

Employment Law

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In this issue

SOUTH AFRICA

- New asthma compensation regulations: Ensuring adequate treatment for affected workers
- Retirement fund lump sum benefits and severance benefits

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**EMPLOYMENT LAW
ALERT**

New asthma compensation regulations: Ensuring adequate treatment for affected workers

On 7 June 2024, the Minister of Employment and Labour officially promulgated two significant sets of regulations aimed at protecting workers affected by respiratory conditions. These are the Regulations on Irritant-Induced Asthma for the Compensation Fund (Irritant-Induced Regulations) and the Regulations on Work-Agravated Asthma for the Compensation Fund (Work-Agravated Asthma Regulations). These new regulations mark a crucial step forward in ensuring that workers suffering from asthma due to workplace conditions receive appropriate compensation and support from the Compensation Fund. This issue was previously dealt with in various circulars issued by the Director General of the then Department of Labour. Which we refer to below.

The Irritant-Induced Regulations define irritant-induced asthma as a “disease characterised by variable airflow limitation and/or bronchial hyper-responsiveness due to causes and conditions attributable to a particular working environment”. This definition underscores the direct link between the working environment and the onset of asthma symptoms.

Conversely, the Work-Agravated Asthma Regulations define work-aggravated asthma as:

“[A] subset of work-related asthma in patients with pre-existing or concurrent asthma that is worsened, but not caused, by work. The disease is characterised by variable airflow limitation, bronchial hyper-responsiveness, and/or airway inflammation due to causes and conditions not directly related to a particular agent in the working environment.”

This definition highlights that while the asthma is exacerbated by workplace conditions, it is not originally caused by those conditions.

Both sets of regulations emphasise the importance of recognising and compensating for asthmatic conditions influenced by the work environment, whether directly induced or aggravated by workplace factors.

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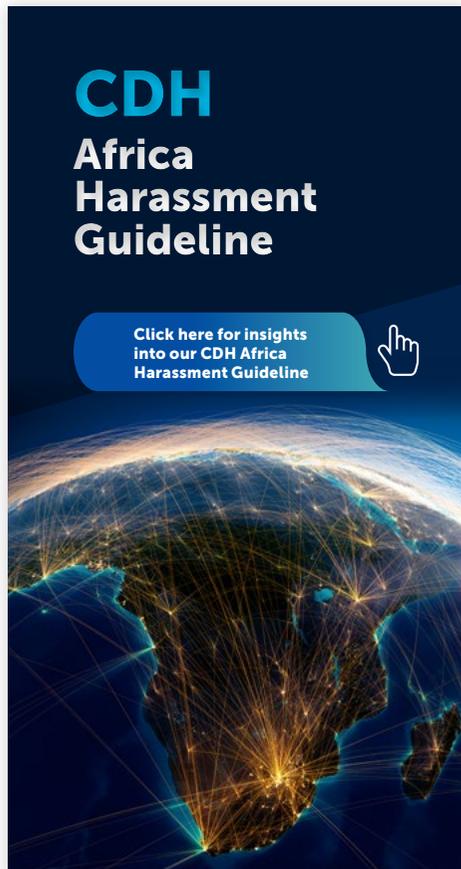
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It is notable that Circular Instruction No. 177, dated 29 April 2003, regarding Compensation for Irritant-Induced Asthma mirrors the definition provided in the Irritant-Induced Regulations.

Circular Instruction No. 184, dated 25 February 2005, regarding Compensation for Work-Related Asthma defines “*work-aggravated asthma*” as “*a disease characterised by variable airflow limitation and/or bronchial hyper-responsiveness due to causes and conditions not directly attributable to any particular agent in the working environment.*” This definition is slightly different but is still consistent with the Work-Aggravated Asthma Regulations.

The Irritant-Induced Regulations and the Work-Aggravated Asthma Regulations replace the respective circulars. The new regulations represent the most current and authoritative guidance on the matter, ensuring that workers receive fair compensation based on the latest international trends.

Fiona Leppan, Kgodisho Phashe and David de Goede



Chambers Global 2024 Results

Employment Law

Chambers Global 2014–2024 ranked our Employment Law practice in:
Band 2: Employment.

Aadil Patel ranked by Chambers Global 2024 in
Band 1: Employment.

Fiona Leppan ranked by Chambers Global 2018–2024 in
Band 2: Employment.

Imraan Mahomed ranked by Chambers Global 2021–2024 in
Band 2: Employment.

Hugo Pienaar ranked by Chambers Global 2014–2024 in
Band 2: Employment.



EMPLOYMENT LAW
ALERTRetirement fund
lump sum benefits
and severance
benefits

The lump sum tax benefits (including severance benefits) due to the termination of employment as a result of reaching the retirement age, sickness, accident, injury, incapacity, redundancy or termination of the employer's trade has been amended as follows:

TAX BENEFITS	
1 – 550,000	0% of taxable income
550,001 – 770,000	18% of taxable income above 550,000
770,001 – 1,155,000	39,600 + 27% of taxable income above 770,000
1,155,001 and above	143,550 + 36% of taxable income above 1,155,000

As part of the tax calculation on a specific lump sum benefit (retirement or severance), any amounts received, and tax paid from October 2007 in respect of retirement benefits or March 2009 in respect of severance benefits will be taken into consideration. For further information and advice please contact us.

Employment Law practice



OUR TEAM

For more information about our Employment Law practice and services in South Africa and Kenya, please contact:



Aadil Patel

Practice Head & Director:
Employment Law
Joint Sector Head:
Government & State-Owned Entities
T +27 (0)11 562 1107
E aadil.patel@cdhlegal.com



Anli Bezuidenhout

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)21 481 6351
E anli.bezuidenhout@cdhlegal.com



Asma Cachalia

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1333
E asma.cachalia@cdhlegal.com



Jose Jorge

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)21 481 6319
E jose.jorge@cdhlegal.com



Fiona Leppan

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1152
E fiona.leppan@cdhlegal.com



Imraan Mahomed

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1459
E imraan.mahomed@cdhlegal.com



Nadeem Mahomed

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1936
E nadeem.mahomed@cdhlegal.com



Yvonne Mkefa

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)21 481 6315
E yvonne.mkefa@cdhlegal.com



Phetheni Nkuna

Director:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1478
E phetheni.nkuna@cdhlegal.com



Desmond Odhiambo

Partner | Kenya
T +254 731 086 649
+254 204 409 918
+254 710 560 114
E desmond.odhiambo@cdhlegal.com



Hugo Pienaar

Sector Head:
Infrastructure, Transport & Logistics
Director: Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1350
E hugo.pienaar@cdhlegal.com



Thabang Rapuleng

Counsel:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1759
E thabang.rapuleng@cdhlegal.com



Njeri Wagacha

Partner | Kenya
T +254 731 086 649
+254 204 409 918
+254 710 560 114
E njeri.wagacha@cdhlegal.com



Mohsina Chenia

Executive Consultant:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1299
E mohsina.chenia@cdhlegal.com



Jean Ewang

Counsel:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1499
E jean.ewang@cdhlegal.com



Ebrahim Patelia

Legal Consultant:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1000
E ebrahim.patel@cdhlegal.com

OUR TEAM

For more information about our Employment Law practice and services in South Africa and Kenya, please contact:



Rizichi Kashero-Ondego

Senior Associate | Kenya
T +254 731 086 649
+254 204 409 918
+254 710 560 114
E rizichi.kashero-ondego@cdhlegal.com



Jordyne Löser

Senior Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1479
E jordyne.loser@cdhlegal.com



Lee Masuku

Senior Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1213
E lee.masuku@cdhlegal.com



Leila Moosa

Senior Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)21 481 6318
E leila.moosa@cdhlegal.com



Christine Mugenyu

Senior Associate | Kenya
T +254 731 086 649
+254 204 409 918
+254 710 560 114
E christine.mugenyu@cdhlegal.com



Kgodisho Phashe

Senior Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1086
E kgodisho.phashe@cdhlegal.com



Taryn York

Senior Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1732
E taryn.york@cdhlegal.com



Lynsey Foot

Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1429
E lynsey.foot@cdhlegal.com



Malesela Letwaba

Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1710
E malesela.letwaba@cdhlegal.com



Biron Madisa

Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1031
E biron.madisa@cdhlegal.com



Thato Maruapula

Associate:
Employment Law
T +27 (0)11 562 1774
E thato.maruapula@cdhlegal.com

BBBEE STATUS: LEVEL ONE CONTRIBUTOR

Our BBBEE verification is one of several components of our transformation strategy and we continue to seek ways of improving it in a meaningful manner.

PLEASE NOTE

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JOHANNESBURG

1 Protea Place, Sandton, Johannesburg, 2196. Private Bag X40, Benmore, 2010, South Africa.

Dx 154 Randburg and Dx 42 Johannesburg.

T +27 (0)11 562 1000 F +27 (0)11 562 1111 E jhb@cdhlegal.com

CAPE TOWN

11 Buitengracht Street, Cape Town, 8001. PO Box 695, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Dx 5 Cape Town.

T +27 (0)21 481 6300 F +27 (0)21 481 6388 E ctn@cdhlegal.com

NAIROBI

Merchant Square, 3rd floor, Block D, Riverside Drive, Nairobi, Kenya. P.O. Box 22602-00505, Nairobi, Kenya.

T +254 731 086 649 | +254 204 409 918 | +254 710 560 114

E cdhkenya@cdhlegal.com

STELLENBOSCH

14 Louw Street, Stellenbosch Central, Stellenbosch, 7600.

T +27 (0)21 481 6400 E cdh Stellenbosch@cdhlegal.com

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