



Communicare Acts to Protect Tenants in Building Hijacking

11 September 2019

Communicare is extremely concerned about the escalating threats and attempts to trespass and hijack several of its properties in Cape Town.

As far as Communicare can establish a group of people have been cutting locks and breaking into Communicare premises in an attempt to hijack buildings. These acts are a serious violation of the law and have been reported to SAPS.

Dennehof and Albatross apartments in Thornton as well as two freestanding houses in Ruyterwacht have been affected in the last three weeks. Vacant units being repaired or waiting for new tenants to move in are being targeted by the group.

Some of those organising these invasions include a few tenants and have already been arrested and appeared in court against charges of obstructing justice as well as contempt of court. In March, the High Court had interdicted them from unlawfully occupying units and from inciting others to do so. Some of the people they had given illegal occupation to have also been interdicted and/or arrested.

In February, the group held an unarmed security guard at gunpoint to obtain keys of vacant units. Last night, the group once again resorted to violence and beat a security guard into submission to obtain keys to a house. Apart from using excessive force, these individuals prey on the severe need for housing in the city and fraudulently claim to own the properties. They claim to be the "Body Corporate" for the complexes concerned, then illegally collect 'rent' from some of those they put into the units. Others taking illegal occupation are their relatives and friends. They have been intimidating and harassing Communicare's legitimate tenants.

The safety of our legal tenants remains our primary concern. Many tenants have young children, are single moms or are elderly. This is why we have implemented stricter security and access control measures in the properties that are under attack by this group.

Criminal cases have been opened at Pinelands and Elsies River SAPS and we expect law enforcement agencies to take the necessary urgent action to protect Communicare and its tenants from these illegal actions. The law must take its course and those found guilty will face the consequences.

"We have a zero tolerance approach to unlawful conduct and take these incidences very seriously. Like any other tenants in the country, there are formal mechanisms in place for tenants to address concerns they have with their landlords. Other tenant leaders are effectively using these forums as well as informal opportunities for constructive engagement with Communicare. We have seen how such building hijackings quickly result in slums in Johannesburg and cannot tolerate the hijacking of our property and threats to the safety of our legitimate tenants." said Anthea Houston CEO of Communicare.

"I am sympathetic to the severe housing backlog in our city but breaking the law is not the way to express frustration," concluded Houston.

We encourage anyone with safety concerns or information to contact our call centre (0800266737) or the anonymous tip-offs line (0800204969). They can also email the call centre at callcentre@goodfindproperties.co.za

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For more information contact:

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