

S. Africa labour court okays traditional healer's 'sick note'

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A labour appeals court in South Africa has validated a "medical certificate" written by a traditional healer, the Sunday Times reported.

After being denied unpaid leave by her Pretoria employer in 2007, Johanna Mmoledi had produced a note from a traditional healer stating somewhat cryptically that she had been "diagnosed with a perminisions of ancestors".

According to court proceedings, she left her job for a month to follow a course by a sangoma—or traditional healer—who helped her appease the "wrath of her ancestors".

The [appeals court](#) ruled that her dismissal was "substantively unfair" and argued that South Africa was a multi-cultural society where traditional forms of healing should be recognised.

"Companies cannot only accept certificates from [medical doctors](#) when we live in a diversified society," Black Business Council president Ndaba Ntsele said, reacting to the ruling.

Speaking to the Sunday Times, labour law expert Tony Healy however voiced surprise that the certificate was validated when South Africa has no [legal framework](#) for sangomas' activities.

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