



FURNITURE BARGAINING COUNCIL

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CIRCULAR 07/23

TO ALL EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE INDUSTRY

1. PRESCRIBED INDUSTRY ANNUAL CLOSURE DATES - DECEMBER 2023 TO JANUARY 2024

In terms of Clause 9.6.1 of Chapter 1 of the prevailing Main Collective Agreement, the Industry's Annual Closure shall be for a period of 15 (fifteen) consecutive working days, between 1 December of each year and 31 January of the following year, or as otherwise prescribed by the Council from time to time.

Establishments in the Industry may therefore in general determine their own annual closure dates between December 2023 and January 2024, subject to the fifteen (15) consecutive working days' requirement.

However, on Tuesday, 19 September 2023, Council has resolved to relax the official minimum annual closing period for 2023/2024, to be at least from the evening of **Friday, 22 December 2023** until the morning of **Tuesday, 2 January 2024**.

An establishment who still elects to close outside the above determined dates and has the support of not less than 75% of its employees who are covered by the Collective Agreement, may apply in writing to the Council for an exemption from the above prescribed annual closure dates. In terms of clause 9.6.3 of Chapter 1 of the prevailing Collective Agreement, such applications must be in writing on the prescribed application form, accompanied by the necessary supporting documentation.

If an establishment closes for a period of less than 15 (fifteen) consecutive days e.g. closes on Friday, 22 December 2023 and re-opens on Tuesday, 2 January 2024 and an employee requests to take the remainder of his/her 15 leave days after re-opening, the employer must grant such leave prior to **Friday, 31 May 2024**.

2. PROVIDENT FUND, LEAVE PAY FUND AND HOLIDAY BONUS FUND STATEMENTS

Provident Fund, Leave Pay Fund and Holiday Bonus Fund statements will be delivered to the establishments from the beginning of **December 2023**.

Establishments are advised to ensure that all employees at their establishments receive their Provident Fund, Leave Pay Fund and Holiday Bonus Fund statements, before each establishment's annual closure date in **December 2023**.

Please be reminded that the employees have the right to receive their annual Provident Fund, Leave Pay Fund and Holiday Bonus Fund statements as soon as possible after such statements have been distributed by Council to the establishments. If any establishment fails to present their employees' individual statements to them, such employees may lodge appropriate complaints with the Council against the employers concerned, in which event those statements and all future statements may be distributed, directly to such members by the area agent.

3. ANNUAL CLOSURE OF THE COUNCIL'S OFFICES – DECEMBER 2023 TO JANUARY 2024

The Council's offices will be closed as from 13:00 on the afternoon of Friday, 22 December 2023 and will re-open at 08:00 on Monday, 8 January 2024.

Any queries that you may have regarding this Circular must be directed to your area agent or the Council's Inspectorate Department. Please do not direct any queries you may have regarding this Circular to any other Council staff members.

18 October 2023