Pretorius Street
Pretoria

Dear Ms. Memela-Khambula

RE: MUHANGVI MAGRET TSHIKALANGE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Complainant has approached our organization for guidance and support with the sexual harassment case reported to yourself in 2020.

At the outset, it must be stated unequivocally that sexual harassment expresses and reinforces inequalities of power and that power gives authority credibility with the ability to dismiss the words of others. Women who have taken the step of naming their abuse and reporting their abusers, routinely encounter disbelief, trivialization or minimization of their experience or expectations, doubt and undermine their accounts as is the case with what happened to Ms. Tshikalanga.

SASSA as an employer under your stewardship has an obligation to create a culture in which women are treated as equals and there is respect between colleagues, encourage reporting of any form of abuse. Further it is the duty of SASSA to address the allegations with speed and professionalism to avoid secondary victimization of the complainant.

We want to believe that the process being followed in this matter is being handled in line with sexual harassment policy and procedure that obtains in the public service. We wish to iterate that the process should be independent, and objectivity maintained at all times. Once issues of independence and objectivity crop up, the integrity of the process is compromised.

To drive the point further, prevalence and persistence of sexual harassment, together with widespread impunity of perpetrators, manifest a systemic, structural problem linked to broader social, economic and political distributions of power that vest authority, decision making and belief in men. It is not minor or trivial but a grave problem that needs ***serious, knowledgeable and urgent attention.***

We trust that Ms. Tshikalange will receive justice she deserves and that SASSA will continue to support her throughout this ordeal. In the meantime, we request that we be forwarded with the latest SASSA sexual harassment policy for ease of reference.

Sincerely,



Brenda Madumise- Pajibo
Director



Onica N. Makwakwa
Director