



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

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ALL HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

**SUBJECT : MEASURES TO MINIMIZE THE SPREAD OF THE
CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS IN THE EASTERN CAPE
PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION DURING NATIONAL
LOCKDOWN ALERT LEVEL 1**

1. At its meeting held on 25 November 2020, the Executive Council considered and deliberated extensively on the report presented by the PDOC on the latest trends in the resurgence of the coronavirus cases.
2. An integral part of the PDOC report was the devastating impact of Covid-19 on government business continuity. This is evidenced by the increased rate of infection and death amongst public servants, especially in the hotspot areas; the common occurrence of closure and decontamination of offices; and the high levels of disruption of public service due to employees being either on isolation or quarantine.
3. The Executive Council resolved that:
 - 3.1 Until further notice events organised by the Provincial Government must be virtual approach, including programmes that have already been approved for roll out such as the World Aids Day.
 - 3.2 The Director-General should urgently conduct an assessment of the gravity of the situation and then provide guidance to the Provincial Administration based on the identified risks.
4. As you are aware, Alert Level 1 came into effect on 21 September 2020 and amended Regulations were issued in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No.57 of 2002).



5. Unfortunately the Province of the Eastern Cape has seen an unprecedented increase in new cases of COVID-19 with Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality and Sarah Baartman District Municipality being the hotspots at present. At the same time, there is a definite increase in cases in the rest of the Province as well, especially in Buffalo City Metro and Amathole District Municipality.
6. The current situation requires us to (a) exercise utmost caution and observe the Regulations with extra care and diligence; and (b) institute additional measures to contain and suppress the resurgence.
7. The high risk of transmission of COVID-19 during gatherings is widely known but as we enter the festive season, we may be tempted to take unnecessary risks. Regulation 69 makes specific determinations in this regard and it is important that we remind ourselves of the general principles as well as those which specifically apply to gatherings at the workplace:
 - Wearing of face masks, adherence to all health protocols and maintaining a distance of at least one and a half metres from each other remain compulsory.
 - The certificate of occupancy which sets out the maximum number of persons that the facility may hold must be displayed at indoor and outdoor facilities.
 - Although gatherings at faith-based institutions and other public events are allowed under certain conditions, I would sincerely like to request Provincial Departments not to arrange such physical/contact gatherings (for example, memorial services) until the surge of new COVID-19 cases in the Province has passed. There is a real risk that entire Departments may be incapacitated if such gatherings turn into “super-spreader” events.
 - In the same vein as above, I would like to request that Departments likewise do not arrange or sponsor social events and gatherings for recreational purposes or sporting activities which carry similar risks. Inviting celebrities to events is likely to attract large crowds. This is certainly not desirable under the current circumstances and thus should not be entertained.



- Even though gatherings at the workplace for work purposes are allowed, due to the high risk of transmission in the Province it is preferable that Departments conduct meetings (especially larger staff meetings, workshops and conferences) virtually. Departments are thus discouraged from organizing and holding physical/contact meetings, workshops and conferences during the present surge.
8. Whilst appreciating that most employees have returned to offices since the beginning of national lockdown Alert Level 1, in view of the current surge in coronavirus cases, Departments are advised to:
- Ensure that employees with comorbidities and other underlying conditions continue to work remotely;
 - Ensure that whilst balancing with the need to optimize programme performance, until further notice, at any given time, the number of employees in shared office spaces must not exceed fifty percent (50%)
 - Institute measures to ensure that employees working remotely are administratively and performance managed so as not to compromise service delivery.
9. It is appreciated that the above measures are not ideal but the sacrifices which we make now are small in comparison to the benefits which employees and the recipients of our services at large will enjoy if we fight this pandemic successfully.

Kind regards,



MBULELO SOGONI (MR)

DIRECTOR GENERAL

27 November 2020

Cc 1. Premier
2. Members of the Executive Council

