

Inputs sought on document to improve film, TV workers' rights

Major improvements are in the pipeline for the rights of workers in the film and television industry.



Image source: Getty Images

The Department of Employment and Labour is urging stakeholders in the industry to make inputs on the Basic Conditions of Employment Act notice, which was issued by Minister Thulas Nxesi in December 2019.

Nxesi issued the notice with the intention of deeming persons in the film and television industry as employees for the purposes of the National Minimum Wage Act and the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act.

The notice, titled 'Intention to Deem Persons in the Film and Television Industry as Employees for Purposes of Some Parts of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and Labour Relations Act', was published in the Government Gazette. It was issued in terms of Section 83(2) of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA).

The notice seeks to afford actors and crew members the same rights as other workers, including sick leave, maternity leave, severance pay, proof of incapacity and compensation claims for occupational accidents/diseases.

Nxesi issued the notice shortly after actress Vatiswa Ndara, in an open letter to Sports, Arts and Culture Minister Nathi Mthethwa, painted a sordid state of affairs in the industry. In the letter, Ndara urged government to take steps to protect industry practitioners from exploitation and underpayment.

In a statement issued on Monday, the Department of Employment and Labour said following the release of the notice, it is inviting parties with an interest in the film and television industry to make written representations.

Comments can be made to:

Chief Director: Labour Relations Directorate,
Department of Employment and Labour,
Private Bag X117,
Pretoria
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“Interested stakeholders will have 60 days to make inputs. The Government Gazette was published on 11 December 2019,” the department said.

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