



**INFORMATION
REGULATOR
(SOUTH AFRICA)**

*Ensuring protection of your personal information
and effective access to information*

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MEDIA STATEMENT

INFORMATION REGULATOR TURNS TO THE COURTS TO FINE BLOUBERG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY FOR CONTRAVENTION OF POPIA

29 APRIL 2026

The Information Regulator (Regulator) resorted to seeking the High Court's intervention following the Blouberg Local Municipality's disregard for the Enforcement Notice instructions within the stipulated timeframes. The Regulator welcomes the court order of the Polokwane High Court passed in favour of the Regulator in early April 2026. This follows a complaint that personal information relating to a member of staff was made available on the Municipality's website. The matter concerns the Municipality's obligations as a responsible party under the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA) to ensure that personal information is processed lawfully and in a manner that safeguards the privacy of data subjects (to whom the personal information relates).

After investigating the complaint, the Regulator issued an Enforcement Notice and later an Infringement Notice. Failure by the municipality to comply with both Notices, a Court confirmation in terms of section 109(5) of POPIA was sought, which provides a process for an administrative fine to be made a court order. Although the Municipality took steps to remove the information from its website, the Regulator maintained that enforcement action was necessary to underscore the importance of compliance and to deter future contraventions.

The infringement fine imposed on the Blouberg Local Municipality by the Regulator amounted to R500,000, however, the Judge who considered the section 109(5) statement was of the view that the fine was excessive in the circumstances. As such, the Judge concluded that a fine of R250,000 was more reasonable. The reduction of the fine was due to the following considerations: The personal information of one data subject was affected (as opposed to many data subjects); The Municipality had taken corrective measures to remove the personal information of the complainant from its website; This was the first violation of the Municipality in terms of POPIA.

The Regulator emphasises that compliance with POPIA is a continual requirement for all responsible parties, both public and private bodies, and notes that this matter demonstrates the practical implications that may follow when personal information is unlawfully published or disseminated. The Regulator will continue to use its legislative authorities to promote accountability and safeguard data subjects' privacy rights, and it encourages institutions to improve internal controls, publication procedures, and continuous compliance monitoring to prevent recurring incidents.

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ISSUED BY THE INFORMATION REGULATOR OF SOUTH AFRICA.