



Office of the Premier

North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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PREMIER PROF T.J MOKGORO'S ADDRESS TO THE MEDIA ON THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT'S 21 DAYS NATIONAL LOCKDOWN PROGRAMME

By now, all of us are aware that President Cyril Ramaphosa and the National Command Centre have declared a 21 Days National Lockdown, effective from midnight tonight, due to the sharp increase in COVID-19 infections that we have witnessed recently but also as a means to curb the spread of COVID-19.

As a country, we are part of the 3-billion people worldwide who are under lockdown due to the rapid spread of the virus and we are calling on every citizen of this province to take heed of the calls to stay home for the next 21 days.

We are aware of the far reaching impact the lockdown will have on citizens but it is a necessary step that had to be taken by government, if we are to win the battle against the spread of the CoronaVirus.

Of the 709 COVID-19 cases reported and confirmed yesterday by the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, the North West Province had five cases reported and confirmed.

I am accompanied by the entire Provincial Command Centre; of which I am the Convenor and Chairperson, which is tasked with ensuring that we comply with the 21 Days Lockdown instruction while making sure that the Provincial Government continues to provide services to the citizens of the North West.

All Provincial Government Departments are responsible to procure and provide their staff with sanitizers, masks and gloves.

We have therefore called you here today as we believe that, the media, are best positioned to assist us to reach as many citizens as possible; you are a very important partner in our fight against COVID-19.

HEALTH

When announcing the lockdown, President Ramaphosa said that *“the nationwide lockdown will be accompanied by a public health management programme which will significantly increase screening, testing, contact tracing and medical management”*.

Every health worker in the province is therefore critical to contribute to the fight against this pandemic. Hospitals, Community Health Centres and Clinics should operate as normal.

In order to practice social distancing to avoid employee’s infections or reduce workplace congestion the following will apply:

- Managers (Head of Branches / Chief Directorates / Directorates / District Chief Directors and Sub-District Managers) must develop duty rosters for all non-clinical staff based at Provincial Office, District Office’s and Sub-District Offices and inform employees accordingly as soon as possible but not later than 26 March 2020 at 12h00. Employees are to report to work in line with the circulated rosters.
- Duty rosters must ensure that employees are rotated to avoid congestion at the work place and all employees should be on high alert to be at work during this period. Staff must be reachable in case of emergencies. Employees on time off may be called back to work when the need arises.
- Staff will be required to sign duty registers when on duty.
- Staff that shows signs similar to that of Covid-19 should self-quarantine and not come to work. The staff member must inform his or her immediate supervisor who will inform the relevant manager.
- Staff members are advised not to leave the district and Province.

- Security personnel from private security service providers are also required to be on duty. Please ensure compliance to this directive.

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

We should take note of the fact that the continuous functioning of government operations is critical in any democracy as it is a barometer to which its ability to meet the needs of citizens is measured against.

In light of that, the operations of the Office of the Premier cannot at this point come to a complete halt.

The Office of the Premier will therefore continue with the important task of keeping the North West Provincial Government's service delivery machinery running.

The following services will continue to be rendered unhindered by skeletal staff in the Office of the Premier:

- Government Information Technology Office to provide Infrastructure Server and network support services to Provincial Departments
- Finance
- Supply Chain Management to ensure that payments are processed, rejections are attended to and the new 20/21 budget is loaded onto the system
- Communications
- Premier's Private Office and Security Services.

Over and above, the Administrator, together with the three Deputy Directors General will make a determination on any other support personnel that may be required in the Office of the Premier during the lockdown period.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Key Veterinary Personnel will be on duty to perform regulatory and trade control duties and this includes animal movement control, controlled diseases monitoring, controlled import and export of animals and animal products, abattoir inspections and authorizations, auctions monitoring and control.

All Agricultural Extension Officers are working from home and are available for telephone consultation. They stand ready to assist farmers who may require assistance with harvesting and planting winter crops.

All State Research farms will operate on skeleton staff and Agricultural Colleges will be closed with only skeleton staff attending to irrigation and livestock feeding.

ARTS, CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

A Departmental Contingency Team has been established and will be available during the lockdown period; however, we have taken a decision to cancel the following:

- All the activities on arts, culture, sports, recreation and libraries
- All scheduled training/conferences/meetings

In addition to those cancellations:

- All Mmabana centres will be closed, however, online platforms will be used to render dance, traditional dance and visual arts programmes through videos that will be posted for access by the public
- All museums will be closed
- All community libraries will be closed
- The four recreations centres will be closed to the public, but will be available for use as quarantine centres subject to an assessment and evaluation by the Provincial Department of Public Works and Roads.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ROADS

The Department of Public Works and Roads has also put in place measures to address emergencies by developing a list of essential services personnel who will be on stand-by in an instance that their services are required.

All construction work and sites in the province will come to a halt to comply with the 21 Days Lockdown.

EDUCATION

Senior Management at the Department of Education are considered essential services as they are vital for the continued functioning of the Department during the lockdown and **MAY** be recalled for office duty anytime; however, teleconferencing will be used for the meetings during this period.

The Department of Education will provide all online learning programmes for learners and teachers but will also use radio and TV lessons to reach out to learners.

Curriculum coordinators in Districts have been tasked to rework their recovery plans in line with the number of days lost as a result of early closure of schools and the lockdown.

The National Schools Nutrition Programme officials and school principals are liaising with the Department of Social Development regarding learners that need to be fed during the lockdown and a list of such learners has been forwarded to Department of Social Development to provide grocery packs to their families.

Circuit managers are expected to prepare for schools reopening by ensuring that cleansing and sanitizing of schools happens and that the necessary resources are made available.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

The Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism will enforce liquor and consumer regulations as per gazettes that were passed in terms Disaster Management Act 2003 and Consumer Gazette Regulation 2020, in regard to COVID-19 and will entail the following:

- Closure of all liquor outlets as per Regulation 11(A) - on-consumption and off-consumption - inclusive of restaurants, night clubs, casinos and holiday resorts;
- Inspectors will be on standby for emergency services only supported by South African Police Service;
- The Provincial Liquor Board will be on standby to address and attend to issues of non-compliance;

- Monitor businesses as per National Consumer Competition Commission of ensuring that unjustified price increases which includes. Members of the public to report cases to 0800014880;
- General enquiries will be done through e mail (dedectcovid19@nwpg.gov.za), on WhatsApp and via SMS;
- All businesses deemed as essential services as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 must apply to CIPC for certificate of Essential Services Business in terms of Gazette No. 11062;
- All businesses deemed as essential services as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995, which remain open must adhere to all precautionary measures as outlined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Department of Health;

Regarding support to Small Businesses and Cooperatives, we will:

- Facilitate information for access to the National Emergency Funding package for SMME support comprising of Debt relief fund and business growth/resilience facility

Debt relief for SME's will include existing debt and repayments.

Business growth/resilience facility will enable continued participation of SMME's & cooperatives in supply value chains, targeting local manufacturers or which supply products that are in demand due to current shortages.

All businesses deemed as essential services as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 must apply to CIPC for certificate of Essential Services Business in terms of Gazette No. 11062.

SMME's are encouraged to enrol for support on www.smmesa.gov.za.

We are coordinating a Provincial Database of SMMEs - manufacturers and suppliers of health care and related products - that will be utilised to combat the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

We are also encouraging all SMMEs registered for UIF to access application forms for temporary employee scheme through infoTERS@labour.gov.za.

With regards, to Environmental Support Services in the Province, the following will happen during the lockdown:

- For Anti-poaching, all Compliance and Enforcement officers will be on standby in all the Four Districts,
- Wildlife permit issuance is suspended and only emergency applications will be considered,
- For Damage Causing Animals Control (Problem Animal Control) purposes, officers in respective districts shall be on standby to attend to assessments and control of the situations under strict hygiene and safety controls,
- For Waste Collection Services, departmental officials will provide oversight on waste collection as this is a municipal function and mandate. Municipalities will make available lists of emergency contacts,
- Air quality management services will be on standby,
- North West Parks will be closed for lockdown, except to the extent that they are required for remaining tourist confined to them. And the necessary security measures have been put in place at all parks in the Province.

We will also coordinate the following services that are offered by the National Department of Tourism:

- Tourism relief fund to assist SMME's in the hospitality sector,
- Tourism emergency support service on 0800 029 999 or WhatsApp 060 012 3456
- Regulation 11(B)(4) Places and Premises will be closed to the public and they are hotels, holiday resorts, lodges and guest houses, except to the extent that they are required for remaining tourist confined to them,
- Tourism establishments are requested to have a database of all guests

The following have hospitality facilities in the North West have been identified for quarantine purposes:

- **Taung Hotel School** that has total of 33 rooms but only **27** rooms which are in good condition and can be used during lockdown
- **Mahikeng Hotel School** that has a total of 21 rooms but only 16 rooms are in good condition and can be used for the lockdown.
- **Golden Leopard Resorts** with a total of 86 rooms in their facilities

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

We will put in place intervention measures for families and individuals in distress through our Social Relief of Distress programmes. This means that we will be providing them with food parcels, blankets, dignity packs and trauma debriefing.

Furthermore, we will be providing cooked meals, blankets, shelter and dignity for the homeless; and this will be in addition to the Profiling and Assessment by social workers as well as the provision of life skills and trauma debriefings.

The entire management of the Department of Social Development will be on standby during the lockdown, service point management team will have to ensure the distribution of food parcels, enlist households which require services and ensure psycho-social reports as per each family.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

In announcing the nation-wide lockdown, the President indicated that provision will be made for essential transport services to continue, including transport for essential staff and for patients who need to be managed elsewhere.

The measures we are announcing today are in line with this injunction, while ensuring that the objective of the lockdown is achieved.

All international and domestic flights are prohibited, irrespective of the risk category of the country of origin and only essential air cargo will be allowed. However, cargo from high risk country must be sanitized.

Pilanesberg International Airport however, remains open.

Taxis and buses

The Province will implement measures announced by the Minister of Transport yesterday to the latter.

Cross-border road transport

- All cross-border road passenger movements will be prohibited for the duration of the lockdown.

Cross-border freight movement for essential goods will continue to and from our neighbouring countries.

During the lockdown period most services rendered by our entities will be suspended.

Vehicle Testing Centres and Drivers' License Testing Centres (DLTCs) will be closed.

Should your drivers' license expire during the duration of the lockdown it shall be deemed to remain valid until the end of the lockdown, with the grace period of renewal within 14 working days thereafter unless otherwise determined.

We will maintain all law enforcement officers for purposes of safe road operations, clearing of accidents, maintenance of tunnels as well as road traffic enforcement.

In addition to the measures, the Minister of Transport is empowered by the Disaster Management Act Regulations to issue Directives. The MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management will therefore issue Directives covering the following areas:

- Movement of cargo (aviation, maritime, road – including cross border). This will cover measures such as prohibition of crew change and movement of essential cargo across all our modes of transport.

- Limiting movement of allowed essential public transport to specific times.
- Movement of cross-border road transport.
- Suspension of services rendered by our entities.
- Closure of Vehicle Testing Centres and Drivers' license Testing Centres (DLTCs).
- Expiry of drivers licenses.

We are encouraged by the positive response to the existing regulations by all stakeholders. These include sanitization of taxis and surfaces by the taxi industry to assist with transportation relating to healthcare logistics. We would therefore take like to take this moment to ask everybody to stay at home, self-quarantine, avoid unnecessary movements and maintain social distancing as well as to cover yourself when coughing.

I thank you

Ends