



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



KZN DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROTOCOLS ON COVID-19

PROTOCOLS

The Department of Social Development has a legal obligation in accordance with Internal Security policy and Section 8, of the Occupation Health and Safety Act (OHSA), 1993 as amended to where reasonable practicable, provide and maintain a safe, healthy work environment that is without risk to employees due to the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus also known as COVID-19 has spread to many countries across all continents affecting a number of people.

As new infections grow at a record level the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared it a pandemic. In response the South African government, through President Cyril Ramaphosa, has declared a National Emergency Disaster in line with the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2002. The Department has decided to develop the protocols that will assist to minimize contact and spread of infection virus in the working premises.

1. WHAT IS CORONAVIRUSES

Coronaviruses are a large family virus which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold or sever diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The mostly recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

2. WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

3. WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Dry cough
- Body aches and pain
- Nasal congestion
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but do not develop any symptoms and do not feel unwell. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention immediately.

4. HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?

The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneeze and exhales. These droplets land on object and surface around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these object or surface, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who cough out or exhales droplets. Therefore, it is important to stay more than one point five meters (1.5m) away from a person who is sick.

Emergence Services	Telephone number	Toll free number
COVID-19 hotline	080 002 9999	080 002 9999
COVID-19 WhatsApp Number	060 012 3456	
Emergency Management Services (24 hour services) Ambulance Disaster Management Fire Department		10177

5. SAFETY MEASURES

The following procedures shall be followed at all points of entry and exit of the premises:

- 5.1** All employees shall wear their name tags at all times so they do not sign the access control register to prevent the cross infection of COVID-19.
- 5.2** All employees who enter the working premises using their private/ State vehicles shall not sign the register instead security officers will complete all the information required instead of signature, security officers will record all the details.
- 5.3** All visitors who come to visit employees on personal level shall be attended outside of the office.
- 5.4** The bio-matric system which is used in some of the entrances shall be disabled to prevent cross infection of COVID-19.
- 5.5** Sanitizers with 70% alcohol based shall be provided to all Social Development Department facilities and offices at entrance/exit points.
- 5.6** All employees and clients who visit our facility must wear face mask that covers mouth and nose at all-time.
- 5.7** No person will be allowed to enter the premises without a face mask.
- 5.8** EPWP or cleaners must disinfect doors, lifts, counters, kitchen counters, toilets, offices and boardrooms at least three times a day.
- 5.10** Employees shall wash their hands regularly using soap and water.

- 5.11 Employees shall use sanitizers when they enter or exit the building.
- 5.12 Employees shall avoid physical contact at all costs.
- 5.13 It is advisable that where there is overcrowding in the offices rotation system must be implemented.
- 5.14 Employees shall not share food and utensils.
- 5.15 Ensure use of well-ventilated office spaces of gatherings and maintain social distance (1,5m apart) as per WHO amendment.

6. PROVISION OF PPES

- 6.1 The Department shall provide 70% alcohol based sanitizers at all strategic points.
- 6.2 Each employee shall be provided with a face mask, hand sanitizers, gloves and face shields;
- 6.3 EPWP cleaning personnel shall be provided with 70% alcohol hand sanitizers, gloves and masks;
- 6.4 All ablution facilities of the Department shall have soap dispenser, hand paper towels, hand dryer, automated foam toilet cleaner
- 6.5 EPWP cleaning personnel shall be provided with goggles, face masks, disposable overalls, gloves when sanitizing offices.

7. SCREENING OF OFFICIALS AND VISITORS

- 7.1 All employees of the Department shall be screened by the security personnel before entering the premises of the Department.
- 7.2 A suspected case or positive case should be isolated and immediately contact a nearby Department of Health who has a capacity of dealing with such cases or referred to his or her doctor.
- 7.3 Employees/s who present signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during Screening shall not be allowed to enter premises, they will be referred to Health facilities.
- 7.4 All clients visiting the department shall be screened by the security personnel before entering the premises of the department.
- 7.5 Clients/s who present signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during screening will not be allowed to enter the premises, they will be referred to Health facilities.

8. CONVENING MEETINGS

- 8.1 Meeting should be done through Microsoft teams.
- 8.2 All internal meetings should maintain a social distancing which 2- M meter apart when attending the meeting.
- 8.3 Informal internal movement of officials to other offices should be restricted.

- 8.4 As per DPSA circular number 07 of 2022 leave period should be provided to all officials presenting COVID-19 symptoms and should be provided with necessary working tools to work from home.
- 8.5 All incidents should be reported to the supervisor before the end of the shift.
- 8.6 Any suspected employees who may present sign of COVID-19 at the working environment must notify supervisor and contact Department of Health for further tracing of contacts and conduct testing and screening.
- 8.7 Compensation for injury and Occupation Diseases Act 130 of 1993 labour guide and DPSA Circular 18 2020 should be followed when reporting a suspected case from work.

9. SELF ISOLATION / QUARANTINE OR MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 +CASES

- 9.1 Isolation period for the person who has tested positive for COVID-19 is about 10 days starting from the day he/she get tested.
- 9.2 Quarantine period for COVID-19 close contact is about 6 to 7 days, starting from the last day of contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- 9.3 After 6 to 7 days in quarantine monitoring yourself if there are any signs and symptoms developing, if there are signs immediately seek medical help or get tested for COVID-19, if there are no signs during quarantine period it may mean that you are not infected.
- 9.4 Employees displaying symptoms of COVID-19 as a result of contact with a positive case, as a precautionary measure, must be placed on isolation and be granted a special leave in line with leave policy whilst waiting for the results once confirmed as positive special leave be converted into sick leave.

10. Conditions for employee granted special leave.

Employee granted sick leave for COVID-19 are required to:

Stay at home for the duration of the period certified by the medical professional until advised that the risk of spreading the virus to others has subsided; and avoid contact with other people to help prevent the spread of disease in their homes and community, particularly people at high risk of severe illness outcomes such as older people or medically vulnerable people.

11. Eligibility Criteria for Remote Work

- 11.1 Employees with underlying conditions (comorbidities) and considered as vulnerable to COVID-19 which including employees over the age of 60 should be encouraged to work remotely to contain the spread of virus and ensure the safety of other fellow employees.
- 11.2 Employees with comorbidities must submit relevant documentation in this regard as evidence to their supervisors to advise their Human Resources for proper management.

- 11.3 The employer as soon as possible should make necessary arrangement and provide working tools to employees identified to work remotely. Although employees affected will be working from home, they may also be required from time to time to attend the workplace, to among others, receive instructions, documentation, access office infrastructure and to submit completed work.

12. OBSERVATION ROOM

- 12.1 Equipped isolation room shall be provided to all Social Development facilities, where persons present symptoms of COVID-19.
- 12.2 The Department shall be in consultation with the Department of Health in respect to necessary equipment for the full observation.
- 12.3 Appointed nurses or personnel or volunteers to manage the observation room shall be trained by the Department of Health on how to deal with suspected case of the virus, including guidance on the referral and transportation of these employees.
- 12.4 Appointed personnel shall be only personnel granted access to the observation room.
- 12.5 Personal hygiene must be maintained all time, hand washing procedure and wearing of mask and gloves when dealing with suspected case.

13. WASTE GENERATED FROM RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES/OFFICES

- 13.1 All waste generated including masks, gloves, paper towels, etc. shall be treated as health care general waste as per SANS 10248-1:2008.
- 13.2 The waste shall be placed in plastic rubbish bags and tied when full.
- 13.3 These plastics rubbish bags shall be placed with the normal health care waste generated for collection, removal, transportation and disposal by the relevant municipality.
- 13.4 If health screening measures are exercised at workplace/ offices, all waste generated shall be treated as health care risk waste as per SANS 10248-1:2008.
- 13.5 Proper hand hygiene practices must be performed/observed during and after the removal of the waste.

14. HEALTH CARE RISK WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 14.1** Health care waste generated from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths, tissues, gloves, masks, etc.) shall be regarded as health care risk waste and placed in a red liner and tied when full.
- 14.2** The red liner shall then be placed in a second red liner and tied.
- 14.3** It shall be placed in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test result are known.
- 14.4** Health care waste produced shall be placed in the suspected or patients room awaiting collection.
- 14.5** One should **NOT** place the waste in communal waste areas.
- 14.6** If the individual test is negative, the waste shall be handled as normal health care risk waste (infectious waste) instead of isolation waste.
- 14.7** If the individual test is positive, then the waste shall be handled as isolation waste.
- 14.8** Provincial/District Health Office or Municipal Environment Health Practitioners (EHPs) shall arrange for collection of the waste.
- 14.9** The health care core worker (designated community health worker or other any health personnel) shall collect and transport the waste to the nearest public health facility for collection by the appointed or contracted service provider prior to treatment and disposal.
- 14.10** Proper hand hygiene practices must be performed/ observed during and after the removal of the waste.

15 CLOSURE OF A UNIT /COMPONENT/OFFICE/DEPARTMENT IF EMPLOYEE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19.

- 15.1** The following procedure shall be followed should and employee tested positive for COVID-19.
- 15.2** Manager of the unit must report the incident to District Director, Chief Director, DDG, HOD, OHS for statistics capturing and Department of Health.
- 15.3** It is the duty of the employee to report to his or her immediate supervisor if he or she tested positive for COVID-19 to prevent the spread of virus.
- 15.4** The Department must contact the relevant public health officials to discuss the case, identify who have been exposed and advised on any actions or precautions that should be taken.

- 15.5** An assessment of the unit/component/office will be conducted by Public Health and OHS Specialist and advised on the Management of the occurrence based on this assessment.
- 15.6** The assessment decision to close a unit/component/office in the Department is the prerogative of the Head of Department and will be based on the advice of an OHS and Public Health Officials.
- 15.7** The closure of the unit/ component/office must be considered with due regard to extent of the exposure and its implications on health and safety including service delivery needs of the Department.
- 15.8** The closure of the unit/component/office for deep cleaning or sanitization must be conducted with immediate effect this process may take only two days then re-open the offices or unit.

References: World Health Organization, 2020 DPSA Circulars and COVID-19 National guidelines from Department of health.



Mrs. N.I Vilakazi

Head of Department

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