Best Practice Guidelines for Citrus Industry Workplaces during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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STOP COVID-19

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In January 2020, the world became aware of a viral disease that had transferred from animal hosts to human hosts and had acquired the ability to transmit from human to human. Although the original outbreak occurred in the Wuhan province of China, the disease soon spread to more than 100 countries around the globe. The disease was named Covid-19 (**Co**rona**vi**rus **d**isease 20**19**). On the 11th of March the World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 to be a global pandemic, and a travel ban was announced in South Africa, with a warning that South Africans should practise physical distancing and personal hygiene to avoid transmission. Schools were also closed and public meetings were limited in size. On the 23rd of March, a lockdown was announced for South Africa, which came into effect at midnight on the 26th of March. Businesses involved in food production and distribution, and businesses providing critical goods and services to those in the food production supply chain, were excluded from the lockdown, although certain regulations were put in place to protect people involved in those business operations.

There are two reasons to implement protective measures in citrus industry workplaces: firstly, and most importantly, to protect the people in the workplace – if there were to be an outbreak of this disease in a nursery, on a farm, or in a packhouse, the health of the people and operations of the business would be jeopardised; and secondly, to comply with legislation, regulations and directives that have been issued by the South African government.

This document aims to provide information and recommendations for best practice to workplaces in the citrus industry. The document draws information from a wide range of sources, and it reflects what is considered to be best practice in the local conditions. It furthermore aims to provide guidance and recommendations that are not only applicable during certain periods, such as during a lockdown, but that will be helpful for the entire period that Covid-19 remains a risk.

Please Note!

On the 28th of April 2020, the Department of Employment and Labour issued the **COVID-19 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES IN WORKPLACES COVID-19 (C19 OHS), 2020** directive. All workplaces (with the exception of those excluded from the Occupational Health and Safety Act and medical and health care services) have to comply with this directive, irrespective of the nature of its operations, and whether it qualifies as an essential service. The number of employees of the organisation also does not significantly impact on its obligation to comply with the directive, although there are a few measures that apply in particular to very large and very small organisations. The content of this directive has been included in these guidelines in the appropriate sections by inserting the relevant section of the directive in a text box. The full directive is attached to these guidelines.

C19 OHS

42.   An inspector designated in terms of section 28 of OHSA may perform any of the functions in section 29 of OHSA and exercise any of the powers listed in section 30 of OHSA in order to monitor compliance with this Directive.

43.   In so far as any contravention of this Directive constitutes a contravention of an obligation or prohibition under OHSA, the offences and penalties provided for in section 38 of OHSA apply.

44.   An inspector, contemplated in clause 42, may for the purpose of promoting, monitoring and enforcing compliance with the OHSA, advise employees and employers of their rights and obligations in terms of this Directive in accordance with section 64 of the BCEA.

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1. What you need to know about Covid-19

It should be noted that the medical and scientific community around the world are still learning about Covid-19 and that there is still a lot of details that are not known or that are, at present, mere speculation. There is also a large amount of inaccurate and fake news going around. The facts about Covid-19 and that we currently know and relevant are:

➢ Covid-19 is a serious type of flu caused by a coronavirus.

➢ The virus is transmitted person-to-person via respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

➢ Apart from being directly infected by the droplets, a healthy person can also be infected when the virus settles on surfaces from where it can transfer to their hands and infect them when they touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

➢ Symptoms of the disease are a dry cough, a sore throat, slight fever, and shortness of breath.

➢ Additional symptoms may include redness of eyes, body aches, loss of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and fatigue.

➢ On average it takes five to six days from when someone is infected until they show symptoms, however it can take up to 14 days.

➢ Approximately 82% of cases will present with only mild symptoms, and patients will recover within two weeks after which they will no longer be contagious and will have some immunity to the disease.

➢ Approximately 6% of cases will develop severe pneumonia and require intensive care treatment, often with assisted breathing.

➢ The mortality rate is currently estimated to be 0.5% to 0.9% overall of those infected, although this is highly contentious.

➢ Any person of any age can be infected by the disease, but older people are more likely to develop severe illnesses. The only group in which severe cases seem not to emerge is healthy persons under the age of 14.

➢ The disease is more likely to be severe and even fatal for the following:

     o Persons over the age of 80 (although it should be noted that the severity increase with age, starting with those over the age of 60);

     o Smokers;

     o Persons with compromised immune systems (due to for instance HIV/AIDS and cancer); and

     o Persons with comorbidities, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, chronic respiratory disease and hypertension.

➢ Healthy, fit individuals are more likely to develop only mild symptoms and to recover quickly.

➢ The virus is denatured by strong sunlight, soap and water, and most disinfectants.

➢ Studies have shown that the Covid-19 virus can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper and less than 24 hours on cardboard. Surfaces can however be cleaned with common household disinfectants which will kill the virus.

➢ There is currently no antiviral treatment or vaccination against Covid-19, but there are a number of trials that are being conducted worldwide. It is estimated that an antiviral treatment could be available in the last quarter of 2020, and a vaccination in the second half of 2021.

➢ Covid-19 will be more prevalent in the winter months, as is the case with other flu-like diseases.

➢ **The transmission of the disease can be prevented by:**

✓ **Washing hands regularly with soap or using an appropriate hand sanitiser (see list under 5.1).** (Please note that ordinary soap works well enough as long as hands are washed for long enough (more than 20 seconds), and that anti-bacterial hand wash soap is no more effective against viral contamination. Washing hands properly and for long enough with soap and water is also more effective than using hand sanitiser.)
✓ **Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
✓ **Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.**
✓ **Coughing or sneezing into a flexed elbow or covering it with a tissue which is then immediately discarded.**
✓ **Cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched objects and surfaces.**

2. General management best practice

Business owners and executive managers have a special responsibility in dealing with this situation and limiting the risk and damage to their operations while protecting their employees.

2.1. Inform yourself!

Firstly, and most importantly, stay informed on the latest news, in particular on transmission rates in South Africa, your province and your area. Identify and use reliable information sources – there is a lot of fake news and misinformation doing the rounds. The following are reliable sources of information and contacts:

General information

✓ https://sacoronavirus.co.za/
✓ Emergency Hotline: 0800 029 999
✓ WhatsApp Support Line: 0600 123 456
✓ Provincial Departments of Health and Departments of Labour and Employment
✓ Local municipalities

Industry-specific information

✓ CGA Covid Memos – available on www.cga.co.za and www.crw.org.za (member login required)

2.2. Inform your people!

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16.3   It must notify all workers of the contents of this Directive and the manner in which it intends to implement it;
16.4   It must notify its employees that if they are sick or have symptoms associated with the COVID–19 that they must not come to work and to take paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA;

16.5   It must appoint a manager to address employee or workplace representative concerns and to keep them informed and, in any workplace in which an health and safety committee has been elected, consult with that committee on the nature of the hazard in that workplace and the measures that need to be taken;

16.9   It must provide workers with information that raises awareness in any form or manner, including where reasonably practicable leaflets and notices placed in conspicuous places in the workplace informing workers of the dangers of the virus, the manner of its transmission, the measures to prevent transmission such as personal hygiene, social distancing, use of masks, cough etiquette and where to go for screening or testing if presenting with the symptoms;

41.   In addition to the obligations of employees under the OHSA, every worker is obliged to comply with measures introduced by their employer as required by this Directive.

With all the misinformation doing the rounds, it is much better for employers to take responsibility to inform their employees on the real facts and the latest developments. Keep records of all training and communication sessions as well as minutes of committee meetings in order to prove compliance to directives.

➢ Appoint at least one person in the workplace to be responsible for communication around Covid-19, and make sure that this person is accessible to all workers and has the necessary resources and capacity to answer their questions and assist them in every way necessary.

➢ If there is a health and safety committee in the workplace, consult the committee in risk assessment, mitigation procedures and communication with workers.

➢ Put up information posters in the workplace, in particular to create awareness around preventative measures and personal hygiene.

➢ Make available information pamphlets with the above information, but also include information on how workers can be safe at home, and keep their families and communities safe. Also use this means to encourage workers to live healthily and stay fit.

➢ Hold training sessions with teams, bringing them up to speed on the facts about the disease, on the regulations that are in place, and on the workplace practices and procedures that have been implemented. Remember to maintain physical distancing when meeting for training.

➢ Hold daily briefing sessions with all workers, informing them of the latest news about the disease (even if you think they may already know it), changes in regulations that may have been put in place, and changes in workplace practices and procedures, always remembering to maintain physical distancing. Short team-talk scripts for supervisors are a practical way to ensure that a consistent message is given.

➢ Allow workers to ask questions during these sessions and take the time to allay fears and address misconceptions. Fake news spreads faster than any virus – it should be debunked before it gets a chance to spread and take hold.

➢ Consider setting up a WhatsApp group to communicate with workers. Keep records of all communication with workers, in particular any reports by employees of feeling unwell.

2.3. Manage risk

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16.1   It must undertake a risk assessment to give effect to the minimum measures required by this Directive taking into account the specific circumstances of the workplace.

16.2   If the employer employs more than 500 employees, that employer must submit a record of its risk assessment together with a written policy concerning the protection of the health and safety of its employees from COVID-19 as contemplated in section 7(1) of OHSA to-

16.2.1 Its health and safety committee established in terms of section 19 of OHSA; and

16.2.2 The Department of Employment and Labour. (Submission must be made to the Provincial Chief Inspector at http://www.labour.gov.za/About-Us/Ministry/Pages/IES0320-7398.aspx)

16.6   It must ensure that the measures required by this Directive and its risk assessment plan are strictly complied with through monitoring and supervision;

Please also see the **Specialised Health Risk Assessment for Workplaces (by Employers and Self-Employed Persons)**, and interim guide to risk assessment published by the Department of Health (attached).

The Department of Health has also issued a **COVID-19 Walk-through Risk Assessment** for health and safety professionals (attached), which is a handy tool for checking that all requirements are being met.

Put in place a risk management plan which aims to identify and address as many risks as possible related to the threat of a Covid-19 outbreak in the workplace, and related to the regulations and restrictions being put in place by the South African government and governments of importing countries.

The steps below can be followed for compiling a Covid-19 risk management plan. Develop the plan in the form of a matrix.

➢ **Identify potential risks**
   Identify and evaluate each business function in the operation, such as input supply, production, marketing, financial management, human resource management, business management, and worker health and safety, and identify potential risks related to Covid-19. List this in the first two columns. Use what-if scenario planning to assist with identifying risks, for example:

   o What if an input supplier or service provider is forced to close down due to a Covid-19 outbreak? (Classify suppliers according to how critical they are for your operations.)
   o What if a supplier is unable to import inputs due to restrictions on goods movement?
   o What if the supplier of an item that is not considered essential but that still important to your operations is forced to close down?
   o What if prices for inputs increase substantially and seemingly unfairly?
   o What if a worker in the production unit tests positive for Covid-19?
   o What if a large percentage of workers in the production unit has to self-isolate for 14 days?
   o What if a family member of a worker tests positive for Covid-19?
   o What if a misconception created by fake news take hold under workers and causes unrest?
   o What if the transport services used by workers are no longer operational?

➢ **Assess the risks**
   Rate the likelihood and impact or consequence of each risk that has been identified, on a scale that makes sense for the operational environment, adding columns for the likelihood and impact to the matrix. Indicate whether and how each risk is controlled at present, such as by way of elimination, substitution, engineering, administration, through use of protective equipment and clothing, etc.

➢ **Manage the risks**
   Determine cost-effective ways to deal with each risk, according to the level (likelihood and possible impact) of that risk and indicate this on the matrix. Risks can be managed through avoiding the risk (for instance by changing processes or inputs), reducing the risk (for instance by decreasing the likelihood and / or decreasing the impact), transferring the risk (for instance

by taking out insurance or tightening up contracts), or accepting the risk. If a high-level risk is accepted, it is critical that those situations should be monitored very closely and plans should be in place to react if the risk materialises.

The risk management plan should be developed in collaboration with business unit managers to ensure that all possible risks are identified. The plan should also be communicated to clearly to all key staff members in order to ensure that management activities are put in place.

The plan should be reviewed regularly during this critical period. Should the situation change (i.e. should restrictions or regulations from government change, should a treatment or vaccine be found, should transmission rates in South Africa and in particular in your area and the area where your workers reside increase or fall significantly, etc.), the plan should be immediately reviewed.

2.4. Review policies and SOPs

Review all the policies and SOPs that are currently in place and make the necessary changes. As an essential service, the operation may be open to scrutiny to ensure that all necessary measures were taken to ensure the safety of workers, input suppliers and service providers. The basis of such a review will be the policies and SOPs that were implemented. Add emergency measures SOPs if necessary.

Ensure that changes to the policies and SOPs are clearly communicated to all relevant staff members. Keep record of such communication.

2.5. Classify workers – essential, enabling, non-essential

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16.7   It must, as far as practicable, minimize the number of workers at the workplace at any given time through rotation, staggered working hours, shift systems, remote working arrangements or similar measures in order to achieve social distancing, as contemplated in clause 17;
16.8   It must take measures to minimize contact between workers as well as between workers and members of the public;

As long as Covid-19 remains a threat in South Africa, citizens will be encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, and employers will be asked to minimise the number of people in the workplace and to allow workers that can work from home to do so, while still ensuring that business operations can continue without major disruption.

Restriction levels that has been implemented by the government also allows only certain sectors and business in the economy to operate, with only essential services being able to function at the most restrictive level. Businesses that deliver essential services are expected to only have present in the workplace those workers who are essential to their business operations.

The recommended practice is to classify workers as essential, enabling and non-essential. The following procedure can be used, making use of a matrix:

➢ Identify the business functions of the operation, similar to those identified for the risk management plan, but more specific to the operation itself. This will most likely include some or all of the following: business management, financial management, human resource management, office administration, production operations, marketing, and logistics, although this is not an exhaustive list.

➢ Rate each business function as "Essential", "Enabling", which means a function without which an essential function cannot continue, or "Non-essential". Non-essential does not mean that the business function is not important to the operation of the business, it merely means that the business can carry on with its operations temporarily if that business function did not carry

on. For example, providing workplace training for workers may be one of the business functions, but the business will still be able to carry on its operations in the short term if this function was suspended. For many businesses, the same may be true for a function such as office administration.

➢ For each essential and enabling business function, list the job titles related to that business function. It is helpful to consult the company organogram for this purpose.

➢ Rate each job title as "Essential", "Enabling" or "Non-essential". For instance, for the financial management function, the financial manager may be essential to keep the wheels turning, but the creditors and debtors clerk may be considered non-essential in the short term, while the cash book clerk may be seen as enabling for the financial manager.

➢ Consider whether workers who are classified as essential and enabling can work from home, partly or completely. Indicate this for each essential and enabling job title, and add notes about what will be required to make it possible for as many workers as possible to work from home.

It is best to develop and document a policy and procedure for identifying essential workers. The procedure will encapsulate the process that was followed (as per the example above) to identify essential and enabling workers. The policy will define how each of these categories of workers will be treated during a critical period when emergency measures are implemented.

Inform each worker in writing of the category into which they fall and the reasoning behind the classification. Hold meetings and briefing sessions with small groups of employees at a time, giving them sufficient opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns.

2.6. Structure work teams

Work teams should be structured in such a way that the risk of an outbreak is limited – in principle, if a person in the workplace should contract Covid-19, the number of people exposed to that person should be limited and traceable, and that exposure should not be at close quarters or for extended periods. The following practices are recommended, in as far as it is practical:

➢ The size of work teams (including picking teams) must be limited to as few workers as possible. The size of teams depends on the size of the enterprise, the tasks that those teams have to perform, and the availability of supervisors and team leaders, but no team should be larger than 30 workers.

➢ The teams should be fixed and remain the same – workers should not be allowed to move between teams.

➢ Teams should be transported together, so it will be sensible to make up teams of workers that reside reasonably close together.

➢ Shifts should be arranged so that work teams arrive, depart and take breaks at different times, so that members of different work teams have minimum interaction and contact.

➢ Workers should be encouraged to spend breaks outside instead of in breakrooms.

2.7. Recruit and screen new workers

It may become necessary to recruit more workers during this time. The regular recruitment channels may not be as effective due to physical distancing and travel restrictions. The following suggestions might be useful:

➢ It is better to recruit in the area where the workplace is located to avoid problems with moving people too far while travel restrictions are in place.

➢ Use electronic means, such as social media, direct messaging or SMSs, for recruitment.

➢ Develop an interview questionnaire that will allow for interviewing prospective employees electronically, without making it necessary for them to come to the workplace.

➢ Conduct the Personal Health Risk Assessment as part of the interview.

➢ Change the policy on new appointments and probation periods in accordance with these practices.

Once new employees have been appointed, they need to be thoroughly briefed on the procedures and measures that have been implemented in the workplace to limit the risk of infection and to protect workers and all others that come to the workplace. New employees must be assessed for symptoms of Covid-19 when they first enter the workplace.

2.8. Manage off-site essential and enabling workers

For most companies it is a new experience to have workers who are still doing all their tasks and duties, but who are not on-site. Essential and enabling workers who are able to work from home will be mostly administrative staff members, such as financial staff, human resource management, marketing, logistics, etc.

To enable this arrangement and to make the transition as smooth as possible, the following is recommended:

➢ Ensure that workers have the necessary infrastructure at home to enable connectivity without interruptions.

➢ Ensure that the electronic document storage systems and software systems enable workers to access what they need to in order to perform their tasks and duties.

➢ Encourage workers to set up a home workstation where they can focus on the work at hand without distractions.

➢ Ensure that workers are clear on the tasks and duties that they need to complete on a daily and weekly basis, and put in place systems making it easy for them to report on, and for you to monitor the completion of these tasks. It is impractical and futile to try and manage the amount of time workers work every day – they are after all compensated for the work they do, and not the number of hours they sit at their desks.

➢ This requires a trust relationship between the manager and the worker, for which communication is essential. Set up and make use of electronic communication tools, such as Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp and even telephone calls, to stay in touch and in reach of your team members at all times. Speak to your team members often and make sure that they know you are always available.

3. Compensation and leave

The South African government is encouraging employers to continue paying all their workers during this time, in order to limit the impact of the Covid-19 regulations on the wider population. Various schemes and programmes have also been put in place to assist small business during this time.

It must be remembered, though, that for private companies, as per the Companies Act, directors must consider their fiduciary duty and act in the best interests of the company when deciding whether to send employees home with a promise of payment where there is a risk of jeopardizing the continued operation of the company and rendering it insolvent.

It is important that a policy must be drafted to set out the approach that will be taken for each of the groups below.

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23.   If a worker presents with those symptoms, or advises the employer of these symptoms, the employer must –

23.1   not permit the worker to enter the workplace or report for work; or

23.2   if the worker is already at work immediately-

23.2.1 isolate the worker, provide the worker with a FFP1 surgical mask and arrange for the worker to be transported in a manner that does not place other workers or members of the public at risk either to be self-isolated or for a medical examination or testing; and

23.2.2 assess the risk of transmission, disinfect the area and the worker's workstation, refer those workers who may be at risk for screening and take any other appropriate measure to prevent possible transmission;

23.3   ensure that the worker is tested or referred to an identified testing site;

23.4   place its employee on paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA or if the employee's sick leave entitlement under the section is exhausted, make application for an illness benefit in terms of clause 4 of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020 on the COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme under regulation 10(8) of the Regulations promulgated in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act;

23.5   ensure that the employee is not discriminated against on grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19 in terms of section 6 of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998);

23.6   if there is evidence that the worker contracted COVID-19 as a result of occupational exposure, lodge a claim for compensation in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993) in accordance with Notice 193 published on 3 March 2020.

3.1. Essential and enabling workers

Essential and enabling workers, whether they are working on- or off-site, will continue to receive full compensation if they are still expected to work the hours they usually do, and / or perform the tasks and duties they usually do.

3.2. Compensation for non-essential workers

There are two options for dealing with workers who have been identified as non-essential and not required to work at all during a lockdown period, namely annual leave and a temporary layoff. Employees may be asked to use their annual leave during this time. This only applies to the statutory portion of annual leave (i.e. 15 business days). Statutory annual leave is regulated by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Section 20 sets out the framework for statutory annual leave. An employer must grant statutory annual leave in accordance with an agreement between the parties. In the absence of an agreement the employer may determine the time for statutory annual leave to be taken. If workers have been classified as non-essential, the employer may choose to inform employees that they are to take their annual leave during a period of lockdown.

Employers may also consider temporary layoffs. Temporary layoffs mean the temporary suspension of workers' employment for a period when workers are unable to meet their employment obligations because of, for instance, the lockdown. This should be the second option, used only when workers no longer have annual leave available. If workers are laid off, it will be possible to claim compensation in the form of the National Disaster Benefit under the Temporary Employer / Employee Relief Scheme from the UIF.

Please visit www.labour.gov.za.

Take care however not to recruit new workers in the place of workers whose employment has been suspended through a temporary layoff. If an employer were to recruit replacement workers, the layoff would be considered unnecessary, and the employer will become liable for paying the salaries of the workers that have been laid off for the duration of the layoff.

3.3. Compensation during self-isolation and illness

When a worker is being suspected of having been infected with Covid-19 or has been diagnosed with Covid-19, the period for which they are absent from work will be considered sick leave, during which the worker must receive full compensation, provided that they still have sufficient sick leave available.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act regulates sick leave entitlement. In terms of section 22 of the BCEA, the sick leave cycle means the period of 36 months' employment with the same employer immediately following an employee's commencement of employment. During every sick leave cycle, an employee is entitled to an amount of paid sick leave equal to the number of days the employee would normally work during a period of six weeks. For an employee who works five days a week, this equates to 30 days' sick leave per 36 months of employment.

An employer is not required to pay employees for sick leave taken when the sick leave entitlement has been exhausted. If the worker no longer has sick leave available, they can take annual leave. If they also have no more annual leave, they will be placed on unpaid leave. The employer can apply to the Unemployment Insurance Fund for compensation for the worker.

Please visit www.labour.gov.za.

3.4. Retrenchment of workers

Section 189 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 applies if an employer contemplates dismissing one or more of its employees for reasons based on its operational requirements, defined as requirements based on the economic, technological, structural or similar needs of the employer.

A retrenchment is as a result of no fault on the part of the employee. In the current circumstances, retrenchment cannot be used to terminate the employment of ill employees.

3.5. Dismissal due to Covid-19

In terms of Schedule 8: Code of Good Practice Dismissals, an employer must investigate the extent of the illness if the employee is temporarily unable to work. If the illness may result in a prolonged absence from work, alternatives to dismissal must first be considered. The factors to take into account include the seriousness of the illness, the period of absence, the nature of the employee's job and whether a temporary replacement may be secured.

During this process, the ill employee should be given an opportunity to make recommendations as well. Only once all these processes have been followed, a clear case of incapacity has been established, and no alternative to dismissal found, should an employer consider dismissal in line with labour legislation.

3.6. Compensation for contracting Covid-19 in the workplace

On the 20th of March 2020, the Compensation Commissioner issued a notice to the effect that the Workmen's Compensation Fund will cover the following if it can be proven that an employee contracted Covid-19 at the workplace:

➢ Compensation for temporary total disablement and permanent disablement
➢ Medical aid
➢ Death benefits

Please see the accompanying COIDA notice for more information. Or visit www.labour.gov.za.

4. Workplace access best practice

Access to the workplace sites must be strictly controlled while the Covid-19 pandemic is ongoing. Once the workplace site itself is sanitised and secured, the only way that the virus can come into the workplace is by being transmitted by a person coming onto the site. Therefore, this is a critical control point for managing the risk of Covid-19 contamination.

4.1. Worker transport

During lockdown periods, public transport may be limited. Even if certain forms of transport are still allowed, the capacity of these may be restricted. Employers may need to arrange transport for workers who depend on public transport.

It is also very difficult for workers to maintain the prescribed personal distance on public transport, which will expose them to the risk of infection. It is therefore best practice to arrange dedicated transport for workers. As mentioned before, in the section dealing with structuring work teams, it is also best practice to transport only members of the same work teams together.

Please also take note that during lockdown periods, other regulations may be in place, such as permit requirements, restrictions of the times during which workers may be transported, and restrictions on the carrying capacity of vehicles.

All vehicles must be sanitised every time before and after they are used. Please see 5.1.

4.2. Site access for workers

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(For more specific guidelines see: Department of Health "Guidelines for symptom monitoring and management of essential workers for COVID-19 related infection". (attached))

21.   Every employer must take measures to-

21.1   screen any worker, at the time that they report for work, to ascertain whether they have any of the observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever, cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);

21.2   require every worker to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness; and

21.3   require workers to immediately inform the employer if they experience any of the symptoms in sub-clauses 21.1 and 21.2 while at work.

22.   Employers must comply with any guidelines issued by the National Department of Health in consultation with the Department in respect of –

22.1   symptom screening; and

22.2   if in addition required to do so, medical surveillance and testing.

All essential and enabling employees must be made aware and continuously reminded of how to keep themselves healthy and protected from infection when they are away from the workplace. Remind them to practice physical distancing, to stay at home as much as possible, and particularly to avoid contact with anyone that have Covid-19 or symptoms of the disease.

All workers must be screened every time before they come onto the work site.

For employees who make use of their own transport, the following is recommended:

➢ Every employee should be screened at the entrance to the site.

➢ Equip access guards with handheld infrared thermometers.

Please Note	
	Handheld infrared thermometers are perferred to other types of thermometers because they eliminate the need for contact. It ensures that the thermometer itself does not become a vector for transmitting the disease between people. The reading is also more accurate. Ensure that the manufacturer's user instructions are followed, and that the thermometers is maintained and callibrated correctly.

➢ Monitor the access guard for symptoms regularly as they are at high risk by coming into contact with many different people.

➢ Use a *Site Access Register* with the following columns:

Date	Employee name	Time of entry	Do you have the following symptoms?				Temperature	Signature
			Sore throat	Cough	Fever	Shortness of breath		

➢ Allow only the access guard to handle the sheet and pen.

For employees who make use of transport provided by the employer, the following is recommended:

➢ All workers must be screened before getting onto the transport vehicle.

➢ Ensure that workers keep a distance of at least one and a half metres when lining up.

➢ Carry a register similar to the *Site Access Register* in each vehicle, with one page completed for each trip.

➢ Allow only one person to handle the sheet and pen.

➢ Take and record the temperature of each worker every time.

➢ No person that has not been screened and whose details have not been entered into the register should be allowed onto the transport vehicle.

➢ All workers must use hand sanitiser before entering the transport vehicle.

Any person who has any symptom and / or has a temperature higher than 37.3°C should be turned away and asked to go home. They should be tested for Covid-19, monitor their symptoms and go into voluntary isolation for a 7-day period. They should only be allowed to return to the workplace once they no longer have any symptoms and / or have tested negative for Covid-19.

Keep all access and transport registers must be kept on record and available for inspection, making note of when workers were turned away from the workplace.

4.3. Site access for visitors

C19 OHS
36.   The principal purpose of the measures contained in the following clause is to protect workers from being exposed to the virus through their interaction with the public and to protect members of the public from being exposed to virus through their interaction with workers or other persons present in such a workplace.

37.   Depending on what is reasonably practicable given the nature of the workplace, every employer must-

37.1   arrange the workplace to ensure that there is a distance at least one and a half metres between workers and members of the public or between members of the public; or

37.2   put in place physical barriers or provide workers with face shields or visors;

37.3   if appropriate, undertake symptom screening measures of persons other than the employees entering the workplace with due regard to available technology and any guidelines issued by the Department of Health;

37.4   if appropriate, display notices advising persons other than employees entering the workplace of the precautions they are required to observe while in the workplace;

37.5   require members of the public, including suppliers, to wear masks when inside their premises.

Other visitors that come to the workplace, such as transporters, service providers and suppliers, the following is recommended:

➢ All visitors must complete the following access questionnaire, in addition to the other access registers that are normally used:

Covid-19 Workplace Access Questionnaire				
{Company Name} {Company Address 1} {Company Address 2} {Company Address 3}		**Workplace Details:**		
Section 1: General Information				
Visitor Name:		Contact Number:		
Reason for Visit:		Person Visited:		
Have you returned from a foreign country in the last 14 days?			Yes	No
Have you been had close contact with a person that had travelled from a foreign country in the last 14 days?			Yes	No
Have you returned from another province in the last 14 days?			Yes	No
Have you in the last 14 days been in contact with or cared for a person that has tested positive for Covid-19?			Yes	No
Do you currently have a sore throat?			Yes	No
Do you currently have a cough?			Yes	No
Do you currently have a fever?			Yes	No
Are you suffering from shortness of breath?			Yes	No
Temperature measurement				
I declare that the information in this document is correct to the best of my knowledge.				
Visitor Signature:		**Date:**		

➢ The access guard must ask the questions without handing over the form for signature until a "no" answer has been obtained to all the questions.

➢ Sanitise the pen immediately after contact.

➢ If a person answers "yes" to any of the questions on the questionnaire, they should not be allowed access to the site.

➢ Keep all access questionnaires on record and available for inspection.

4.4. Access between areas in the workplace

➢ Plot the movement of work teams through the workplace while performing their duties, and at the start and end of their shifts.

➢ Manage shift changes so that different work teams will not meet each other while moving to and from their workstations.

➢ Keep doors and other access barriers on these movement paths standing open, so that workers do not have to touch door or gate handles unnecessarily.

➢ Limit access to certain parts of the workplace to limit the movement of workers and reduce the chance of contact.

➢ It is particularly recommended that access to enclosed spaces, such as bathrooms and storerooms, is limited and that more than one person is never allowed to enter such an area at the same time.

5. Sanitation best practice

C19 OHS

28. Every employer must take measures to ensure that-

28.1 all work surfaces and equipment are disinfected before work begins, regularly during the working period and after work ends;

28.2 all areas such as toilets, common areas, door handles, shared electronic equipment are regularly cleaned and disinfected;

28.3 disable biometric systems or make them COVID-19-proof.

29. The employer must ensure that-

29.1 there are adequate facilities for the washing of hands with soap and clean water;

29.2 only paper towels are provided to dry hands after washing – the use of fabric toweling is prohibited;

29.3 the workers are required to wash their hands and sanitize their hands regularly while at work;

29.4 the workers interacting with the public are instructed to sanitize their hands between each interaction with public;

29.5 surfaces that workers and members of the public come into contact with are routinely cleaned and disinfected.

Keeping workers, equipment, vehicles, and the working environment clean and sanitary is essential to limiting the spread of Covid-19 and managing the risk of an outbreak.

5.1. Sanitising worker transportation

➢ Designate a person to sanitise the entire inside of transport vehicles (rails, backs of seats, windows where faces may touch, doors, etcetera) before workers enter the vehicle.

➢ Use a backpack spray unit with one of the sanitisers listed below. Dilute according to the label if not specifically indicated:

o Sporekill solution at 0,5% for hands and 1% for surfaces
o Commercial sanitisers with at least 70% alcohol – not advisable for long-term use for equipment, reserve for use as a hand sanitiser
o Polybiguanidine products such as Vantocil
o Nonylphenol Polyethylene Glycol Ether products such as HD313, Tergitol or Agral 90
o Household bleach (~3,5% sodium hypochloride): add 30-35ml per litre of water

- o Chlorine such as Frexus or DryTec (~0.1% calcium hypochlorite with 68% active): add 5g to 2 litres of water
  - o At least 0,5% peroxide solution
  - o A 2 to 3% soap solution

- ➢ Please note that vinegar is NOT recommended.

- ➢ Wipe down all surfaces treated as above.

- ➢ Once workers have been unloaded, the vehicle must be sanitised again.

5.2. Sanitising goods and goods transportation

- ➢ Goods delivered to the workplace should be sanitised by being sprayed or wiped down with one of the sanitising agents above.

- ➢ Delivery drivers of goods transport vehicles and their helpers must sanitise their hands on arriving at the workplace.

- ➢ Before loading goods transport vehicles, the inside of the loading area should be sprayed with a sanitising agent.

5.3. Sanitising the workplace

- ➢ Every access point to the workplace must be sanitised at least once every hour. Clean door and gate handles, frames and surrounding walls. Keep doors and gates standing open, if possible, to limit touching or doors and gates.

- ➢ Workstations must be sanitised completely between every shift change by spraying and wiping down all surfaces and all equipment. In some workplaces, such as packhouses, this practice should already be part of regular packhouse sanitation, but care should be taken to ensure that the sanitising agent is sufficiently able to deal with viral contamination as well.

- ➢ For equipment, ensure that every surface is sprayed and wiped down, in particular surfaces, buttons, switches, handles, levers, etc. that are touched often.

- ➢ Sanitise storage, office and administrative areas at least twice a day, in particular doors and door handles, light switches, cupboard doors and handles, and work surfaces.

- ➢ Sanitise all ablution facilities between every shift change and at least once during each shift, and in particular taps, toilet cubicle doors and handles, toilet handles and seats, locker doors and locks, and light switches.

- ➢ Sanitise common areas, such as the canteen and other social areas, between every shift by spraying and wiping down all surfaces, including tables and chairs (in particular chair backs), and washing and sanitising all condiment containers, utensils and crockery. Encourage work teams to spend break times outside rather than in an enclosed area.

6. Personal hygiene best practice

Remind staff regularly that the spread of Covid-19 can be prevented by:

- ✓ Washing hands regularly with soap or using an appropriate hand sanitiser (e.g. 70% alcohol-based).

- ✓ Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- ✓ Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

- ✓ Coughing or sneezing into a flexed elbow or cover it with a tissue, and discard it immediately.

- ✓ Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

In the end, the only way that any individual can avoid being infected with Covid-19 is by consistently distancing themselves from others and practicing personal hygiene. Ensure that all workers know what to do and what not to do, and the reason for each of these practices.

6.1. <u>Physical distancing measures</u>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**C19 OHS**</td></tr>
<tr><td>17.</td><td>Every employer must arrange the workplace to ensure minimal contact between workers and as far as practicable ensure that there is a minimum of one and a half metres between workers while they are working, for example, at their workstations. Depending on the circumstances of the workplace or the nature of the sector, the minimum distance may need to be longer. Reducing the number of workers present in the workplace at any time in terms of clause 16.5 may assist in achieving the required social distancing.</td></tr>
<tr><td>18.</td><td>If it is not practicable to arrange work stations to be spaced at least one and a half metres apart, the employer must-</td></tr>
<tr><td>18.1</td><td>arrange physical barriers to be placed between work stations or erected on work stations to form a solid physical barrier between workers while they are working; or 8</td></tr>
<tr><td>18.2</td><td>if necessary, supply the employee free of charge with appropriate PPE based on a risk assessment of the working place.</td></tr>
<tr><td>19.</td><td>Every employer must ensure that social distancing measures are implemented through supervision both in the workplace and in the common areas outside the immediate workplace through queue control or within the workplace such as canteens and lavatories. These measures may include dividing the workforce into groups or staggering break-times to avoid the concentration of workers in common areas.</td></tr>
</table>

Keeping your distance is one of the most important things any person can do to stay safe. Even if you are certain that the people surrounding you are not infected with Covid-19, you need to keep up physical distancing – it is a habit that can save you and it is better to be safe. Personal contact between employees should be avoided at all times, including shaking hands, hugging, etc.

When reporting to work, the following distancing practices are recommended:

➢ Where possible, avoid using a biometric clocking systems to limit touching contaminated surfaces. Where this cannot be avoided, hands should be sanitised before and after clocking.

➢ If workers have to sign in, make sure that they do not use the same pen and limit touching surfaces as much as possible.

➢ Work teams should arrive and clock in one by one.

➢ If practical, ensure that workers are at least one and a half metre apart when lining up.

During operations, the following distancing practices are recommended:

➢ Where possible, ensure that workers are more than 1.5 metres apart.

➢ If workers cannot be separated by this distance, create barriers (e.g. Perspex, cardboard, curtaining) between workstations.

➢ More than one employee should never be allowed to operate in the same workstation.

➢ Prevent workers from encountering each other unnecessarily.

During breaks and meals, the following distancing practices are recommended:

➢ Ensure that work teams have their breaks and meals at different times to avoid mingling.

➢ Encourage workers to spend breaks and meals outside, but ensure that they keep 1.5 metres apart. Use paint to draw circles that are the appropriate distance apart.

➢ Set up the canteen in such a way that workers sit at least 1.5 metres apart.

➢ Each worker must use their own food container and utensils.

➢ Sharing condiments (salt, pepper, sauces, etc.), containers and utensils is not allowed under any circumstances.

When receiving raw material, packaging and other supplies, the following distancing practices are recommended:

➢ Receiving workers should wear disposable gloves and mask when receiving raw material (such as fruit), packaging and other inputs.

➢ The driver should preferably not leave the vehicle during this process.

➢ Paperwork that must be completed should be done with separate pens for those that need to enter information of sign forms.

➢ Sanitise clipboards and pens after each use.

6.2. Protective equipment and clothing – gloves and masks

C19 OHS

30. The main benefit of everyone wearing a cloth mask is to reduce the amount of virus droplets being coughed up by those with the infection and transmitted to others and to surfaces that others may touch. Since some persons with the virus may not have symptoms or may not know they have it, the Department of Health requires that all persons wear cloth masks when in a public place.

31. For the reasons underlying the Department of Health's requirement, every employer must –

31.1 provide each of its employees, free of charge, with a minimum of two cloth masks, which comply with the requirement set out in the Guidelines issued by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (attached), for the employee to wear while at work and while commuting to and from work; and

31.2 require any other worker to wear masks in the workplace.

32. The number and replaceability of cloth masks that must be provided to an employee or required of other workers must be determined in accordance with any sectoral guideline and in the light of the employee or worker's conditions of work, in particular, where these may result in the mask becoming wet or soiled.

33. Every employer must ensure that workers are informed, instructed, trained and instructed as to the correct use of cloth masks.

34. An employer must make appropriate arrangements for the washing, drying and ironing of cloth masks in accordance with the Guidelines referred in clause 31.1 recommendations.

35. The general requirement for workers to wear masks does not derogate from the fact that, where a risk assessment indicates that PPE is required, those categories of workers must be provided with the accredited PPE in accordance with Department of Health guidelines.

39. Every employer must check regularly on the websites of the National Department of Health9, National Institute of Communicable Diseases10 and the National Institute for Occupational Health11 whether any additional PPE is required or recommended in any guidelines given the nature of the workplace or the nature of a worker's duties.

There are differing opinions on whether gloves and masks assist with the prevention of Covid-19 infection. Wearing gloves can create a false sense of security, as the virus can still adhere to the glove and infect a person when they touch their face, and it can lead to reduced hand-washing.

Surgical masks are in short supply and it is best to leave those that are available to very high risk workers, such as medical personnel and emergency workers (who are also skilled at using them properly). Masks can also create a false sense of security in that they don't cover the entire area that can be infected, as the eyes is also vulnerable. People who are wearing masks are also more likely to touch their faces more regularly in order to adjust their masks.

The Department of Labour and Employment prescribes that all persons should wear cloth masks at all times while they are in the workplace. Masks has been shown to significantly reduce the viral load in the air.

It is essential that all workers must wear a fabric mask at all times (including during breaks) while they are in the workplace. They must however:

➢ **NEVER touch the mask to adjust it**

➢ **NEVER remove the mask for any reason whatsoever**

➢ **NEVER touch the inside of the mask**

➢ **ALWAYS wear the mask correctly over the nose and mouth**

➢ **ALWAYS replace the mask regularly and wash the used mask with soap and warm water**

Remember that the virus can contaminate paper and plastic surfaces and remain active on them for some time. It can therefore contaminate gloves and masks themselves, making them into another and very dangerous vector for infection. Masks must be washed or replaced at least every hour for them to remain effective and not pose an additional risk. If gloves are used, they should be changed after each activity. It is essential to keep emphasising the need for not touching the face, regular hand washing, physical distancing and good respiratory hygiene.

Where gloves or masks are used in the normal course of production (e.g. for picking fruit or handling chemicals), remind workers that these can be sources of contamination and that they should be especially careful not to touch their faces while wearing them. They must be cleaned and sanitised after every time they are used.

6.3. Hand washing

C19 OHS
29. The employer must ensure that-
29.1 there are adequate facilities for the washing of hands with soap and clean water;
29.2 only paper towels are provided to dry hands after washing – the use of fabric toweling is prohibited;
29.3 the workers are required to wash their hands and sanitize their hands regularly while at work;
29.4 the workers interacting with the public are instructed to sanitize their hands between each interaction with public;
29.5 surfaces that workers and members of the public come into contact with are routinely cleaned and disinfected.

➢ Promote frequent handwashing with soap, running water and use paper towels to dry hands.

➢ Make sure employees have easy access to places where they can wash their hands.

➢ Wash hands using the right method, which have always been promoted in workplaces before as a food safety practice.

➢ Wash hands for at least 20 seconds.

➢ Hands should be washed at least before the start of every shift, before entering any area where there will be contact with the product (the orchard, the packline, loading areas, etc.), after going to the toilet, after eating or smoking, after breaks, after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose, and after handling refuse.

➢ Regularly clean and disinfect the tap where hand washing takes place.

➢ Display posters on promoting the correct method to wash hands.

C19 OHS

25.   For the purposes of these clauses, a hand sanitizer must be one that has at least 70% alcohol content and is in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Health.

26.   Every employer must, free of charge, ensure that –

26.1   there are sufficient quantities of hand sanitizer based on the number of workers or other persons who access the workplace at the entrance of, and in, the workplace which the workers or other persons are required to use;

26.2   every employee who works away from the workplace, other than at home, must be provided with an adequate supply of hand sanitizer.

27.   If a worker interacts with the public, the employer must provide the worker with sufficient supplies of hand-sanitizer at that worker's workstation for both the worker and the person with whom the worker is interacting.

➢ Hand sanitizer should be available from allocated points in the packhouse, which should be applied at least every hour to the employees' hands.

6.4. Good respiratory hygiene

➢ Cover the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or bent elbow.

➢ Discard a tissue immediately after use.

➢ Ensure that tissues are available at all workstations.

➢ Ensure that closed bins are placed within easy access for hygienically disposing of tissues.

➢ Ensure that workers do not spit or blow their noses onto the ground.

6.5. Sharing items

Workers must be made aware and constantly reminded that sharing items and equipment pose a direct risk. The following is recommended in this regard:

➢ Issue workers with individual eating containers, utensils and water bottles, or ask them to bring these items to the workplace.

➢ Issue each worker who needs to make notes or complete reports or schedules with their own pen.

➢ Drinking directly from a water tap must be strictly prohibited.

➢ Discourage workers to share cigarettes during smoke breaks and in smoking areas.

6.6. Laundering clothing

C19 OHS
34.   An employer must make appropriate arrangements for the washing, drying and ironing of cloth masks in accordance with the Guidelines referred in clause 31.1 recommendations.

It is suspected that the virus that causes Covid-19 is able to adhere to and stay active on fabrics for a number of hours after contamination, and it is therefore essential that clothing should be kept clean. Washing with laundry soap and water at a regular temperature is sufficient for deactivating the virus – it is not necessary to use very hot water or detergents that can damage clothing.

The following is recommended:

➢ Wash all protective clothing that is used in regular production (overalls, aprons, etc.) every time after it is used.

➢ Iron clothing, as this will assist to kill the virus.

➢ Wash gloves used for fruit picking after every shift, and have replacement gloves at hand in the orchard should a worker need them while picking.

➢ Remove all other fabrics, such as table cloths, seat cushions, decorative curtaining, etc., from the work area during this time, launder it and put it into storage. It is much easier to spray and wipe down hard surfaces with sanitation agent than to constantly launder fabrics.

7. Workstation and work flow setup

C19 OHS
17.   Every employer must arrange the workplace to ensure minimal contact between workers and as far as practicable ensure that there is a minimum of one and a half metres between workers while they are working, for example, at their workstations. Depending on the circumstances of the workplace or the nature of the sector, the minimum distance may need to be longer. Reducing the number of workers present in the workplace at any time in terms of clause 16.5 may assist in achieving the required social distancing.
18.   If it is not practicable to arrange work stations to be spaced at least one and a half metres apart, the employer must-
18.1   arrange physical barriers to be placed between work stations or erected on work stations to form a solid physical barrier between workers while they are working; or 8
18.2   if necessary, supply the employee free of charge with appropriate PPE based on a risk assessment of the working place.
19.   Every employer must ensure that social distancing measures are implemented through supervision both in the workplace and in the common areas outside the immediate workplace through queue control or within the workplace such as canteens and lavatories. These measures may include dividing the workforce into groups or staggering break-times to avoid the concentration of workers in common areas.

Workstations and work flows for teams should be set up with the following objectives in mind:

➢ Enabling and encouraging physical distancing and isolation practices.

➢ Limiting contact between employees as much as possible, especially between workers belonging to different work teams.

➢ Avoiding sharing any items.

➢ Preventing an outbreak of Covid-19 should a person in the workplace contract the disease.

7.1. Ventilation

C19 OHS
38. Every employer must –
38.1 keep the workplace well ventilated by natural or mechanical means to reduce the SARS-CoV-2 viral load;
38.2 where reasonably practicable, have an effective local extraction ventilation system with high-efficiency particulate air HEPA filters, which is regularly cleaned and maintained, and its vents do not feed back in through open windows;
38.3 ensure that filters are cleaned and replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions by a competent person.

If a workplace is enclosed, keeping it well-ventilated is safer for all workers, as ventilation reduces the viral load in the air. The following can be done in this regard:

➢ Do not use air-conditioning systems that recirculate air. Also remember that the SARS-CoV-2 virus are more likely to flourish in cold conditions.

➢ Keep doors and windows open as much as possible.

➢ Install vents in walls or in the roof, if practical.

➢ If practical, install extractor fans that can assist with air circulation, ensuring that extracted air will not be circulated back into work areas.

➢ Have work teams spend their break and lunchtimes outside rather than in enclosed cafeterias or common areas.

7.2. Picking teams

Isolating picking teams may compromise picking efficiency and create the need for more supervisory staff, and picking and transport equipment, but it is a small price to pay for keeping workers safe from contamination and preventing an outbreak.

➢ Select the picking areas so that picking teams are kept isolated, for instance by having teams work in different orchards.

➢ Allocate separate picking trailers or picking bins and trailers to each picking team.

➢ Allocate a tractor driver to each picking team and don't have drivers move between teams.

➢ When unloading fruit at the packhouse, the driver should stay at the tractor and not mingle with the receiving team.

➢ Allocate a supervisor to each picking team.

➢ Sanitise all equipment before and after each shift, including recording equipment (pens, clipboard, tickers, etc.), clippers, picking bags, ladders, bins and trailers by spraying and / or wiping them down with a sanitising agent.

➢ Allow only the supervisor to handle pens, clipboards, tickers or other counters, or any other recording equipment during picking.

➢ Have workers empty their own picking bags into bins / trailers.

➢ Designate certain pickers to use ladders, and issue a ladder to each of these pickers. Ladders are not to be shared.

➢ Ensure that each picker only use the clippers and picking bag that was issued to them, and that this equipment is not touched by any other person.

7.3. Grading stations

On many packing lines it should be possible to adjust the workstation setup to allow distancing and / or separation between graders. The important thing is to ensure that workers are not within range of each other's respiratory droplets, are not forced or at risk of making physical contact, and are not forced to share equipment or touch the same surfaces.

Example of separating graders in the packline.

7.4. Packing stations

Packing stations are usually much closer together and may be more difficult to distance. One option is to use only every second packing station, but this may lead to an unacceptable lowering in productivity. Physical barriers between packing stations may however be as effective.

Examples of separating packing stations.

7.5. Palletising and loading

It may be difficult to effectively maintain distancing between workers in palletising and loading, because the workers are more mobile in these areas. The purpose however is still to limit the physical contact between workers and the mingling of workers from different teams. The following is advised:

➢ Assign a small team of workers to each palletising station and have them work together throughout this time period.

➢ If necessary, change the flow of packed boxes in the packhouse so that palletisers from different stations do not fetch boxes from the same spot. For example, separate the line where packed boxes into different spaces by using barriers, and assign each team to a space.

➢ Assign forklifts to specific drivers and allow only that driver to use the forklift for that shift.

➢ If pallets are being moved to the loading area, assign a separate space in the loading area to each forklift driver so that they are not constantly crossing paths.

➢ Sanitise palletisation equipment and stations, and forklifts thoroughly between each shift.

7.6. Hand washing stations

➢ Every worker should have easy access to handwashing stations with soap and running water, where paper towels for hand drying, tissues, and sealed bins for disposing of these items, can also be found. Washing their hands regularly should not be a chore for workers.

➢ If it is difficult to install more permanent hand washing stations, consider making use of water tanks that can be rigged to make temporary hand washing stations.

➢ If this is not possible, have available hand sanitiser dispensers. Please remember, however, that hand sanitisers is less effective than washing properly and for long enough with soap and water.

7.7. First aid and health care services

First aid officers and health care professionals play a critical role during this time.

Firstly, first aid should be centralised during this period to limit the exposure of workers to those that may be infected with Covid-19. The following is recommended:

➢ Assign a first aid officer to particular areas in the workplace, or to certain work teams.

➢ The first aid officer must be the only person allowed to treat an injury that occurs in those area(s) or work team(s). A supervisor or other worker should under no circumstances be allowed to treat an injury in the field or in the workplace.

➢ The first aid officer must be close by and able to respond quickly should an injury occur (e.g. there should be a first aid officer on call that can move between picking teams and treat injuries, should they occur).

➢ The first aid officer must use a mask and gloves which are discarded after each treatment.

Secondly, if there is an onsite healthcare facility, such as a clinic or a sickbay, the healthcare professional who works there will play a very important role during this time. The following is recommended:

➢ The healthcare professional must be fully briefed by a medical professional on symptoms, preventative measures, isolation and quarantine procedures, and all other relevant information related to Covid-19.

➢ The healthcare professional should have at hand all the emergency contact numbers that may be required.

➢ The healthcare facility must be equipped with all the protective clothing, equipment and supplies required to respond effectively.

7.8. Isolation rooms

➢ If a person in the workplace displays symptoms of Covid-19, that person should be isolated immediately if they cannot be sent home and go into self-isolation.

➢ Set up an isolation room in the workplace where these workers can stay until they can be tested for the disease.

➢ If more than one person is held in the isolation room, they must practice physical distancing.

➢ Ensure that the isolation room is sanitised regularly.

> ➢ Only healthcare professionals should be allowed into the isolation room, whether there is a patient in the room or not.

> ➢ Every person entering the room when there is a patient in the room must wear gloves and a mask, which must be discarded as soon as they leave the room.

> ➢ Reserve one bathroom for the exclusive use of those in isolation. If this is not possible, the bathroom must be thoroughly sanitised after each use.

7.9. Isolation on-farm accommodation

> ➢ If workers live on the farm, it will be necessary to set up accommodation on the farm for workers who are in self-isolation and those that are infected with Covid-19.

> ➢ Ensure that there is a separate room for each patient.

> ➢ Only healthcare professionals should be allowed to enter the isolation accommodation apart from the patients.

> ➢ Every person entering the accommodation must wear gloves and a mask, which must be discarded as soon as they leave.

8. Communication

At times like these, one of the greatest threats to stability in a workplace is misinformation which can lead to uncertainty, distrust and panic, and ultimately may lead to worker unrest. Communication is key to ensure that all workers are clear at all times on the following:

> ➢ The facts and latest news about the disease;

> ➢ What to do to stay safe and healthy and to keep your family safe and healthy;

> ➢ What to do when you think you may be infected;

> ➢ Government regulations that are currently being enforced; and

> ➢ Workplace practices and procedures that have been implemented.

Remember that fake news spreads like wild fire and that it can do more damage, more quickly than any virus. Take this threat as seriously.

8.1. Regular information sharing

C19 OHS
16.3   It must notify all workers of the contents of this Directive and the manner in which it intends to implement it;
16.4   It must notify its employees that if they are sick or have symptoms associated with the COVID–19 that they must not come to work and to take paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA;
16.5   It must appoint a manager to address employee or workplace representative concerns and to keep them informed and, in any workplace in which an health and safety committee has been elected, consult with that committee on the nature of the hazard in that workplace and the measures that need to be taken;
16.9   It must provide workers with information that raises awareness in any form or manner, including where reasonably practicable leaflets and notices placed in conspicuous places in the workplace informing workers of the dangers of the virus, the manner of its transmission, the measures to prevent transmission such as personal hygiene, social

distancing, use of masks, cough etiquette and where to go for screening or testing if presenting with the symptoms;

41.   In addition to the obligations of employees under the OHSA, every worker is obliged to comply with measures introduced by their employer as required by this Directive.

➢ As recommended in section 2.2, it is essential that daily briefing sessions must be held with all workers, communicating to them the latest news about the disease, changes in regulations that may have been put in place, and changes in workplace practices and procedures.

➢ Develop short team-talk scripts for supervisors to ensure that a consistent message is given, and ask the supervisors to write down questions so that standard answers can be formulated where necessary.

➢ Allow workers to ask questions during these sessions and take the time to allay fears and address misconceptions.

➢ Ensure that every work team is briefed before they start their shift.

➢ If there are notice boards in common areas, develop daily briefs in all the languages spoken in the workplace and post them there. Make sure though that physical distancing is maintained at notice boards. A good measure it to make the font large enough so that workers do not have to congregate in front of the notice boards in order to read them.

8.2. Communicating policies and operating procedures

It is essential that all workers must be aware of the policies and operating procedures that are applicable in the workplace during this time. Workers are likely to be particularly concerned about policies around remuneration and leave, and about procedures aimed at protecting their health. Make sure that there is absolute clarity about the policies and procedures and that the reasoning behind them are well-understood.

The following is recommended:

➢ Hold training sessions with all managers, supervisors and team leaders and inform them in detail on the policies and procedures, their implications and their practical implications. Use scenario planning to help them to better understand what will happen in particular circumstances.

➢ Make sure that managers, supervisors and team leaders are immediately informed of any changes in policies or operating procedures.

➢ Managers, supervisors and team leaders must inform their work teams around policies and procedures and changes in them during daily briefing sessions.

➢ Develop information pamphlets and FAQs in all the languages used in the workplace, put them up on notice board and make them available in common areas where workers can study them or take them home to read. Encourage workers to inform themselves.

8.3. Signage and posters

Put up signage and posters at appropriate places in the workplace with graphic illustrations of the following:

➢ The symptoms of Covid-19

➢ Preventative measures

➢ Personal hygiene practices

➢ Correct handwashing procedures

8.4. Communicating with stakeholders

During this time there is a lot of uncertainty everywhere about what regulations, restrictions, etc. will be imposed next, and what this will mean on a personal level, and for the ability of a business to maintain economic activity. You can control how your operation handles these challenges, and how you communicate to all your stakeholders. Uncertainty is a big challenge and the more you can do to manage it, the better for your operation.

➢ Develop a communication strategy that identifies all the relevant stakeholder groups. Groups are, for example, customers, suppliers, service providers, financial institutions, employees, and government agencies.

➢ Develop a communication plan for each of these groups, indicating the what, when and how of communicating with these groups.

➢ Assign a person responsible for communicating to each group. For large groups, such as customers, it may be necessary to assign more than one person. If this is the case, ensure that the message and methods are consistent.

➢ Monitor communication by inviting stakeholders to contact you directly with their concerns and feedback. This is the best way to ensure that there are no developing crises of which you are not aware.

8.5. Information sources

During this time, stakeholders are more likely to consult online information sources to get the latest information about your business. Whereas the previous section dealt with active communication, it is also essential to ensure that passive communication is being used to convey a consistent message.

➢ Take a critical look at your website and decide what information is best conveyed through that channel. It might be appropriate to have only a "still open for business" message on the home page of the site, or it may be useful to have more detailed information. It is however essential that the website must be updated to indicate that your organisation is responding to the situation and taking steps to deal with it in the best possible way.

➢ Look at social media channels on which you may be active and consider who is most likely to access information through each of these channels. Decide what is the most appropriate and relevant message to send through each channel.

➢ It is critical during this time to be aware of taking a stand that might be seen as political, such as criticising measures put in place by our government or a foreign government or complaining about interruptions in supply chains or disruptions in infrastructure. Decide what overall message your organisation wants to promote, and ensure that all messaging is purposeful.

➢ Ensure that all staff members who have access to and can be connected to the electronic presence of you organisation are aware of the communication strategy and messaging.

9.   What to do when a worker tests positive for Coronavirus

C19 OHS

16.10   If a worker has been diagnosed with COVID-19, an employer must-

16.10.1. inform the Department of Health (Report may be made to the COVID-19 hotline: 0800 02 9999) and the Department of Employment and Labour; and

16.10.2   investigate the cause including any control failure and review its risk assessment to ensure that the necessary controls and PPE requirements are in place; and

16.11   it must give administrative support to any contact-tracing measures implemented by the Department of Health.

21.   Every employer must take measures to-

21.1   screen any worker, at the time that they report for work, to ascertain whether they have any of the observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever, cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);

21.2   require every worker to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness; and

21.3   require workers to immediately inform the employer if they experience any of the symptoms in sub-clauses 21.1 and 21.2 while at work.

22.   Employers must comply with any guidelines issued by the National Department of Health in consultation with the Department in respect of –

22.1   symptom screening; and

22.2   if in addition required to do so, medical surveillance and testing.

23.   If a worker presents with those symptoms, or advises the employer of these symptoms, the employer must –

23.1   not permit the worker to enter the workplace or report for work; or

23.2   if the worker is already at work immediately-

23.2.1   isolate the worker, provide the worker with a FFP1 surgical mask and arrange for the worker to be transported in a manner that does not place other workers or members of the public at risk either to be self-isolated or for a medical examination or testing; and

23.2.2   assess the risk of transmission, disinfect the area and the worker's workstation, refer those workers who may be at risk for screening and take any other appropriate measure to prevent possible transmission;

23.3   ensure that the worker is tested or referred to an identified testing site;

23.4   place its employee on paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA or if the employee's sick leave entitlement under the section is exhausted, make application for an illness benefit in terms of clause 4 of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020 on the COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme under regulation 10(8) of the Regulations promulgated in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act;

23.5   ensure that the employee is not discriminated against on grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19 in terms of section 6 of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998);

23.6   if there is evidence that the worker contracted COVID-19 as a result of occupational exposure, lodge a claim for compensation in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993) in accordance with Notice 193 published on 3 March 2020.

24.   If a worker has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and isolated in accordance with the Department of Health Guidelines, an employer may only allow a worker to return to work on the following conditions:

24.1   The worker has undergone a medical evaluation confirming that the worker has been tested negative for COVID-19;

24.2   the employer ensures that personal hygiene, wearing of masks, social distancing, and cough etiquette is strictly adhered to by the worker; and

24.3   the employer closely monitors the worker for symptoms on return to work.

There are two possible scenarios for an employee being diagnosed with Covid-19.

The first is if the worker presents with symptoms when arriving for work or at a worker transport collection point. In this case, the following steps must be taken:

➢ Deny the worker access to the workplace or transport vehicle.

➢ Send the worker home with instructions to self-isolate and monitor their symptoms.

➢ Direct the worker to the nearest testing facility, and make it clear that they cannot return to work before they have been tested.

The second scenario is that the worker is already in the workplace and has a sudden onset of symptoms. In this case, the following steps must be followed:

➢ Immediately give the worker a FFP1 surgical mask to wear.

➢ Remove the worker from the work area by a route that minimises contact with any other workers.

➢ Transport the worker to the nearest testing facility.

➢ Instruct the worker to return home, self-isolate and monitor their symptoms.

➢ Sanitise the worker's workstation and any other areas that the worker might have been in, including bathrooms, common areas, sick bays, etc.

In both these scenarios, the following steps must be followed:

➢ Identify the workers that the possibly-infected worker has been in contact with.

➢ Determine whether protocols for physical distancing, protective clothing and personal hygiene were followed at all times during the contact periods – encourage workers to be honest and open, ensuring them against negative repercussions.

➢ If available, consult written records to confirm that protocols were followed.

➢ If protocols were followed, instruct the workers who have been in contact with the possibly-infected worker to monitor their symptoms closely while continuing to work. Should they experience any symptoms, they are to immediately stay home, self-isolate and go for testing.

➢ If there is reason to believe that protocols were not followed, immediately instruct all workers that have been in contact with the possible infected worker under those circumstances to return home, self-isolate and monitor their symptoms. Should they experience any symptoms, they are to immediately go for testing.

Workers who are suspected of being infected with Covid-19 must inform the people living with them and all other people they have regular contact with outside the workplace that they may have been infected with Covid-19, and encourage them to self-isolate and monitor their symptoms for a period of 7 days.

If the result of a test is positive and it is known that a worker has contracted Covid-19, the employer must:

➢ Immediately inform the Department of Health through the Covid-19 hotline, and the Department of Labour and Employment.

➢ Investigate the cause of the infection and determine whether the worker was likely to have been infected at work.

➢ If the worker was infected at work, investigate the failure in protocols aimed at limiting transmissions and review the risk assessment and control protocols.

➢ If there is reason to believe that workplace transmission is ongoing, close down the relevant areas and thoroughly clean and disinfect the entire area, and instruct workers from those work areas to stay at home and monitor their symptoms for a 7-day period. Should they experience any symptoms, they are to immediately go for testing.

Workers who have tested positive can only return to work once they have tested negative. On their return, they must adhere strictly to transmission control protocols and monitored closely for any further symptoms.

10. Conclusion

The citrus industry is privileged to be in a position where we can continue working. As an essential service that provides food to our country and the world we have a responsibility to do so well and ensure that we do not compromise our business, our employees or our customers. With this in mind, take all the possible measures to keep everyone safe and productive, while still providing good quality citrus exports.

We must help each other during this challenging time so if you have any suggestions or amendments to this document, please email them to Jacomien de Klerk (jacomien@citrusacademy.org.za) or Paul Hardman (ph@cga.co.za).

11. Sources and references

❖ Guide to COVID 19 in the Orchard and Packing Shed (Citrus Australia)

❖ Coronavirus – A Practical Guide for Employers (Cowan, Harper, Madikizela)

❖ COVID19 TERS Benefits Easy Aid Guide (Department of Labour and Employment)

❖ UIF – Easy Guide for Electronic Claims

❖ Easy-Aid Guide for Employers (Unemployment Insurance Fund)

❖ COVID-19 Guideline Mar 2020 (Department of Labour and Employment)

❖ Notice on Compensation for Occupationally Acquired Coronavirus under COIDA Amended Act

❖ COVID-19 – The Employment Survival Guide (25 March 2020) (Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyer)

❖ Covid-19 Lockdown FAQs (Western Cape Government)

❖ COVID-19 Harvesting Measures (Sky Vines)

❖ COVID-19 Packhouse Measures (Sky Vines)

❖ PPE Statement (Western Cape Government)

❖ Lockdown Regulations (Government Gazette)

❖ Transportation Regulations (Government Gazette)

❖ Home Affairs Regulations (Government Gazette)

❖ Memo - Face masks 5 April (Department of Health)

❖ COVID-19 Occupational Health and Safety Measures in Workplaces COVID-19 (C19 OHS), 2020 (Department of Employment and Labour)

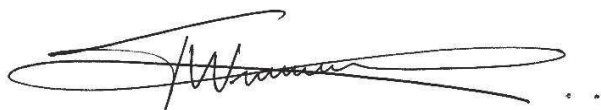# GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR

COVID-19 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES IN WORKPLACES COVID-19 (C19 OHS), 2020

No. R.

2020

DIRECTIVE BY THE MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR IN TERMS OF REGULATION 10 (8) OF THE REGULATIONS ISSUED BY THE MINISTER OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS IN TERMS OF SECTION 27 (2) OF THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT, 2002 (ACT NO. 57 OF 2002)

I, Thembelani Waltermade Nxesi, the Minister of Employment and Labour, acting in terms of Regulation 10 (8) of the Regulations issued by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in terms of section 27 (2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002) in terms of Regulation 10 (8) of the Regulations issued by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in terms of section 27 (2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002) has determined that it is necessary to adopt and implement occupational health and safety measures to (reduce and eliminate) the escalation of COVID-19 infections in workplaces as set out in the Schedule.

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MR. T. W. NXESI, MP
MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR
DATE: 28 APRIL 2020

COVID-19 Direction on Health and Safety in the Workplace

issued by the Minister in terms of Regulation 10(8) of the National Disaster Regulations

PREAMBLE

1. On 17 March 2020, the Department of Employment and Labour issued guidelines for employers to deal with COVID-19 at workplaces.[1] The Department of Employment and Labour appealed to employers to use the prescriptions of the OHSA in particular the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations governing workplaces in relation to Coronavirus Disease 2019 caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

2. In the period since the issuing of the guidelines, a clearer picture has emerged about COVID-19 and the nature of the hazard and risk in the workplace and the precautions that should be taken to minimise the risk. The purpose of these directives is to stipulate measures that must be taken by employers in order to protect the health and safety of workers and members of the public who enter their workplaces or are exposed to their working activities.

3. These directive seek to ensure that the measures taken by employers under OHSA are consistent with the overall national strategies and policies to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

4. The OHSA, read with its regulations and incorporated standards, requires the employer to provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable a working

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[1] http://www.labour.gov.za/DocumentCenter/Publications/Occupational%20Health%20and%20Safety/COVID-19%20Guideline%20Mar2020.pdf

environment that is safe and without risks to the health of workers and to take such steps as may be reasonably practicable to eliminate or mitigate the hazard or potential hazard.

5. The OHSA further requires employers, to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all persons who may be directly affected by their activities (such as customers, clients or contractors and their workers who enter their workplace or come into contact with their employees) are not exposed to hazards to their health or safety. This obligation also applies to self-employed persons (for example, plumbers or electricians) whose working activities bring them into contact with members of the public.

6. For the purposes of OHSA in the workplaces to which this Directive applies, the identifiable hazard relating to COVID-19 is that workers face is the transmission by an infected person to workers in the workplace. In workplaces to which the public has access, the hazard includes transmission of the virus by members of the public. Each situation requires special measures to be implemented by employers in order to prevent the transmission of the virus.

7. Although OHSA requires employers to review and update risk assessments on a regular basis, the new hazard posed by COVID-19 is clearly identifiable and the basic measures to eliminate or minimise the risk are now well known[2]. The object of conducting or updating a risk assessment in respect of COVID-19 is to provide specific focus on COVID-19 and adapt the measures required by this Directive to specific working environments taking into account the Risk Assessment Guides published online by the National Department of Health.

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[2] These basic measures may be further refined in the sector guidelines or in amendments to the direction as the science on the transmission of the disease progresses.

8. This Directive is based on infection transmission prevention and specific occupational hygiene practices that focus on the need for employers to implement measures to mitigate or eliminate the transmission of the virus in the workplace.

9. This Directive recognises that there are sector specific measures that need to be taken into account and accordingly provides for sector guidelines to supplement this Directive.

10. This Directive does not reduce the existing obligations of the employer in terms of OHSA nor prevent an employer from implementing more stringent measures in order to prevent the spread of the virus.

DEFINITIONS

11. In this Directive, unless the context indicates otherwise –

    "BCEA" means the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997);

    "COVID-19" means Coronavirus Disease 2019;

    "Disaster Management Act" means the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002);

    "OHSA" means the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993);

    "PPE" means personal protective equipment;

    "virus" means the SARS-CoV-2 virus;

    "worker" means any person who works in an employer's workplace including an employee of the employer or contractor, a self-employed person or volunteer[3];

    "workplace" means any premises or place where a person performs work.

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[3] The distinction between 'worker' and 'employee' in the Direction is used to ensure that all persons who in work in a workplace are protected and to locate the responsibility in respect of certain obligations imposed on the employer in respect of its employees such as an application for illness benefits or worker's compensation.

APPLICATION

12. Subject to clause 13, this Directive applies to employers and workers in respect of-

    12.1   the manufacturing, supply or provision of essential goods or essential services, as defined in Schedule 2 of the Regulations issued in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act;

    12.2   any workplace permitted to continue or commence operations before the expiry of those Regulations.

13. This Directive does not apply to workplaces-

    13.1   excluded from the OHSA in terms of section 1(3) of the OHSA;

    13.2   in which medical and health care services as defined in Schedule 2 in the Regulations issued in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act (other than retail pharmacies) are performed;

    13.3   in respect of which another Minister has issued a directive under those Regulations dealing with health and safety.

14. Subject to the employer's obligations under OHSA to conduct a risk assessment, employers with less than 10 employees need only apply the measures set out in clause 40 of this Directive.

Period of application

15. This Directive remains in force for as long as the declaration of a national disaster published in *Government Gazette* 43096 on 15 March 2020 remains in force.

Administrative measures

16. Every employer must establish the following administrative measures:

    16.1   It must undertake a risk assessment to give effect to the minimum measures required by this Directive taking into account the specific circumstances of the workplace.

16.2 If the employer employs more than 500 employees, that employer must submit a record of its risk assessment together with a written policy concerning the protection of the health and safety of its employees from COVID-19 as contemplated in section 7(1) of OHSA to-

16.2.1 Its health and safety committee established in terms of section 19 of OHSA; and

16.2.2 The Department of Employment and Labour.[4]

16.3 It must notify all workers of the contents of this Directive and the manner in which it intends to implement it;

16.4 It must notify its employees that if they are sick or have symptoms associated with the COVID–19 that they must not come to work and to take paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA;

16.5 It must appoint a manager to address employee or workplace representative concerns and to keep them informed and, in any workplace in which an health and safety committee has been elected, consult with that committee on the nature of the hazard in that workplace and the measures that need to be taken;

16.6 It must ensure that the measures required by this Directive and its risk assessment plan are strictly complied with through monitoring and supervision;

16.7 It must, as far as practicable, minimize the number of workers on at the workplace at any given time through rotation, staggered working hours, shift systems, remote working arrangements or similar measures in order to achieve social distancing, as contemplated in clause 17;

16.8 It must take measures to minimize contact between workers as well as between workers and members of the public;

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[4] Submission must be made to the Provincial Chief Inspector at http://www.labour.gov.za/About-Us/Ministry/Pages/IES0320-7398.aspx

16.9 It must provide workers with information that raises awareness in any form or manner, including where reasonably practicable leaflets and notices placed in conspicuous places in the workplace informing workers of the dangers of the virus, the manner of its transmission, the measures to prevent transmission such as personal hygiene, social distancing, use of masks, cough etiquette and where to go for screening or testing if presenting with the symptoms;

16.10 If a worker has been diagnosed with COVID-19, an employer must-

16.10.1.1 inform the Department of Health[5] and the Department of Employment and Labour; and

16.10.2 investigate the cause including any control failure and review its risk assessment to ensure that the necessary controls and PPE requirements are in place; and

16.11 it must give administrative support to any contact-tracing measures implemented by the Department of Health.

Social distancing measures

17. Every employer must arrange the workplace to ensure minimal contact between workers and as far as practicable ensure that there is a minimum of one and a half metres between workers while they are working, for example, at their workstations. Depending on the circumstances of the workplace or the nature of the sector, the minimum distance may need to be longer. Reducing the number of workers present in the workplace at any time in terms of clause 16.5 may assist in achieving the required social distancing.

18. If it is not practicable to arrange work stations to be spaced at least one and a half metres apart, the employer must-

18.1 arrange physical barriers to be placed between work stations or erected on work stations to form a solid physical barrier between workers while they are working; or

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[5] Report may be made to the COVID-19 hotline: 0800 02 9999.

18.2 if necessary, supply the employee free of charge with appropriate PPE based on a risk assessment of the working place.

19. Every employer must ensure that social distancing measures are implemented through supervision both in the workplace and in the common areas outside the immediate workplace through queue control or within the workplace such as canteens and lavatories. These measures may include dividing the workforce into groups or staggering break-times to avoid the concentration of workers in common areas.

Health and safety measures

20. Every employer must implement the following health and safety measures.

Symptom screening[6]

21. Every employer must take measures to-
    21.1 screen any worker, at the time that they report for work, to ascertain whether they have any of the observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever, cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);
    21.2 require every worker to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness; and
    21.3 require workers to immediately inform the employer if they experience any of the symptoms in sub-clauses 21.1 and 21.2 while at work.

22. Employers must comply with any guidelines issued by the the National Department of Health in consultation with the Department in respect of –
    22.1 symptom screening; and

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[6] For more specific guidelines see: Department of Health "Guidelines for symptom monitoring and management of essential workers for COVID-19 related infection".

22.2 if in addition required to do so, medical surveillance and testing.

23. If a worker presents with those symptoms, or advises the employer of these symptoms, the employer must –

23.1 not permit the worker to enter the workplace or report for work; or

23.2 if the worker is already at work immediately-

23.2.1 isolate the worker, provide the worker with a FFP1 surgical mask and arrange for the worker to be transported in a manner that does not place other workers or members of the public at risk either to be self-isolated or for a medical examination or testing; and

23.2.2 assess the risk of transmission, disinfect the area and the worker's workstation, refer those workers who may be at risk for screening and take any other appropriate measure to prevent possible transmission;

23.3 ensure that the worker is tested or referred to an identified testing site;

23.4 place its employee on paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA or if the employee's sick leave entitlement under the section is exhausted, make application for an illness benefit in terms of clause 4 of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020 on the COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme under regulation 10(8) of the Regulations promulgated in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act;

23.5 ensure that the employee is not discriminated against on grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19 in terms of section 6 of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998);

23.6 if there is evidence that the worker contracted COVID-19 as a result of occupational exposure, lodge a claim for compensation in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993) in accordance with Notice 193 published on 3 March 2020.[7]

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[7] GG 43126 GN193 of 23 March 2020.

24. If a worker has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and isolated in accordance with the Department of Health Guidelines, an employer may only allow a worker to return to work on the following conditions:

24.1 The worker has undergone a medical evaluation confirming that the worker has been tested negative for COVID-19;

24.2 the employer ensures that personal hygiene, wearing of masks, social distancing, and cough etiquette is strictly adhered to by the worker; and

24.3 the employer closely monitors the worker for symptoms on return to work.

Sanitizers, disinfectants and other measures

25. For the purposes of these clauses, a hand sanitizer must be one that has at least 70% alcohol content and is in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Health.

26. Every employer must, free of charge, ensure that –

26.1 there are sufficient quantities of hand sanitizer based on the number of workers or other persons who access the workplace at the entrance of, and in, the workplace which the workers or other persons are required to use;

26.2 every employee who works away from the workplace, other than at home, must be provided with an adequate supply of hand sanitizer.

27. If a worker interacts with the public, the employer must provide the worker with sufficient supplies of hand-sanitizer at that worker's workstation for both the worker and the person with whom the worker is interacting.

28. Every employer must take measures to ensure that-

28.1 all work surfaces and equipment are disinfected before work begins, regularly during the working period and after work ends;

28.2 all areas such as toilets, common areas, door handles, shared electronic equipment are regularly cleaned and disinfected;

28.3 disable biometric systems or make them COVID-19-proof.

29. The employer must ensure that-

    29.1 there are adequate facilities for the washing of hands with soap and clean water;

    29.2 only paper towels are provided to dry hands after washing – the use of fabric toweling is prohibited;

    29.3 the workers are required to wash their hands and sanitize their hands regularly while at work;

    29.4 the workers interacting with the public are instructed to sanitize their hands between each interaction with public;

    29.5 surfaces that workers and members of the public come into contact with are routinely cleaned and disinfected.

Cloth masks

30. The main benefit of everyone wearing a cloth mask is to reduce the amount of virus droplets being coughed up by those with the infection and transmitted to others and to surfaces that others may touch. Since some persons with the virus may not have symptoms or may not know they have it, the Department of Health requires that all persons wear cloth masks when in a public place.

31. For the reasons underlying the Department of Health's requirement, every employer must –

    31.1 provide each of its employees, free of charge, with a minimum of two cloth masks, which comply with the requirement set out in the Guidelines issued by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition,[8] for the employee to wear while at work and while commuting to and from work; and

    31.2 require any other worker to wear masks in the workplace.

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[8] http://www.thedtic.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/Updated_Recommended_Guidelines_Fabric_Face_Masks.pdf .

32. The number and replaceability of cloth masks that must be provided to an employee or required of other workers must be determined in accordance with any sectoral guideline and in the light of the employee or worker's conditions of work, in particular, where these may result in the mask becoming wet or soiled.

33. Every employer must ensure that workers are informed, instructed, trained and instructed as to the correct use of cloth masks.

34. An employer must make appropriate arrangements for the washing, drying and ironing of cloth masks in accordance with the Guidelines referred in clause 31.1 recommendations.

35. The general requirement for workers to wear masks does not derogate from the fact that, where a risk assessment indicates that PPE is required, those categories of workers must be provided with the accredited PPE in accordance with Department of Health guidelines.

Measures in respect of workplaces to which public have access

36. The principal purpose of the measures contained in the following clause is to protect workers from being exposed to the virus through their interaction with the public and to protect members of the public from being exposed to virus through their interaction with workers or other persons present in such a workplace.

37. Depending on what is reasonably practicable given the nature of the workplace, every employer must-

   37.1 arrange the workplace to ensure that there is a distance at least one and a half metres between workers and members of the public or between members of the public; or

   37.2 put in place physical barriers or provide workers with face shields or visors;

37.3 if appropriate, undertake symptom screening measures of persons other than the employees entering the workplace with due regard to available technology and any guidelines issued by the Department of Health;

37.4 if appropriate, display notices advising persons other than employees entering the workplace of the precautions they are required to observe while in the workplace;

37.5 require members of the public, including suppliers, to wear masks when inside their premises.

Ventilation

38. Every employer must –

38.1 keep the workplace well ventilated by natural or mechanical means to reduce the SARS-CoV-2 viral load;

38.2 where reasonably practicable, have an effective local extraction ventilation system with high-efficiency particulate air HEPA filters, which is regularly cleaned and maintained, and its vents do not feed back in through open windows;

38.3 ensure that filters are cleaned and replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions by a competent person.

Other PPE

39. Every employer must check regularly on the websites of the National Department of Health[9], National Institute of Communicable Diseases[10] and the National Institute for Occupational Health[11] whether any additional PPE is required or recommended in any guidelines given the nature of the workplace or the nature of a worker's duties.

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[9] http://www.health.gov.za/
[10] https://www.nicd.ac.za/
[11] http://www.nioh.ac.za/

SMALL BUSINESSES

40. Employers with less than 10 employees must take the following measures:

    40.1 arrange the workplace to ensure that employees are at least one and half metres apart or, if not practicable, place physical barriers between them to prevent the possible transmission of the virus;

    40.2 ensure that employees that present with the symptoms set out in clause 21 are not permitted to work;

    40.3 immediately contact the COVID-19 hotline: 0800 02 9999 for instruction and direct the employee to act in accordance with those instructions;

    40.4 provide cloth masks or require an employee to wear some form of cloth covering over their mouth and nose while at work;

    40.5 provide each employee with hand sanitizers, soap and clean water to wash their hands and disinfectants to sanitize their workstations;

    40.6 ensure that each employee while at work washes with soap and sanitizes their hands; and

    40.7 ensure that their workstations are disinfected regularly;

    40.8 take any other measures indicated by a risk assessment.

Worker obligations

41. In addition to the obligations of employees under the OHSA, every worker is obliged to comply with measures introduced by their employer as required by this Directive.

Monitoring and enforcing the Directive

42. An inspector designated in terms of section 28 of OHSA may perform any of the functions in section 29 of OHSA and exercise any of the powers listed in section 30 of OHSA in order to monitor compliance with this Directive.

43. In so far as any contravention of this Directive constitutes a contravention of an obligation or prohibition under OHSA, the offences and penalties provided for in section 38 of OHSA apply.

44. An inspector, contemplated in clause 42, may for the purpose of promoting, monitoring and enforcing compliance with the OHSA, advise employees and employers of their rights and obligations in terms of this Directive in accordance with section 64 of the BCEA.

Sectoral guidelines

45. The Chief Inspector appointed in terms of section 27 the OHSA must facilitate the development of sector specific guidelines to supplement this Directive by engaging with the social partners through the offices of the National Economic Development and Labour Advisory Council.

46. The sector specific guidelines must follow the template attached as Annexure A.

ANNEXTURE A

SECTORAL GUIDELINES TEMPLATE

1. **Risk assessment**

    1.1. Identification of exposure levels

    1.2. Identification of "high contact" activities

    1.3. Identification of vulnerable workers and special measures for their protection, including protection against unfair discrimination or victimization

2. **Engineering controls**

    2.1. Ventilation

    2.2. Physical barriers

    2.3. Adaptation of workstations to increase social distance

3. **Administrative controls**

    3.1. Screening/ reporting of symptoms/ sick leave

    3.2. Minimizing contact

    3.3. Rotation and shift work

    3.4. Work-at-home strategies

    3.5. Communication and information strategies

    3.6. Role of health and safety committees and representatives

    3.7. Education and training

    3.8. Reporting of incidents for regulatory purposes

    3.9. Reporting for purposes of public health, contact tracing, screening, testing and surveillance

4. **Healthy and safe work practices**

    4.1. Disinfectants, sanitisers and personal hygiene

    4.2. Other

5. **PPE**

    5.1. Masks

    5.2. Gloves

    5.3. Facial shields

5.4. Other

6. **Provision of safe transport for employees**

6.1. Personal hygiene

6.2. Social distancing

6.3. Arrangements to minimise exposure associated with commuting

6.4. Cloth masks (if commuter)

6.5. PPE (driver/conductor of employer-provided transport)

health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Specialised health risk assessment for workplaces (by employers and self-employed persons)

(Document prepared by the Risk Assessment Group within the Occupational Health and Safety Workstream of the National Department of Health – Covid-19 Response)

> **Please note: This is an <u>interim guide</u> that may be updated as the outbreak in South Africa intensifies, to guide additional workforce preserving strategies; Version 1, 17 April 2020**

Purpose

This guide is to be used by employers or self-employed persons to assess the potential risk of exposure to COVID-19 infection and control measures at all workplaces. (*SARS-CoV-2 virus is the causative virus of Covid-19*).

Objectives

i)   To identify and assess the potential risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 virus at workplaces

ii)   To identify control measures (or the absence of control measures) and assess their effectiveness to reduce the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 virus from recognised and unrecognised sources of infection in a workplace

iii)   To inform the employer of the risk of potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2 virus and additional controls that might be required.

Requirements for the protection of employees against hazardous biological agents (HBA) such as SARS-CoV-2 virus are covered in the South African Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993, Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents, 2001.

This guide serves as a departure point for employers, self-employed persons and appropriately qualified persons to guide their COVID-19 Risk Assessments. This content must not be regarded as the absolute content of a Risk Assessment, rather it is the minimum requirements.

1. Risk assessment by the employer or self-employed person

1.1.   Regulation 6(1) of the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001) requires an employer or self-employed person to determine if any person might have been exposed to a HBA.

1.2.   The relevant health and safety representative or relevant health and safety committee must first be consulted before proceeding with the risk assessment.

1.3.   The employer must inform the relevant health and safety representative or relevant health and safety committee in writing of the arrangements made for the risk assessment, give them reasonable time to comment thereon and ensure the outcomes and findings of the risk assessments are made available to the relevant health and safety representative or relevant health and safety committee, which may comment thereon.

1.4.   The employer or self-employed person must keep a record of the risk assessment and consider matters such as:
   i)   the nature and dose of the SARS-CoV-2 virus to which an employee may be exposed and the suspected route of exposure and exposure scenarios;
   ii)   where SARS-CoV-2 virus might be present and it what physical form it is likely to be;
   iii)   the nature of the work, process and any reasonable deterioration, ot failure of, any control measure;
   iv)   what effects the SARS-CoV-2 virus can have on an employee; and
   v)   the period of exposure

1.5.   An employer or a self-employed person must cause the risk assessment to be conducted based on all available information as far as is reasonably practicable, including:
   i)   classification of SARS-CoV-2 virus into the relevant risk group, according to its level of risk of infection;
   ii)   recommendations Organisations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) or a competent person regarding the control measures necessary in order to protect the health of employees against SARS-CoV-2 virus as a result of their work; and
   iii)   knowledge of diseases from which employees might be suffering and which may be aggravated by conditions at the workplace.

1.6.   An employer must review the risk assessment if there-
   i)   Is a reason to suspect that the previous assessment is no longer valid; or
   ii)   A change in process or numbers of employees that may lead transmission risk or
   iii)   Following a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case at the workplace

1.7.   The outcomes and findings of the risk assessments must inform the programme to monitor the exposure of employees to COVID-19 as well as the programme of medical surveillance.

2. Risk management and control measures

2.1.   Annexure 2 of the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001) sets out a hierarchy of control measures using standard and transmission-based precautions.

2.2.   Personal protective equipment should be appropriate to the route of transmission eg. respirators, impermeable gloves, supply, selection, training, separate storage, decontamination or sterilisation.

2.3.   Testing of engineering control measures should be conducted every 24 months by an approved HBA inspection authority (retaining records for at least 3 years).

2.4.   Annexure D of the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001) sets out requirements for the labelling, packaging, transporting and storage in special containers marked with the biohazard sign.

2.5.   The employer must have written procedures for disposal of HBA to a designated site in terms of the Environmental Conservation Act and decontamination or disinfection of all containers.

3. Competencies

3.1.   The Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001) don't define any competency requirements for conduction HBA risk assessments (or for the monitoring of exposure at the workplace). Employers and self-employed persons are advised to ensure anyone engaged to undertake an HBA risk assessment is competent in risk assessment processes and is familiar with the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001). Knowledge of the HBA of concern (in this case SARS-CoV-2 virus) and HBA in general is advisable. It is recommended that the services of a registered Occupational Hygienist or certified Safety Professional is obtained to undertake the COVID-19 risk assessments.

3.2.   Regulation 12.(b) of the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents (2001) requires that examinations and tests of engineering control measures be carried out at intervals not exceeding 24 months by an approved HBA inspection authority or by a person whose ability to do the measurements, analysis and tests is verified by such an approved HBA inspection authority.

4. Guidance notes

4.1. Anticipated high exposure areas depending on the sector, that will need immediate assessment, then others that will require assessment, less urgently include the following areas:
- Entry points to the workplace
- Change house facilities
- On-site canteen and similar dining areas
- Waiting areas
- Evacuation and gathering places
- Etc.

4.2. Persons Under Investigation (PUI)

The risk assessment must include the potential to screen employees entering the workplace, and the appropriate measures to manage suspect employees (PUI). The risk assessment should also include chaperoning of PUI to the next point at the workplace (PUI should not be left wandering around, getting lost, removing mask etc.). Preferably, a cordoned-off walkway (or at least marked walkway) should be present directing the PUI to the next point at the workplace – ideally to an isolation zone. The risk assessment must also include assessments of the controls within this isolation zone – 1.5m social distancing, presence of barriers, identification of contact points etc.

COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report

Site:	Sector*:		Date:		
Department:			Risk Assessor:	Name & Surname	Signature
Work Area/s:			Employer:	Name & Surname	Signature
Occupations in Area:			Health & Safety Representative:	Name & Surname	Signature

Risk Assessment								
Source of Hazard	Route of exposure	Activities & tasks	Existing Control Measures	Control effectiveness	Risk classification	Additional Controls Required	Responsible person(s)	Due Date/s

Department of Employment and Labour Exposure Risk Classification

Low Exposure Risk	Medium Exposure Risk	High Exposure Risk	Very High Exposure Risk
Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be or suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2, nor frequent close contact with (i.e. within 2 meter of) the general public.	Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e. within 2 meters of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients.	High exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19.	Very high exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures.

*Mining, Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, Manufacturing, Service

COVID-19 Walk-through Risk Assessment

(Document prepared by the Risk Assessment Group within the Occupational Health and Safety Workstream of the National Department of Health – Covid-19 Response)

Please note: This is an <u>interim guide</u> that may be updated as the outbreak in South Africa intensifies, to guide additional workforce preserving strategies Version 1, 17 April 2020

Purpose

This tool is to be used by Occupational Health and Safety professionals at workplaces to assess:
- the potential risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 virus;
- current control measures; and
- provides recommendations for their management.

Objectives

i) To identify and assess the potential risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 virus at workplaces
ii) To identify control measures (or the absence of control measures) and assess their effectiveness to prevent exposure
iii) To inform the management of the risk of potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2 virus and additional controls that might be required.

Guidance note (example of a health facility)

Anticipated high exposure areas that will need immediate assessment, then others that will require assessment, less urgently include the following areas:

1. Entry points to the workplace
2. Change house facilities
3. On-site canteen and similar dining areas
4. Waiting areas
5. Evacuation and gathering places
6. Etc.

COVID-19 Walk-through risk assessment				
Site:	Sector*:	Date:		
Department:		Risk Assessor:	Name & Surname	Signature
Work Area/s:		Area Supervisor:	Name & Surname	Signature
Occupations in Area:		Health & Safety Representative:	Name & Surname	Signature

*Mining, Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, Manufacturing, Service

COVID-19 Walk-trough risk assessment summary of non-compliance				
Requirement	**Finding**	**Recommendation**	**Responsible person**	**Due date**

No	Requirement	Status			Comments
		Yes	No	NA	
1.	**Basic education & awareness campaigns**				
1.1	Staff COVID-19 education/communication programme				
1.2	Contractor staff COVID-19 education/communication programme				
1.3	PPE donning and doffing training programme				
1.4	Health status self-monitoring and reporting /or questionnaire for employees				
2.	**Hygiene / cleaning measures**				
2.1	Work surfaces are decontaminated with appropriate disinfectants at appropriate intervals				
2.2	Equipment are decontaminated before and after use				
2.4	Hand washing basin is present (located near room exit)				
2.5	Soap and paper towel available at handwashing basin				
2.6	Hand washing procedure is done, on entering the workplace, after removing PPE, and before leaving the workplace)				
2.9	Additional sanitation facilities (e.g. hand sanitizers, etc.) at door entrances				

3.	**Reduce physical contact (social distancing)**				
3.1	Facility access and visitation is limited or restricted				
3.2	Limits crowds or gatherings (e.g. large groups >10 or groups in restricted spaces)				
3.3	Discourage physical contact of employees (e.g. handshakes, hugs)				
3.4	Closure of communal areas (e.g. gyms)				
3.5	Scatter dining and 1.5-meter distance while dining and not sitting face-to-face. Separate utensils and frequent disinfect.				
3.6	Eliminate frequent contact of surfaces (e.g. leave door open were possible)				
3.7	Stagger tea and lunch breaks to limit employee groupings				
3.8	Working places rearranged to ensure maximum distance between employees				
3.9	No clustering at in elevators. Elevators not to take more than 50% of their carrying capacity.				
3.10	Employees, contractors and visitors entering the facility are screened for COVID-19 symptoms				
3.11	Employees, contractors and visitors entering the facility who screen positive for COVID-19 symptoms are immediately provided with 'patient' masks.				
3.12	PUIs are chaperoned to the next point at the workplace and preferably, a cordoned-off walkway (or at least marked walkway) is present directing the PUI to the next point at the workplace.				
3.13	An isolation zone is provided for PUIs and the isolation zone allows for 1.5 m spacing, presence of barriers, etc.				
4.	**Engineering control measures**				
4.1	Mechanical ventilation is in working order (inward flow, not recirculated to other areas of building, HEPA filtered when reconditioned and recirculated in laboratory, exhausted air discharged through HEPA filters)				
4.2					
4.3					
4.3	Sufficient air changes and indoor air quality of an acceptable standard				

4.4	Physical barriers / screens as a barrier between personnel and visitors				
4.5	If A/C must be used, disable re-circulation of internal air. Weekly clean/disinfect/replace key components and filters.				
5.	**Administrative controls**				
5.1	Reliable and sustainable source for procurement of key components, including PPE				
5.2	Adequate supplies of PPE, sanitary materials and cleaning products				
	Procedures are in place for personnel to self-check and/or supervisors and colleagues to verify that all relevant PPE is used by personnel during all shifts (e.g. checklists, briefing sessions etc.)				
5.3	Emergency communication plans are current and in place				
5.4	Access to psychological support services				
5.5	Is the COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for South Africa available, and have they been explained to employees?				
6.	**Personal Protective Equipment**				
6.1	PPE is selected based on a documented risk assessment, and should meet the minimum recommendations without using excessive PPE for the setting/task				
6.2	PPE must be available in the appropriate sizes				
6.3	Disposable gloves				
6.4	Disposable plastic apron				
6.5	Closed shoes, non-slip soles and shoe covers				
6.6	Eye protection (goggles/face shield or visors)				
6.7	Respiratory protection (FFP2/N95 or better respirators) for high risk situations (e.g. aerosol-generating procedures), and surgical masks for infectious persons				
6.8	Each employee has been supplied with a minimum of two cloth masks?				
6.9	PPE is consistently and properly worn when required				
6.10	PPE is regular inspected, maintained and replaced, as necessary				

6.11	PPE is properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.				
6.12	Documented respiratory fitment programme that includes fit testing, training, and medical assessments				
6.13	Facial hair (clean shaving) policy for areas where respirators are mandatory.				
7.	**Safe work practices**				
7.2	Eating, drinking, application of cosmetics and smoking in workplaces is prohibited				
7.3	No storage of food or drink or personal items (coats, bags) in work area				
7.4	Materials (pens, pencils, gum, etc.) is not placed in the mouth while in the laboratory or clinical setting				
7.7	Mobile electronic devices kept in areas where they cannot be contaminated, if not decontaminated frequently				
7.8					
7.9	Working places rearranged to ensure maximum distance between employees				
8.	**Waste management**				
8.1	Waste management policy and contract with service provider				
8.2	Waste management contractor complies with occupational health and safety requirements for their employees.				
8.3	Records of waste removal, destruction, and treatment available				
10.	**Emergency response**				
10.1	Response plan in case someone becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace				

10.2	Suspected COVID-19 case isolation areas and protocols				
10.3	System to track and trace potential interactions				
10.4	Self-quarantine protocols available and current				

health
Department: Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Guidelines for symptom monitoring and management of essential workers for COVID-19 related infection

(Document prepared by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee – Covid-19 Response)

Please note: This is an <u>interim guide</u> that may be updated as the outbreak in South Africa intensifies, to guide additional workforce preserving strategies. (CDC. Operational Considerations for the Identification of Healthcare Workers and Inpatients with Suspected COVID-19 in non-US Healthcare Settings; accessed 12 April 2020)

BACKGROUND

These guidelines are applicable to all essential services workers covered by regulation GN R.398 of *Government Gazette* 43148 under section 3 of the Disaster Management Act, 1957 (Act 57 of 2002) as amended on 25 March 2020 wherein essential services are defined in Annexure B (see Addendum 1). The aim of this guideline is to enable:

1. Early and timeous identification and diagnosis of workers at risk of COVID-19 infection

2. Early referral for appropriate treatment, care and timeous return to work of affected workers

3. The protection of other unaffected workers, consumers, visitors and clients of these groups of workers

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE

1. Employees should be screened for COVID-19 related symptoms and report such symptoms to a designated person and / or occupational health practitioner prior to entry into the workplace or work area in order for a decision to be made as to the staff member's continued attendance at work.

2. At the start of a shift and prior to ending the shift, designated persons and / or occupational health practitioner must check with employees whether they have experienced sudden onset of any of the following symptoms: cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever/chills (or ≥ 38°C measured temperature if this is available at the worksite), in the past 24 hours as outlined in the symptom monitoring sheet. These are the current criteria for the identification of persons under investigation (PUI).

3. Should an employee report any of the abovementioned symptoms, s/he should immediately be provided with a surgical mask and referred to the designated staff at the workplace so that arrangements can be made for COVID-19 testing at the closest testing centre.

4. Should an employee report any additional symptoms as outlined in the symptom monitoring sheet, s/he should be provided with a surgical mask and referred to the occupational health clinic, family practitioner or primary care clinic for further clinical evaluation and requirement for COVID-19 testing if indicated.

5. On receiving their results the employee and/or health professional supporting the employee should notify their workplace so that the employee is managed accordingly. The workplace should proactively take steps to obtain this information to avoid any delays in reporting.

6. The employee should be managed according to either scenario 1 or 2 in the algorithm outlined below.

7. A positive COVID-19 test in an employee will require all potential contacts in the workplace to be assessed using scenarios 3 or 4 in the algorithm outlined below.

8. All employees on returning to work after isolation or quarantine period, should follow general work restrictions that include:
- undergo medical evaluation to confirm that they are fit to work
- wearing of surgical masks at all times while at work for a period of 21 days from the initial test
- implement social distancing measures as appropriate (in the case of health workers avoiding contact with severely immunocompromised patients)
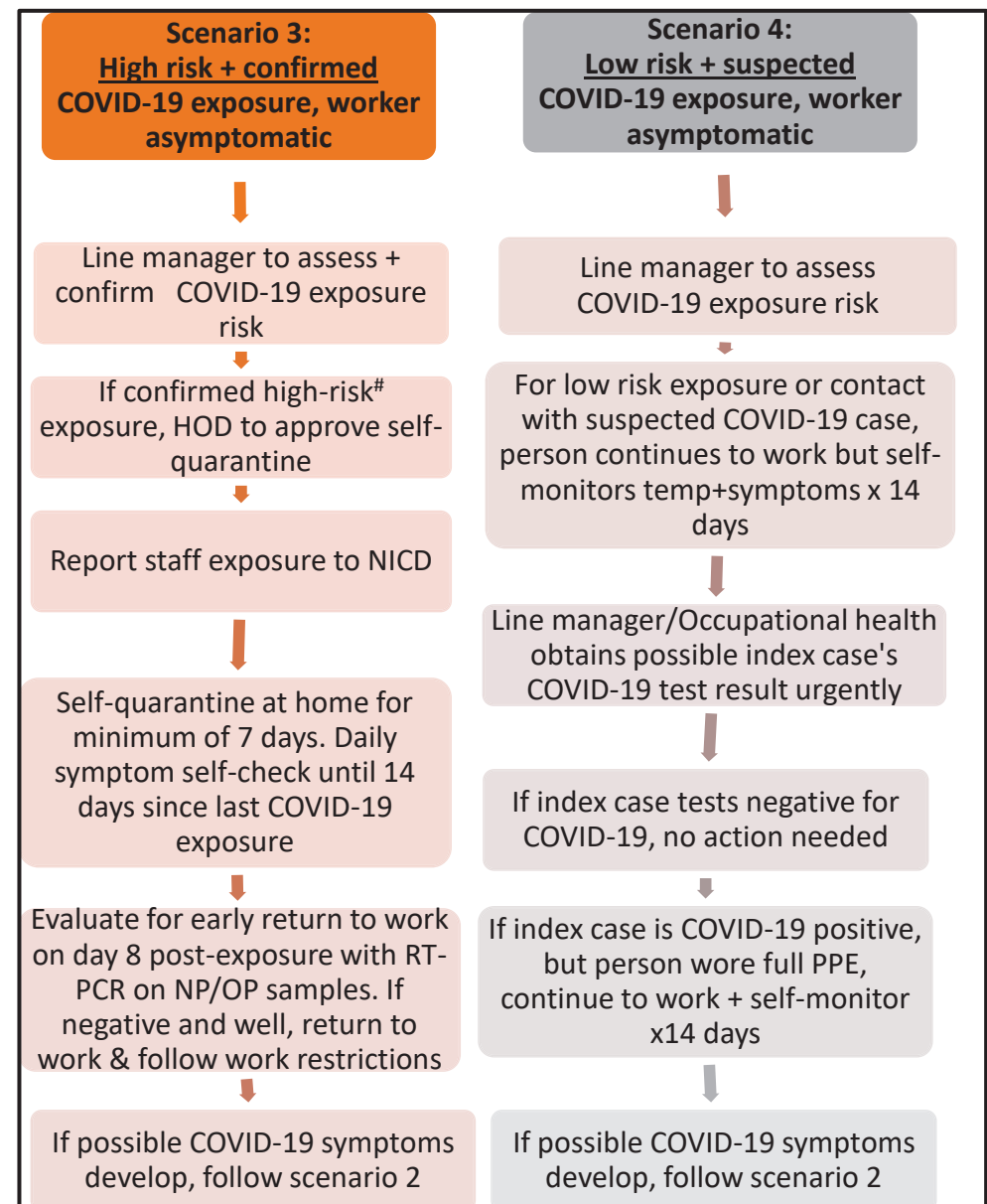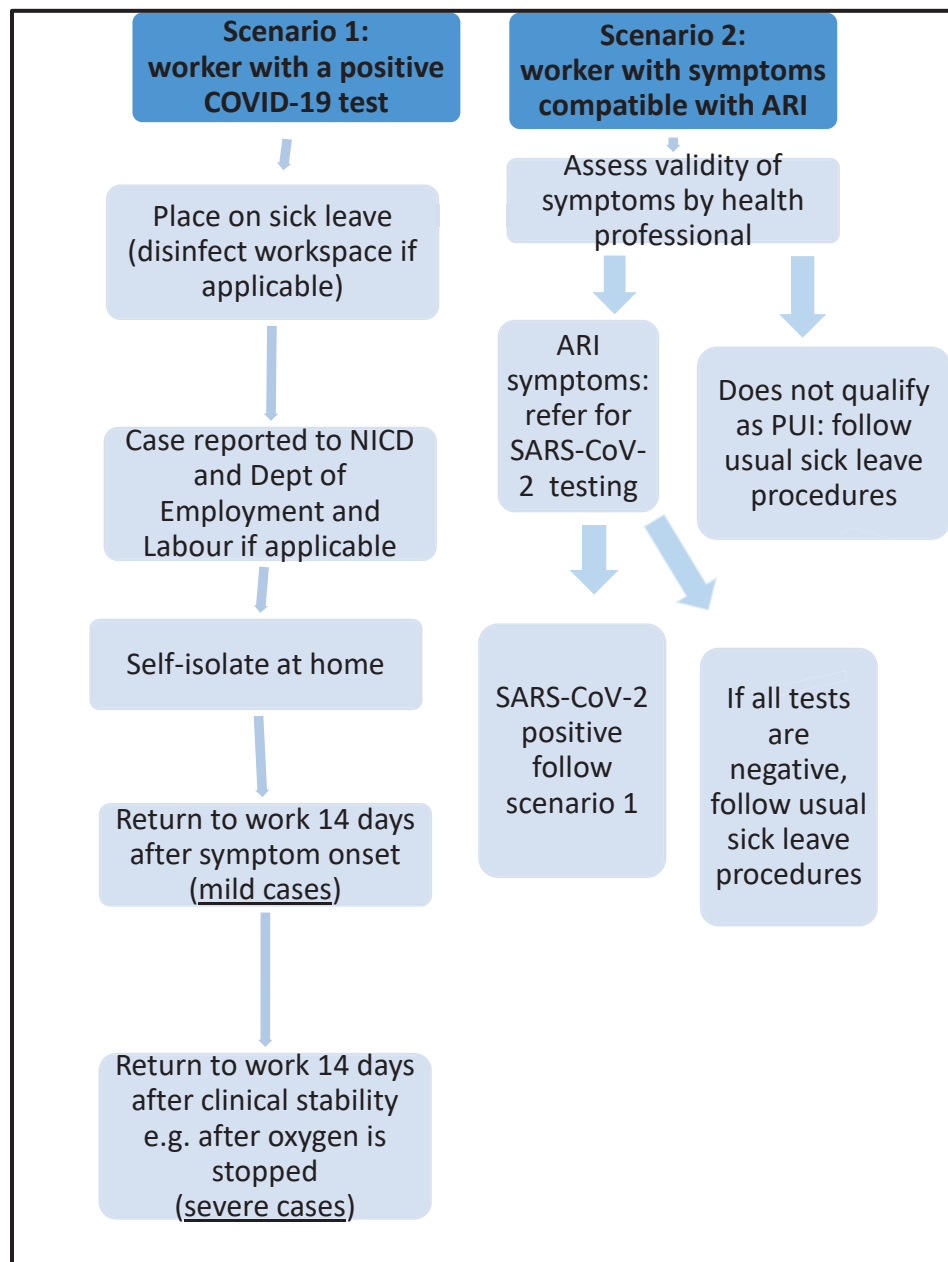
- adherence to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette
- continued self-monitoring for symptoms, and seek medical re-evaluation if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen

REFERENCES

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3. NICD Clinical management of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 disease Version 3 (accessed 30 March 2020)

4. van Someren Gréve F, Ong DSY. Seasonal respiratory viruses in adult ICU patients. Netherlands Journal of Critical Care. 2017;25(6):198-204.

5. Risk assessment and management of exposure of health care workers in the context of COVID-19 Interim guidance. World Health Organization. 19 March 2020. Available from: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331496/WHO-2019-nCov-HW_risk_assessment-2020.2-eng.pdf (accessed 30 March 2020)

Surname			First Name			Date of Birth	
Contact Cell number			**E-mail address**		**Category of Essential Worker (Select from addendum 1)**		
Alternative contact number					**Job Title**		
Next of Kin or Alternative Contact (Please provide name, relationship and contact details)							
Work address & details:							
Home address:							
Days post exposure	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Date: DD/MM							
Document morning + evening	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**	**AM / PM**
Temperature (no meds)	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Respiratory rate	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Pulse rate	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Symptoms (Circle Y or N)	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**
Fever/Chills	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Cough	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Sore throat	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Shortness of breath	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Body aches	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Redness of the eyes	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Loss of smell OR loss of taste	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Nausea/vomiting/diarrhoea	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Fatigue/ weakness	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
At Home or work?	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W
Clinical and Progress Notes and Exposure History:							

			First Name			Date of Birth	
Surname			First Name			Date of Birth	
Contact Cell number			E-mail address		Category of Essential Worker		
Alternative contact number					Job Title		
Next of Kin or Alternative Contact (Please provide name, relationship and contact details)							
Work address & details:							
Home address:							
Days post exposure	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**
Date: DD/MM							
Document morning + evening	AM / PM	AM / PM	AM / PM	AM / PM	AM / PM	AM / PM	AM / PM
Temperature (no meds)	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Respiratory rate	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Pulse rate	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Symptoms (Circle Y or N)	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**	**Daily**
Fever/Chills	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Cough	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Sore throat	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Shortness of breath	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Body aches	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Redness of the eyes	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Loss of smell OR loss of taste	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Nausea/vomiting/diarrhoea	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Fatigue/ weakness	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
At Home or work?	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W	H / W
Clinical and Progress Notes and Exposure History:							

Scenario 1:
worker with a positive COVID-19 test

↓

Place on sick leave (disinfect workspace if applicable)

↓

Case reported to NICD and Dept of Employment and Labour if applicable

↓

Self-isolate at home

↓

Return to work 14 days after symptom onset (mild cases)

↓

Return to work 14 days after clinical stability e.g. after oxygen is stopped (severe cases)

Scenario 2:
worker with symptoms compatible with ARI

↓

Assess validity of symptoms by health professional

↓ ↓

ARI symptoms: refer for SARS-CoV-2 testing

Does not qualify as PUI: follow usual sick leave procedures

↓ ↓

SARS-CoV-2 positive follow scenario 1

If all tests are negative, follow usual sick leave procedures

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Scenario 3:
High risk + confirmed COVID-19 exposure, worker asymptomatic

↓

Line manager to assess + confirm COVID-19 exposure risk

↓

If confirmed high-risk# exposure, HOD to approve self-quarantine

↓

Report staff exposure to NICD

↓

Self-quarantine at home for minimum of 7 days. Daily symptom self-check until 14 days since last COVID-19 exposure

↓

Evaluate for early return to work on day 8 post-exposure with RT-PCR on NP/OP samples. If negative and well, return to work & follow work restrictions

↓

If possible COVID-19 symptoms develop, follow scenario 2

Scenario 4:
Low risk + suspected COVID-19 exposure, worker asymptomatic

↓

Line manager to assess COVID-19 exposure risk

↓

For low risk exposure or contact with suspected COVID-19 case, person continues to work but self-monitors temp+symptoms x 14 days

↓

Line manager/Occupational health obtains possible index case's COVID-19 test result urgently

↓

If index case tests negative for COVID-19, no action needed

↓

If index case is COVID-19 positive, but person wore full PPE, continue to work + self-monitor x14 days

↓

If possible COVID-19 symptoms develop, follow scenario 2

Scenario 1: **worker with a confirmed positive COVID-19 test**	To remain consistent with the advice in the NDOH clinical management of COVID-19 disease Guideline[3], scenario 1 (COVID-19 confirmed in a worker), will require self-isolation of staff member for 14 days after symptom onset (mild cases) and 14 days after clinical stability (severe cases). Should an early return to work policy be needed in future owing to severe workforce shortages, the US CDC criteria may be re-considered.[1]
Scenario 2: **worker with current flu-like symptoms**	Consider latest NICD and international criteria (US CDC): any staff in with direct COVID-19 contact who develops an acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, sore throat) with or without fever (≥38°C) or history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills) is a suspected COVID-19 case. Complete NICD PUI form[2] and select appropriate essential worker tick box PLUS notify to NICD. Perform SARS-C0V-2 RT-PCR testing. For staff, with a negative RT-PCR test, but high-risk COVID-19 exposure and COVID-19 compatible symptoms, discuss with occupational health/infectious diseases regarding the need for further testing and/or self-quarantine. If an alternate diagnosis is made (e.g. influenza), the criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis and duration of infectivity for other respiratory infections.[4]
Scenario 3: **High risk, confirmed COVID-19 exposure, asymptomatic**	**High risk exposure**: **close contact within 1 metre of a COVID-19 confirmed case for >15 minutes without PPE (no face cover/eye cover) or with failure of PPE and/or direct contact with respiratory secretions of confirmed COVID-19 case (clinical or laboratory)**. Line manager to assess and confirm COVID-19 exposure risk (if uncertain, refer to WHO tool for assessing exposure risk).[5] Notify exposure to NICD. Staff member to perform daily symptom self-check and complete symptom monitoring form until 14 days since last COVID-19 exposure. If asymptomatic through day 7, consider for return to work, following a negative RT-PCR on day 8
Scenario 4: **Low risk, suspected COVID-19 exposure, asymptomatic**	**Low risk exposure: >1 metre away from a COVID-19 confirmed case for <15 minutes OR within 1 meter but wearing PPE (face cover, eye cover). Also consider lower risk if COVID case was wearing a surgical mask (source control).** Line manager to assess and confirm COVID-19 exposure risk (if uncertain, refer to WHO tool for assessing exposure risk.[5] For low-risk exposures to a confirmed COVID-19 positive case, worker can **continue to work with self-monitoring** (twice daily temperature and daily symptom check) for 14 days after last COVID-19 exposure. (use symptom monitoring form below)

ADDENDUM 1: CATEGORISATION OF ESSSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES DURING LOCKDOWN - REGULATION 11A

Categories of essential services shall be confined to the following services:

1. Medical, Health (including Mental Health), Laboratory and Medical services;
2. Disaster Management, Fire Prevention, Fire Fighting and Emergency services;
3. Financial services and Insurance services;
4. Production and sale of essential goods (food, cleaning and hygiene products, medical, fuel, basic goods (e.g. airtime, electricity);
5. Grocery stores, including spaza shops;
6. Electricity, water, gas and fuel production, supply and maintenance;
7. Critical government services including social grant payments
8. Birth and death certificates, and replacement identification documents;
9. Essential municipal services;
10. Care services and social relief of distress;
11. Funeral services, including mortuaries;
12. Wildlife Management, Anti-poaching, Animal Care and Veterinary services;
13. Newspaper, broadcasting and telecommunication infrastructure and services;
14. Production and sale of any supplies for the medical or retail sector;
15. Cleaning, sanitation, sewerage, waste and refuse removal services;
16. Courts and legal services;
17. Essential SARS services defined by the Commissioner of SARS;
18. Police, peace officers, traffic officers, military medical personnel and soldiers, correctional services officials and traffic management services;
19. Postal services and courier services related to transport of medical products;
20. Private security services;
21. Air-traffic Navigation, Civil Aviation Authority, Cargo Shipping and dockyard services;
22. Gold, gold refinery, coal and essential mining;
23. Accommodation used for persons rendering essential services;
24. Production, manufacturing, supply, logistics, transport, delivery, critical maintenance and repair in relation to the rendering of essential services including components and equipment;
25. Transport services for persons rendering essential services;
26. Services rendered by politicians in local, provincial and national government;
27. Commissioners of Section 9 structures
28. Transport and logistics in respect of essential goods to neighbouring countries.

Recommended Guidelines – updated

Fabric Face Masks
Manufactured by South Africa's
Clothing and Textile Manufacturing Industry for General Public Use

Friday, 24 April 2020

Table of Contents

1 Overview

A 'fabric/cloth' face mask (non-medical mask) for the general public is only part of a broader solution to curb the spread of COVID-19[1] and it must always be used in combination with other hygienic methods of prevention[2]. Such masks are not a replacement for other recommended precautionary measures. They should not provide a false sense of protection that lead to a lapse in the application of proper preventative measures like personal hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and physical (social) distancing. Furthermore the design of fabric masks should be mindful of the thermo-physiological properties of fabrics which, if wrongly chosen, can lead to problems like skin irritation, the build-up of heat or moisture, or the incubation of bacteria etc, and may cause wearers to take off masks in situations when they should otherwise be wearing them. There has been much debate globally about the use of face masks for non-Health Care Professionals (non-HCP) during the Covid-19 pandemic. There is agreement in the recommendations that symptomatic individuals and those in healthcare settings should use face masks. But discrepancies and mixed messages exist in relation to the wearing of masks by the general public. By refining some of the lessons from various sources, it is possible to arrive at a set of interim guidelines for the use of masks by the general public in South Africa.

It is the intention of this document to distil these guidelines into a set of recommendations for the South African clothing and textile industry when making masks for use by the general public. These recommendations serve as suggested guidelines. They have been developed through engagements with publicly available research and recommendations from authorities like the World Health Organisation[3] (WHO) as well as through insights provided by colleagues from the University of Stellenbosch[4] (Dept of Chemistry and Polymer Science), University of Witwatersrand[5] (School of Public Health, Industry Specialists[6], the Southern African Clothing Textile and Workers Union[7] (SACTWU), staff at the National Department of Health[8] and the Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition[9].

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[1] https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/frequently-asked-questions/
[2] https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/covid-19-prevention/
[3] https://www.who.int/
[4] Ms. Adine Gericke, Department of Chemistry and Polymer Science, University of Stellenbosch: http://academic.sun.ac.za/polymer/agcv.html
[5] Dr. Moreshnee Govender, https://www.wits.ac.za/staff/academic-a-z-listing/g/moreshneegovenderwitsacza/ : the School of Public Health, University of the Witwatersrand
[6] Sma Ngcamu-Tukulula, Mr. Rob Stewart and Mr. Kyle Ballard.
[7] www.sactwu.org.za
[8] http://www.health.gov.za/
[9] http://www.dti.gov.za/

Fabric or 'cloth masks' do not fall in the same category as surgical or medical masks. Fabric/Cloth masks cannot prevent the risk of contracting the virus in aerosol form (as found in a contaminated atmosphere) since this requires the presence of very fine and highly specialised filters capable of trapping microscopic viral particles. **The shortage of medical grade masks globally and in South Africa means members of the public should not use these critical resources at the expense of frontline health workers.** In this context, and given that evidence indicates that the virus appears to largely exit through the mouth of an infected individual in droplet form (during talking, coughing or sneezing) it is believed that if the fabrics and filters used in the manufacture of cloth masks are chosen suitably and designed to fit users accordingly, these masks can play an important role in reducing the community transmission of the virus and offer some degree of protection for the user. They further appear to lower the risk of contracting the virus from contaminated surfaces by acting as a barrier to touching one's face. The function of such public masks may be enhanced or impeded by the usability of the design and the combination of products, although it is also believed that any mask may be better than not wearing a mask.

2 SA's Localisation Objectives

⇒ In line with the Republic of South Africa's Industrial Policy Acton Plan10 (IPAP) and the Clothing, Textile, Footwear and Leather (CTFL) Master Plan's policy objectives it is highly recommended that manufacturers source textiles made locally, by local manufacturers, when making fabric/cloth face masks.

⇒ All textile/fabric quality recommendations for making fabric face masks, found within this document, are qualities found in textiles that are locally made in the Republic of South Africa.

⇒ It is imperative that fabric/cloth face mask manufacturers ensure that efforts to manufacturer masks are done within the boarder context of supporting South Africa's Clothing and Textile Industry, and our government's efforts to ensure localisation of value-chains and boarder economic prosperity – in keeping with our country's developmental objectives and Industrial Policy.

⇒ A list of local textile manufacturers is found in the Appendix A of this document.

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10 http://www.dti.gov.za/industrial_development/industrial_development.jsp

3   Basic Performance Requirements of Fabric/Cloth Face Masks

a)   The performance of fabric/cloth face masks varies greatly with the shape and fit of the mask[11] as well as the fabric structural properties and number of layers.[12]

b)   The objective of a fabric face mask is to act as a physical barrier to extremely small droplets generally upwards of **5 microns in size** secreted during talking, sneezing or coughing (WHO 29/4/2020).

c)   The higher the performance of the mask with regard to barrier efficiency the better.

d)   Masks must be breathable.

  i.   Should the mask prevent one from breathing easily, this will present a serious danger to the health of the wearer - not only from becoming oxygen deprived but also because the mask will promote risky behavior like the need to touch the face and remove or adjust the mask during wear, increasing the risk of transmission of the virus.

e)   Masks must be designed to fit properly and be comfortable to wear.

  i.   Mask style and design features will contribute to user fit which should follow closely the contours of the face especially around the nose bridge and under the chin to reduce leakage out and into the mask.

f)   Mask style and design features will contribute to user fit which should follow closely the contours of the face especially around the nose bridge and under the chin to reduce leakage out and into the mask.

g)   Cleaning and disinfection of all the components should be easy to carry out at home.

h)   All components should be durable and should maintain their integrity during the full expected life span of the product or components.

i)   All masks should be accompanied by instructions clearly explaining how it should be worn and cared for what the limitations of a mask are and when the mask or its components must be replaced.

[11] Shakya, Kabindra M.; Noyes, Alyssa; Kallin, Randa; Peltier, Richard E. (May 1, 2017). "Evaluating the efficacy of cloth facemasks in reducing particulate matter exposure"(PDF). Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology.

[12] Chughtai, Abrar Ahmad; Seale, Holly; MacIntyre, Chandini Raina (June 19, 2013). "Use of cloth masks in the practice of infection control – evidence and policy gaps". International Journal of Infection Control.

4 Fabric Selection for Fabric Masks

a) Tests have shown that at **least two layers** of fabric is are sufficient for balancing performance and comfort (as indicated above).

b) An increase in the number of layers will improve the barrier efficiency, but have the opposite effect on breathability.

c) **Using three layers, selecting a non-woven (or similar) fabric with strong filtering capability (barrier efficiency) as the middle layer (with the accompanying inner and outer layers providing comfort, structure, and some additional protection) is recommended.**

a) Ideally this middle layer (filter) should be inserted into the mask (or removed) via an 'envelope' style design to allow for improved cleaning and easy replacement filters when worn out.

b) It is recommended that the pocket into which it fits be at least 120 mm by 100 mm to ensure compatibility between multiple masks and filters in production domestically.

c) Clear markings or design options must be used to distinguish between the outside of the mask and the inside of the mask.

4.1 Guidelines for Fabric Selection

4.1.1 Inner Layer (next to face)

a) The main purpose of this layer is to provide a smooth, soft, pleasant feel against the skin.

b) The fabric should not irritate the skin in any way or allow the build-up of moisture or excessive heat in between the skin and the mask.

c) Avoid water repellent fabric that inhibit the absorption of droplets. It must not wet easily or accumulate excessive moisture with breathing.

d) The fabric should have very high air permeability and should not restrict normal breathing.

e) Synthetic fibres are recommended for quick drying properties.

f) If cotton, poly-cotton or viscose are used, care should be taken as these fabrics can be highly water absorbent and might become wet against the skin. They can also impact on heat generation, potential fibre/fluff shedding and drying time after washing.

g) Options: Plain weaves (lightweight, low count), warp knit polyester 'mesh'; lightweight single jersey, spunbond nonwovens (providing air permeability is high and fabric is washable)

4.1.2 Middle Layer (optional filter layer)

a) **The primary function of this layer is to trap or stop particles 5 micron and larger.**

b) It should have a **barrier efficiency of at least 75%.**

c) Filter fabric should not restrict air permeability or impede on the air permeability of the completed mask.

d) It is suggested that the filter fabric should not block > 25 % of airflow through the fabric.

e) Filter fabric should not shed fibres or disintegrate with use in any way, causing potential of fibre inhalation or failure to filter.

f) It should not add or create unnecessary heat load.

g) Filter should be replaceable via a pouch between inner and outer layer of mask (envelope).

h) It must be possible to disinfect filter daily or wash with hot water [Minimum filter size 100mm x 120mmm]

i) Ideal product – non-woven or similarly performing fabric that meets the recommended requirements.

4.1.3 Outer Layer (faces outwards)

a) This layer can be woven, warp- knitted or made from a suitable nonwoven fabric.

b) Fabrics should not allow liquids to move through them.

c) Hydrophobic or water repellent properties are recommended to prevent wetting from external sources and improve soil repellence.

d) Fabrics should not restrict normal breathing.

e) Care should be taken that this layer does not ruin the breathability of the mask

f) Fabric choice should be suitable for the design of the mask - some designs may require a firmer fabric while others may require fabrics with more drape.

g) A firm finish will prevent the mask from collapsing with breathing.

h) Outer and inner layers can potentially be of the same fabric.

4.1.4 General Remarks

a) Fabrics should not contain any toxic chemicals or excessive lint (especially the inner layer).

b) The outward facing and inward facing of the mask must be clearly distinguished.

c) **A new prototype can be easily tested for comfort by wearing it for at least 30 minutes.**

d) Disinfection of all the components should be easy to carry out at home and components must not deteriorate with use/cleaning.

e) Fabrics should be able to resist washing in hot water – not easily damaged.

f) Components that are not removable should be resistant to at least 100 wash cycles.

g) It must be ensured that proper airflow is achieved when all the layers are combined.

h) One component with poor air permeability can cause a total failure in breathability

i) **NOTE: If a filter layer is not used, the combination of the two layers must provide a 5 micron particle barrier efficiency of at least 75%.**

5 Designs for Fabric Masks

a) Mask style and design features will contribute to user fit and should follow closely the contours of the face especially around the nose bridge and under the chin to reduce leakage out and into the mask.

b) A wire insert, in middle of the mask that sits over the nose bridge area of mask, will allow the user to mould the shape of the mask around the nose bridge for a closer fit.

c) Comfortable elastic bands/or cloth tie-straps of adequate size and shape for attachment either around the ears or the head should **facilitate comfortable fit.**

d) Further adjustments to the dimension of this elastic/cloth tie-straps will enhance fit for more users permitting flexibility in the adjustment.

e) The ties or elastics used to fit the mask to the face should not be designed to require that the wearer touches the front of the mask at all.

f) Masks should be comfortable to wear. Fabrics selection should consider performance properties such as moisture management and thermal discomfort (guideline for fabric selection 4.1 above).

g) Discomfort will undermine one's health by promoting the need to touch the face and remove or adjust the mask during wear.

h) Bearing in mind that different fabric constructions and innovations allow for different properties and functions, there is merit in a mask designed from at **least two layers of**

suitable fabric or three layers of such fabric (two layers plus an extra third barrier/filtration layer in the centre).

i) Masks must be designed to fit properly, ideally covering at least 50% of the length of the nose and fit to 25mm under the chin.

    a. A guideline for the adult size of pleated mask designs is 180mm for the width and 160mm for the length (maximum unpeated length).

j) Additionally, manufacturers should indicate sizing of masks:

    i. Adults: S/M/L/XL

    ii. Children: S/M/L

k) Children sizes can be considered by downsizing the adult sizes until further anthropometric data is available to guide a more informed decision.

l) The suggested size for the removable filter is 120 x 100 mm.

m) The dimension for a simple pleated masks design is illustrated below:

180mm

160mm (mid section)
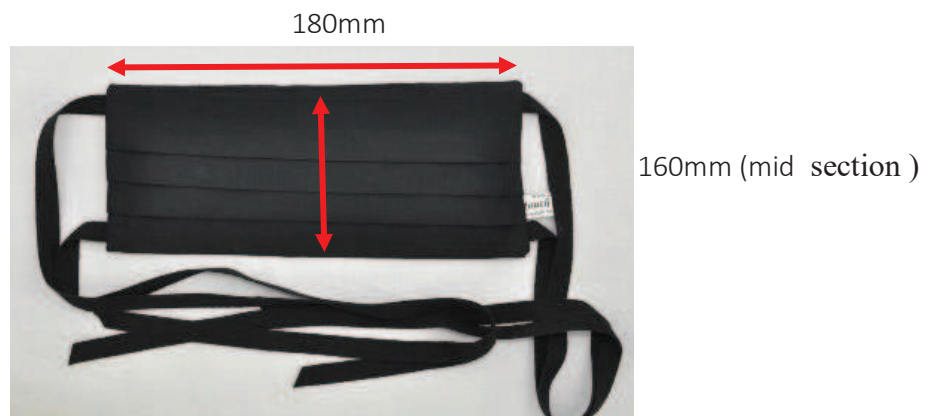
j) It is useful to provide markings or features that help the wearer to distinguish between the inner layer and outer layer of the mask in order to prevent wearers from placing the wrong side against their faces.

k) **Special needs may arise within some groups of society** (such as hearing-impaired individuals who rely on lip reading) whose needs should also be considered when making masks.

l) Other users such as children and those wearing spectacles should also be considered.

m) Fabric Face Masks for different seasons and climates must also be considered.

n) When adjusting to climate and seasonal needs, the fabric used should follow recommended guidelines – adjustments must not compromise fabric functionality as described in the guidelines.

6 Instructions for Using Fabric Masks

a) Clear instructions should be provided to consumers about the capabilities and limitations of masks.

b) At the very least guidance should be given that when re-usable fabric masks are worn:

c) They do not constitute medical PPE nor are they a replacement for normal precautionary hygienic measures such as handwashing, not touching one's face, coughing or sneezing into a tissue or elbow and keeping a proper social distance of 1,5m from other people.

d) The wearer should ensure the masks have been appropriately washed and disinfected before use

e) Clear instructions must be provided around the proper protocol for wearing masks, including at a minimum that wearers should avoid touching the mask during use and that when putting on or taking off the mask, one's hands must have been cleansed after practicing appropriate hand hygiene;

f) That re-usable masks or the components used within the masks may need to be replaced if they are damaged or worn out, or if they have exceeded their lifespans or use; and

g) **That children should be supervised at all times when using a cloth mask**, and they are not recommended for infants who may struggle to breathe with a mask or even choke if they put parts in their mouths.

h) **A user-guide MUST be supplied with a mask on how to wear and how to care for it.**

i) A fabric face masks should generally not to be used by Health workers, working in a health care environment.

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7 Appendix A: Reference List of Local Textile Manufacturers.

Reference list of local manufacturers of nonwoven and woven textiles and elastics for inputs for fabric face masks for the public[13].

7.1 Manufacturers of Nonwoven Textiles

Company	Key contacts	Province	Category/ies	Product/s that your company can offer clothing manufacturers for making masks, and practical description of how your product/s assist in protection
Beier Envirotec	Posh Moodley: 083 708 5378 pmoodley@beier.co.za	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: needle punched nonwovens. Can be used as the outer layer of masks. Their nonwovens provide dust loading capacity, comfort and a level of filtration and mouldability.
Brits Nonwovens	Dicky Coetzee: 082 901 4117 dicky.coetzee@brits.co.za	KZN	Filters	Manufacturer of: Polypropylene/ polyester combination filters. Can be used as filter in the middle of two layers of fabric. Can produce 50m per month
Feltex Nonwovens	Robert Gooch: 082 905 9958 robertg@feltex.co.za John Mauer: 082 909 4402 Johnm@feltex.co.za	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: needle punched nonwovens. Could be used as inner or outer layer of masks. At the moment they do not supply products outside of the automotive industry, but they would be happy to work with mask manufacturers to try and meet the standards required for face masks.
Fibertex	Sefton Fripp: 082 903 6714 SEFR@fibertex.com Clive Hitchcock: 076 413 0899 cahi@fibertex.com	KZN	Filters	Manufacturer or: nonwovens and nanofiber treated products. Can be used as inner or middle (filter) fabrics and media. Functions include moulding support, particulate efficiency layers and barriers. Their adhetex product is made from PET/ PVDF fine fibres is a nano material most commonly used in High-Energy Particulate Arresting (HEPA) filters for masks, A/C units, automotive components and domestic filters i.e. vacuum cleaners. Their breathetex product is made from

[13] This list is subject to available information and will be updated regularly. Please monitor the DTIC's website periodically for updates.

				polyester and is one of the components in FFP1 & 2 masks where it is used to mould and shape the masks. It sits adjacent to the melt-blown and outer spunbond layer
Filtafelt	Anil Chandran: 076 170 0702 Anil@iffgroup.com	Gauteng	Fabrics & Filters	Manufacturer of: nonwovens that can be used as outer and inner layer of masks, and filters. Their 200 gram/m2 weight, 300 gram/m2 weight and 400 gram/m2 weight Polypropylene nonwoven may be used to manufacture masks.
Freudenberg Nonwovens	Fiona Shaw: 083 658 4095 Fiona.Shaw@freudenberg-pm.com	W. Cape	Fabrics & Filters	Manufacturer of: nonwovens that can be used as outer and inner layer of masks, and filters. They can produce a dense polyester nonwoven filter layer, as well as hydrophobic and hydrophilic nonwovens as necessary.
Inno Textiles	Oliver Wilhelm: 082 440 7021 oliver@innotextiles.co.za	KZN	Filters	Manufacturer of: nonwoven fabric for outer or inner layer of mask and middle filter. They produce needled and heat-set or calendered filter media manufactured from 100% polyester in weight ranges from 120g/m² and up. Their producs can be moulded, sewn or welded to make masks. Media could be used as the middle layer of a three layer mask, or if they produce a slightly heavier media at about 200g/m², this might be used for manufacturing a single layer mask. Can produce 5000m per day if required.
Romatex Home Textiles	Helmut Höck, +27 (82) 566 7522 , +27 (21) 933 9800, helmuth@romatex.co.za	KZN & Western Cape		Manufacturer of: nonwoven fabric that can be used as the filler (middle layer) or the outer layer in a multi-layered mask. They manufacture 100% polyester non-allergenic non-woven fabric.

Spunchem	Gary Sweeney: 082 652 0463 garys@spunchem.co.za Thokozani Mbhamali thokozanim@spunchem.co.za Sandy Stewart: 074 999 7009 sandys@spunchem.co.za	KZN	Fabrics & Filters	Manufacturer of: nonwoven fabrics. Can be used as inner and outer layers, as well as middle filter. Spunbond can be produced to any gsm and can be used as a highly breathable outer and inner layer. Standard meltblown is produced to 25gsm to 50gsm and can be used as a middle layer filter. It has medium bacterial filtration properties and is breathable. They are in the process of developing electrostatic meltblown which can be used as a middle layer and forms a viable anti-viral filter.
Vitafoam	Aldrin John: 083 795 1085 aldrin.john@vitafoam.co.za Loren van Jaarsveld loren.vanjaarsveldt@vitafoam.co.za Johan Booysen johan.booysen@vitafoam.co.za	Gauteng	Fabrics & Filters	Manufacturer of: nonwoven fabric and nonwoven filters. Can be used for inner or outer layer (highly breathable hydrophobic spunbond of any gsm), and middle filter (presently running tests of whether their flexible polyurethane foam 4mm low density can be used as a filter)

7.2   Manufacturers of Woven Textiles

Company	Key contacts	Province	Category/ies	Product/s that your company can offer clothing manufacturers for making masks, and practical description of how your product/s assist in protection
Aunde Tap	Sean Kennedy: 083 615 0298 sean.kennedy@aunde.co.za	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: Woven and warpknit 100% polyester fabrics. Can be used as the outer layers for masks.
Da Gama Textiles	Kelvyn Breetzke: 083 297 1485 kbreetzke@cowie.co.za	E. Cape	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: cotton and polycotton woven fabrics. Can be utilised as the inner and outer layer of the mask

Specfically supply: (1) CC484 (P48): 100% cotton sheeting, tight weave and can withstand high temp wash; (2) PCS7: 50/50 poly/cott sheeting , tight weave and can withstand high temp wash; (3) FT3: 100% cotton winter sheeting Flannel , comfort and tight weave; and (4) CJ54 (J54): 100% cotton twill excellent for outside layers , strong and tightly woven, would be able to last many washes |
| Deslee Mattex | Michael Borcherds 082 441 7305 michaelb@desleemattex.co.za

Larry Unterhalter 082 447 4091 larryu@desleemattex.co.za | W. Cape | Fabrics | Manufacturer of: Woven fabrics of Polyester, Polypropylene, Viscose and cotton. Their fabric can be utilized as both the inner and outer layers of the mask.

Fabrics have the following properties: hydrophobic; breathable; washable; and do not contain toxic chemicals. Utilize high density yarns and can customize the fabrics pick count to ensure a pore size of 5 micron or less as per the guidelines. Capable of applying an antimicrobial and antibacterial finish to the woven fabrics which would also assist in reducing infection..

Able to produce 21 000 meters of woven fabric per day. . |
| Finlam Textiles | Janice Roberts: 084 083 0404 jroberts@finlamtechnical.com | KZN | Fabrics | Manufacturer of: woven polyester fabrics, circular knitted polyester fabrics, specialised lamination (breathable hydrophilic membranes, PU membranes, PVC films etc, and coating, dyeing and finishing of woven fabrics. Can be used as outer and inner layers of mask |

Gelvenor Textiles	Thomas Adlam: 082 774 0758 tadlam@gelvenor.co.za Steve Fitzjohn: 066 264 4581 sfitzjohn@gelvenor.co.za	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: Woven polyester fabric. Can be used for outer and inner layers of masks. Produce hydrophobic finish, breathable to FFP rated mask standards – with option to do anti-bacterial/ microbial finish. The fabric is durable and has been tested to keep its functionality for up to 40 washes under specific conditions equivalent to a basic disposable face mask
Imraan Textiles	Imraan Bux : 083 325 3243 ibux@itmkzn.co.za Andrew Broughton: 083 3006535 bwerdna@tiscali.co.za	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: woven polyester as wel as poly-viscose fabrics. Can be used as inner and outer layer of masks. Customisable colours; minimised linting; can be easily washed without changing fabric properties. Materials and capacity for large volume production.
Korteks Textiles	Zayd Tayob: 082 900 5786 zayd@zaydtex.com Khabir Tayob khabir@zaydtex.com	Gauteng	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: 100% polyester woven and warpknit fabrics. Can be used for outer and inner layer of a mask. The warpknit could be used as a filter They have equipment to treat the fabric so that it is water resistant. The warp knitted fabric is a high density net like fabric which could be used as a filter fabric and can be washed and reused easily. It has no stretch.
Nu-Mym Textiles	Farhaad Vally 081 352 2225 Numymtex@telkomsa.net	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: 1. We can polyester, poly-cotton, cotton and poly-viscose fabrics. Can be used for inner or outer layers of mask. They produce 100% polyester, 65/35 poly-viscose, 100% cotton and 65/ 35 poly-cotton. They can add a blood guard, antibacterial agent and a water repellent finish
Suntex	Eddy Sun 082 333 3888 esun@suntex.co.za	E. Cape	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: woven fabrics. Can be used for outer layer and inner layer Outer layer can be +- 200 gsm woven fabrics in 100% texturized polyester yarns with water repellent finish. Iinner layer can be +- 70 gsm 100% texturized or non texturized polyester yarns
Svenmill	Brent Greenblatt: 083 995 8600 the_mill@svenmill.co.za	W. Cape	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: woven fabrics Can be used for inner and outer layers. Can supply 280cm wide fabrics, a mixture of polycotton (50:50) or 100% cotton. Fabric can be treated with anti-

				bacterial nanotechnology silver proven to kill 99.99% of bacteria. Awaiting anti-viral results currently in lab testing.
Umzinto Textiles	Muhammad Paruk: 0827862623 mparuk45@outlook.com	KZN	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: woven fabrics Capable of weaving fabrics. Can do specialized finishes such as anti-microbial and anti-bacterial breathable finishes to various textiles up to a max width of 220cm .
Winelands Textiles	Peter Gaal: 082 441 2938 pgaal@winetex.co.za Juanita Wilkinson (Hextex office) jwilkinson@winetex.co.za Karen Bouwer (WC, EC) kbouwer@winetex.co.za Arif Cassim (GAUT) acassim@winetex.co.za Andrew Guy (KZN) McNair.Guy@telkomsa.net	W. Cape	Fabrics	Manufacturer of: woven fabrics. Can be used for inner or outer layer. Can supply range of polyester viscose, poly-cotton and cottons. Able to finish products with fluid resistant finshes