

# BUDGET VOTE 2021

TAKING PARLIAMENT TO THE PEOPLE



**Office of the Premier  
(VOTE 1)**

**Premier: S.H Ntombela**

**DATE: WEDNESDAY, 31 MARCH 2021**  
**VENUE: FRANKFORT, ZOMBA SPORTS GROUND**  
**TIME: 10AM**

**THEME: "GROWING THE FREE STATE TOGETHER  
DURING THE PERIOD OF COVID-19"**



**the premier**

Office of the Premier  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Honourable Speaker of the Legislature

Honourable Deputy Speaker

Honourable Members of the National Assembly

Honourable Members of the Legislature and the Executive Council

Executive Mayors, Mayors and Speakers of Municipalities

Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders and our Traditional Leaders

The Director-General and Heads of Department

Chairpersons of our Public Entities and Chief Executive Officers

Leaders of the African National Congress and the Alliance

Leaders of Faith Based Organisations

Leaders of Civil Society Organisations

Leaders of the Business Community

Comrades, Compatriots and Friends

We dedicate this last day of human rights month to **Charlotte Maxeke**. As we mark **hundred and fifty-years** anniversary of our beloved mother and struggle icon, we want to pay tribute to her courage and determination.

**Charlotte Maxeke** knew that women have the power to change their lives, reimagine the world and rewrite the course of history.

Colonialism was never a deterrent and only served to inspire her fight for equality and freedom for all.

In the face of brutality, repression, discrimination and harassment, **Charlotte Maxeke** was unshaken. She remained true to her principles and the course of freedom.

**Hundred and fifty** years later, we can stand tall as nation and proudly say that significant progress has been made in changing the living conditions of women.

### **Honourable Speaker**

We are presenting this 2021/22 budget of the **Office of the Premier** at time when the country is facing the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has caused economic decline, job losses, business closure and broken families. All this is happening whilst the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality continue.

Our economy has been hit hard by the pandemic and this has put a strain on available government resources. Having to do more with less is now our new reality. These are tough times.



But tough times can only inspire us to do more. Times like these anchor us in the safety of hope where there is none. We fall and rise again to find our strength to fight on.

Making sure that the expectations of our people are fulfilled is the responsibility of the **Office of the Premier**. Our role is to provide strategic direction to the entire **Provincial Government** in pursuit of service delivery excellence in the Free State.

This we do through integrated planning, development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

What ultimately becomes of the vision of **#Building the Free State We Want** is the function of the **Office of the Premier**.

### **Honourable Speaker**

Only when government is capable, ethical, integrated, professional and driven, can a developmental state characterised by service delivery excellence be achieved.

We exist to work for the people, serve their needs and create opportunities for them to prosper in order to fulfill their wishes. That is the privilege that gives us the honour to serve.

Looking forward into the future, the **National Development Plan** priorities that are expressed in the five-year **Medium Term Strategic Framework** will remain the guiding instruments of change, progress and a better life for all in the Free State.

As the **Free State Provincial Government**, we know that our equitable share has been reduced by over **eleven billion rands** over the **Medium Term Expenditure Framework** period.

Decisions about our budget will inspire confidence and overcome our fiscal limitations. Despite challenges, we are committed to deliver on the priorities we have set for ourselves.

We believe words only will never deliver us from the effects of COVID-19. We will do things differently to get different results.

### **Programme 1: Administration**

#### **Honourable Speaker**

The success of our work depends on the provision of the necessary executive support to the **Premier** and the **Executive Council** in fulfilling their legislative and oversight functions.

Underlying the work of **Programme 1** is good governance as the basis for policy decision-making. Work in this regard includes

ensuring effective, efficient and transparent government practices and resource management.

COVID-19 has taught us to create new opportunities as government, adjust our operations and rethink how we do things.

In order to position the Free State to cushion the impact of the pandemic, we created the **Provincial Coronavirus Command Council, Command Centre** and **Provincial Joint Operations Centre** to provide oversight and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure continued government work.

Alongside these, the **Executive Council, Forum of Heads of Department, Clusters** and **Premier's Coordinating Forums** were realigned to provide the requisite strategic direction.

These institutional means were important in forging integrated planning and coordination as the basis for service delivery.

This was possible because we quickly adapted our technology to ensure service delivery never stopped. Despite lockdown challenges, remote working kept us connected.

In the **Office of the Premier**, **fifty** employees tested positive for COVID-19 and all have recovered from this pandemic.

As the COVID-19 fight continues, we pay tribute to the heroes and heroines that succumbed to this disease in the line of duty. Your dedication to the call of duty continues to inspire us.

### **Honourable Speaker**

Our fight against corruption is aggressive and fearless. We will never stand by to see the future of our province destroyed by corruption.

To prevent acts of corruption, we have a **Fraud Prevention and Detection Implementation Plan** and provides anti-corruption assessment reports as per the information received from the **National Anti-Corruption Hotline**.

Efficiency, transparency and accountability of public funds is important for us. We will work with the **Provincial Treasury** and the **Office of the Auditor-General** to move from a qualified audit opinion to an unqualified one. We will lead by example.

We have strengthened capacity in key areas such as Supply Chain Management by appointing qualified personnel.

We will enhance financial oversight through the **Audit Committee** and **Risk and Ethics Management Committee** to

ensure adherence to sound financial management principles and compliance to financial prescripts.

The **Office of the Premier** will ensure these best practises are replicated across all of **Provincial Government** departments. A clean, effective and efficient government will be the norm.

Work will include assessment of financial transactions, in-year financial reporting and compliance with procurement processes.

We will review and determine compliance with **Strategic Internal Audit Plan** and **Risk Management Policy**.

The universal attainment of a clean government in the Free State relies heavily on our ability to make sure these strategies trickle down to municipalities.

Key to our fight against corruption is the consistent implementation of consequence management, without fear or favour. No misappropriation of funds will be tolerated.

Some of our municipalities are in a bad state. We will as the **Office of the Premier** in particular commit to work with all relevant stakeholders to improve the state of local government.



In this financial year, we will reduce the vacancy rate of the **Office of the Premier to 2 percent** and fill all critical **Information and Communication Technology** vacancies.

**Programme 1** has therefore been allocated **eighty-two million, five hundred and eighty-two thousand rands** (R82 582 million) to fulfil its responsibility.

Of this allocation for the 2021/22 financial year, **fifty-five million, seven hundred and thirty-nine thousand rands** (R55 739 million) is for compensation of employees, and **twenty-five million, eight hundred and seventy-five thousand rands** (R25 875 million) for goods and services.

## **Programme 2: Institutional Development**

### **Honourable Speaker**

We need a professional, ethical and responsive government to build a developmental state. This will be the basis of public trust, effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

We will invest in our human resources to enhance our capacity.

Skills development can only mean opportunities, growth and development for the Free State. Skills empower countries and

individuals alike. The **Office of the Premier** is therefore responsible for driving the skills revolution in the province.

Despite COVID-19, **six hundred and eighty** officials benefited from **fifty-nine** courses offered by the **Free State Training and Development Institute**.

More commendable is that the **Institute** together with the **Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority** successfully trained **hundred and fifty-seven** officials in **Change Management Skills Programme**.

Funding for **hundred and twenty** officials to undergo the **Recognition of Prior Learning Public Administration NQF Level 5** and another **three hundred** to be considered for **Public Administration NQF Level 6** has been secured.

With funding provided to **one thousand and twenty-one** students studying various courses nationally and **three hundred and three** internationally, the scope of our training goes beyond the confines of the **Free State Provincial Government**.

An amount of **two hundred and thirty-eight million, seven hundred and five thousand rands** (R238 705 million) has been allocated for this purpose.

In the past financial year, **fifty-five** international and **hundred and nine** local students successfully completed their studies.

**Forty-two** students were studying in China and **thirteen** in Portugal.

This is evidence of our commitment to provide scarce skills for the growth and development of the Free State. Resilient economies and development are built on strong skills foundation.

Working with the **SETAs**, the **Office of the Premier** continues to provide work experiences to qualified youth through apprenticeships, graduate internships, learnerships, short skills programmes and work integrated learning methods.

In total, **three thousand and sixty-seven** learners benefitted from different **Skill Development Programmes** at a cost of **one hundred and nine million, seven hundred and eighty-one thousand rands** (R 109 781 million).

We will continue to provide skills training to young people in all the districts, particularly in small towns. We have already started in Luckhoff and Smithfield in Xhariep.

In this financial year, a **Youth Advisory Team** will be established to ensure that all sectors of young people are incorporated into the **Free State Provincial Government's** agenda of **#Building the Free State We Want**.

We are working with the **Department of Public Service and Administration** to develop a generic structure for the **Offices of Premiers**, which will include the establishment of the **Youth Directorate**.

Oversight of the **Youth Development Forum** composed of all district and local municipalities **Youth Development Officers** will be strengthened to ensure that services and opportunities are available to the youth of the province.

### **Honourable Speaker**

We will create a thriving environment through the development of quality human resources management to ensure our officials unleash their potential.



One of the pillars for a modern and efficient government is the rapid adoption of technology. The **4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution** promises to drive development, efficiency and effectiveness.

In this financial year, we will invest in improving our government **Information and Communication Technology** infrastructure and complete processes for the establishment the **Free State ICT Security Centre** to protect our information and create new skills set to propel the province into the future.

Voices of the people in shaping decisions that affect their lives is important for us. People need information. A developmental government communication machinery enables us to co-create government in consultation with the people. Communication in the **Office of the Premier** will drastically change.

In order to ensure government messages reach every corner of this province, we will undertake a bulk media buying exercise across all traditional and digital media.

**Re tla tswela pele ho fepa setjhaba ka tsebo.**

For these functions, **Programme 2** is allocated **three hundred forty-seven million, five hundred and fifty-five thousand rands** (R347555 million).

**Eighty-three million, seven hundred and sixty-five thousand rands** (R83765 million) is for compensation of employees and **twenty-two million, seven hundred and ninety-three thousand rands** (R22793 million) is for good and services.

### **Programme 3: Policy and Governance**

#### **Honourable Speaker**

Our success rests on a common approach, collective action to common problems. Our activities, resources, plans and approaches should be coherent.

Long-term growth and development is facilitated through departmental integrated coordination of the implementation of the **National Development Plan** and the **Medium Term Strategic Development Framework** priorities.

Like the **National Development Plan**, we will this financial year review the **Free State Growth and Development Strategy** to better respond to interdependent complex challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequalities in the province.

Most importantly, with regard to policy and governance, working with the **Department of Cooperative Governance and**

**Traditional Affairs**, the **Office of the Premier** will oversee the effective implementation of the **District Development Model**.

The **Model** is a practical framework for integrated planning and cooperation between the three spheres of government.

So far we have developed the districts profiles that will inform the contents of the ***One Plan*** for the districts.

The **District Development Model** political champions consisting of **Members of the Executive Council, Ministers** and **Deputy Ministers** have been nominated and continue to have engagements in their allocated districts in the province.

### **Honourable Speaker**

We know that our ability as the **Provincial Government** to respond to our development challenges depends on our capability to identify and implement major infrastructure projects.

The **Office of the Premier** will therefore together with **Provincial Government** departments, municipalities, **Infrastructure South Africa** and various stakeholders facilitate integrated provincial infrastructure projects coordination.

Already, I have appointed a provincial **Infrastructure Task Team** to coordinate and facilitate the identification and implementation of infrastructure projects to develop the province.

The **Premier's Co-ordinating Council** will be used as a platform for integrated planning coherence between the three spheres of government. Focus will be on integrated service delivery coordination and implementation.

### **Honourable Speaker**

We reject any form of gender-based violence. Our **Gender-Based Violence Coordinators** are working with various stakeholders in each district to complement our efforts in fighting gender-based violence. We are following up on all reported cases to ensure that all these cases are concluded.

We have created a **Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Technical Committee** to drive the implementation of the **National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide 2020/2030**.

The **Provincial Council on Gender-Based Violence** will oversee the implementation of the **Provincial Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide**.



In the past financial year, we hosted the **Provincial Council on AIDS** elective conference, a **Traditional Leaders Dialogue** on **LGBTI** community and the **World Aids Day**.

The **Provincial Council on AIDS** activities that entail the provision of training and awareness campaigns will continue.

We are monitoring access to government services for persons with disabilities and the older persons.

We welcome the example set by the **Department of Social Development** in employing more persons with disabilities and providing them with modified vehicles to perform their functions.

Education and housing support, including employment and economic opportunities were provided to military veterans.

The **Office of the Premier** will conclude a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the **Department of Military Veterans** to expedite the provision of benefits for military veterans.

We commit to engage structures representing military veterans.

**Eighty-six million, one hundred and eighty-four thousand rands** (R86 184 million) has been made available for **Programme 3** to effectively perform its responsibilities.

**Forty-five million, three hundred and ninety-eight thousand rands** (R45 398 million) is for compensation of employees and **thirty-eight million, one hundred and sixteen thousand rands** (R38 116million) for goods and services.

#### **Programme 4: Provincial Monitoring and Evaluation**

##### **Honourable Speaker**

**Programme 4** provides monitoring and evaluation of government interventions and institutional performance. This is important for effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

As the **Provincial Government**, we can only achieve what we can measure. Focus will be on results-based monitoring and evaluation that connect government priorities and outcomes.

There was emphasis on the **Medium Term Strategic Framework** as the implementation plan and monitoring framework of the **National Development Plan**.

Quarterly progress reports for the **seven** priorities of the **Medium Term Strategic Framework** were developed to determine implementation of set priorities. This work will continue.

This allows for early detection of poor performance and timely action by the **Office of the Premier** where necessary.



An annual implementation report of the **State of the Province Address** and **Budget Votes** commitments was completed.

Verification of the commitments by the **Provincial Government** departments will be done on a continuous basis so that intervention is done on time. Our **Monitoring and Evaluation** component will double its efforts in this regard.

We equally embarked on a processes to physically verify the **Budget Votes** commitments made by departments.

We are aware that consistent monitoring and evaluation remains a dark spot in our administration. More needs to be done to ensure we hold our end of the compact with the people.

In this financial year, we will enhance our consequence management regime to deal with incompetence.

We strengthened our frontline service delivery monitoring to improve the way services are offered to our communities.

Currently, we are compiling an annual report on the status of frontline facilities, and as I have said earlier, we shall pay special attention to this, including the borders with Lesotho.

**Honourable Speaker**

Institutional capacity improvement plans were developed for departments to improve their management practices.

Equally, assessment of human resource management practices was done and the report is now being finalised.

Connected with this work is continuous analysis of the quarterly performance reports of **Provincial Government** departments to determine their performance against the pre-determined objectives set out in their **Annual Performance Plans**.

Support was rendered to **Portfolio Committees** of the **Legislature** responsible for oversight on non-financial performance information. This included an analysis of the current financial year **Annual Performance Plans** of departments.

We can never be happy with the poor quality of service delivery. We know our people deserve better and that is why there is a **Presidential Hotline** to attend to their problems.

How serious we are in addressing people's concerns is evident in the number of cases resolved through the **Presidential Hotline**. Cases rose from **87 percent** in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of this financial year to **93 percent** in the third quarter.



More than **twenty-seven thousand** people received services from our **Thusong Service Centres**.

The **Boitumelo Centre** distributed **twenty-seven** wheelchairs in Hertzogville in partnership with the municipality.

Dignity packs were also made available to **seven thousand** female learners and **one thousand, eight hundred and fifty** food parcels were delivered in **sixteen** towns in the province.

As we continue with our work, more emphasis will be on enhancing an integrated approach to service delivery.

This is about the value we place in the people, our institutions and approaches that shapes our democracy.

The **Community Development Workers** remain an important part of our service delivery machinery. They continue to play a critical advocacy role in the fight against COVID-19, including facilitating access to government information and services.

We will equally improve the functioning and management of **Community Development Workers Programme**.

**Programme 4** has been allocated **one hundred and forty-six million, three hundred and fifty-four thousand rands** (R146 354 million) to fulfil its responsibilities.

Provision for compensation of employees is **one hundred and thirty-nine million, three hundred and four thousand rands** (R139 304 million). **Six million, seven hundred and thirteen thousand rands** (R6 713 million) is for goods and services.

## Conclusion

### Honourable Speaker

Even through the tough times of COVID-19, work of the **Office of the Premier** continued. This will not stop. We will work even harder to achieve the priorities we have set for ourselves.

I want to thank the **Director-General** for effortlessly steering the ship through the COVID-19 storm. Your hard work is inspiring.

My gratitude also goes to all officials of the **Office of the Premier** for their hard work. Your dedication is highly appreciated.

I hereby table the budget of the **Office of the Premier** for the 2021/22 financial year for consideration by the **House**.

**I thank you**