



Centre for Applied
Legal Studies

PRESS RELEASE

16 March 2016

VICTORY FOR FREEDOM PARK COMMUNITY

Court orders Gauteng MEC for Housing to provide policies on RDP housing allocation

Freedom Park, an area in southern Johannesburg, is currently undergoing informal settlement upgrading. This forms part of a programme developed by the City of Johannesburg which aims to improve the lives of those living in these settlements by providing formal housing and upgrading their basic services. This process has been underway in Freedom Park since 2002.

By 2014, two portions of land in Freedom Park were still awaiting RDP housing allocation. Until this point, the allocation of RDP housing had been haphazard and many houses were allotted to people unknown to the Freedom Park community. When the community protested, then-MEC Jacob Mamabolo called a meeting and undertook to investigate the situation. He assured the community that no further houses would be allocated until a forensic audit had taken place.

In February 2016, the City of Johannesburg started once again allocating houses despite the undertaking from the former MEC. The community took a number of steps to resolve the situation, including approaching the Mayor's office, the MEC's office and even the Public Protector, before finally contacting the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CAL S) for assistance.

CAL S brought the matter to the South Gauteng High Court, seeking urgent relief for the community. We asked the court to urgently stop the allocation of housing until such time as the MEC's office provides the forensic audit and housing allocation policies. This was made an order of court on 15 March 2016.

"People have been waiting for houses since 1996. This is a step to ensure that housing allocations are done in an open and transparent manner," said Zeenat Sujee, attorney at CAL S.

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