



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

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INSTRUCTION NOTE 53

**TO: ALL DDGs
ALL SMS MEMBERS
ALL OFFICE BASED EMPLOYEES AND PSA EMPLOYEES IN SCHOOLS
ALL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
ALL SGB ASSOCIATIONS
ORGANISED LABOUR**

FROM: ACTING SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL

DATE: 27 JANUARY 2021

**RE: COVID-19 MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE UNDER
LOCKDOWN ALERT LEVEL 3 – RETURN BACK TO WORK
ARRANGEMENTS FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2021**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Instruction Note should be read in conjunction with DPSA Circular 1 of 2021, the Eastern Cape DG Circular dated 20 January 2021 and all COVID-19 regulations.
- 1.2 The resurgence of COVID 19 which resulted in the drastic increase in COVID-19 infections and deaths has necessitated the country to move from Alert Level 1 Lockdown to Adjusted Alert Level 3.
- 1.3 All our managers and employees have a responsibility to protect each other from being infected with COVID-19.
- 1.4 All COVID-19 essentials and protocols must be observed at all times.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this Instruction Note is to outline the return to work arrangements for office based employees from 1 February 2021 onwards in line with DPSA Circular 1 of 2021 and the Provincial Circular by the DG dated 20 January 2021.
- 2.2 To request the Chief Directors and Directors to ensure that employees returning to work are received in an environment that is compliant with COVID-19 health and safety precautionary measures in particular observation of social distance, wearing of masks, regular use of sanitizer, and washing of hands.
- 2.3 To give guidance on the number of office based employees that must be at the workplace at any given time.
- 2.4 To give guidance on the management of employees with comorbidities.

3. RETURN TO WORK ARRANGEMENTS.

- 3.1 From 1 February 2021 the occupancy rate at the workplace should be reduced to 50% at any given time and in doing so remote, rotational and shift working arrangements should be considered.
- 3.2 Chief Directors and Directors must develop schedules on remote work and rotation and such should be on a weekly basis.
- 3.3 Where employees have to work remotely, a remote working arrangement should be in place in order to manage accountability, performance and liabilities.
- 3.4 There must be clear deliverables that the manager and employee agree to which can be tract and accounted for.
- 3.5 Chief Directors and Directors must ensure that service delivery continues without interruption during this period whilst at the same time avoiding the spread of COVID-19.
- 3.6 Members of the Senior Management Service (SMS) are to be in office at least three days a week to provide leadership and direction.
- 3.7 All employees must adhere to the agreed to working arrangements as failure to do so without reason and authorization may lead to consequence management being applied.
- 3.8 Managers have a responsibility to provide for tools for remote work.

4 MANAGING EMPLOYEES WITH COMORBIDITIES

- 4.1 Employees with comorbidities must present to the unit Director, Section Head (in case of districts) or School Principal a medical report from a treating doctor which medical report must not be older than 30 day.
- 4.2 The responsible managers mentioned in 4.1 above and the relevant employee must agree on how such underlying medical condition shall be accommodated whilst taking into consideration the operational requirements of the workplace.
- 4.3 The agreement must be clear on whether the employee will work from home or there would be special arrangements to be made to accommodate the health and safety concerns of the employee.
- 4.4 The Director/Section Head/Principal must in front of the employee complete the Individual Risk Assessment form for vulnerable employees which is attached hereto.
- 4.5 Both the manager and the employee must sign the individual risk assessment form for vulnerable employees.
- 4.6 The option agreed to between the employee and the manager will be effective immediately the medical report is submitted and the risk assessment form has been signed.
- 4.7 Directors are implored to immediately attend to the applications and if a Director is not available, the relevant Chief Director is hereby empowered to do as the Director could have done.
- 4.8 No employee should be frustrated due to the unavailability of the Director or Chief Director.
- 4.9 Where the agreement is for remote work a remote working arrangement should be in place in order to manage accountability, performance and liabilities and failure thereto could result into consequence management.
- 4.10 Managers have a responsibility to provide for tools for remote work.

5. LEAVE MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The application of the leave policy as previously covered in Circular 7 of 2020 and Circular 11 of 2020, read with the provisions in the Determination and Directive of Leave remain applicable for all categories of employee.

6. KEEPING OF INFORMATION

6.1 Each Chief Director and each District Director must submit a return-to-work schedule arrangement on 1 February 2021 to the Wellness Coordinator at Head Office, using the following email addresses:

Ms. Kunene nobukhosi.kunene@ecdoe.gov.za
Ms. Makongolo bongiwe.makongolo@ecdoe.gov.za

NB: It is important for Directors and Chief Directors to ensure that the contents of this Instruction note are communicated to all employees and implemented accordingly.

Thank you,



27/01/2021

R Tywakadi.
Acting Superintendent General

Date