

**RISK STRATEGY PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEE CONTRACTION OF
THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCov2)**

at

Name of Company

DEFINITIONS:

“The company” shall mean:

“The company premises” shall mean:

(place address)

“floor space” shall mean:

the company’s floor space which is
_____ meters.

“The Employee” shall mean:

a natural person employed by the company,
in his/her own capacity or the capacity in
which he/she operates, as per the Labour
Relations Act 66 of 1995 (as amended).

“COVID-19” shall mean:

the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCOv2) which is
an infectious disease caused by a virus that
has previously not been scientifically
identified in humans, which emerged during
2019 and was declared a pandemic by the
WHO in 2020.

“Alert Level 4” shall mean:

the alert level 4 as per Chapter 3 of
Regulations issued in terms of section 27(2)
of the Disaster Management Act, 20020 on
29 April 2020.

“Compliance officer” shall mean:

an employee designated to ensure the
implementation of the action plan and
handling of issues related to the compliance
of the regulations in terms of the Disaster
Management Act, and ensuring that the
company is up to date with all matters
related thereto.

“adequate space” shall mean: not more than one person per one and a half metres of floor space.

1. BACKGROUND:

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic. The COVID-19 has affected the nature in which the workplace operates and as such on 29 April 2020, following the National Lockdown which was effective from 27 March 2020, the government has specified guidelines for safety and prevention under the regulations of the Disaster Management Act¹. These guidelines do not circumvent the Occupational Health and Safety² (OHS) requirements that the company should implement and they are additional preventive measures to be implemented in the workplace under Alert Level 4.

The OHS 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 and safety.

This document aids as an action plan for the prevention of employee contraction of the COVID-19 at the company, which is to be implemented under Alert Level 4 from 04 May 2020. Alert Level 4 permits employees to return to work under certain restrictions and the action plan outlines the restrictions applicable at the company.

2. PURPOSE:

To develop a risk strategy plan on the phased in return of employees to the workplace and the prevention, management and mitigation of the spread of COVID-19 at the company, as well as detail steps that will be taken to protect both the company and the employee from the effects of the virus.

3. SCOPE:

This action plan is applicable to all employees employed by the company.

¹ Disaster Management Act, 2002. Regulations issued in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002, as published on 29 April 2020.

² NO 85 of 1993.

4. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE COVID-19:

4.1 What is coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus disease is COVID-19.³

4.2 What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.⁴

4.3 What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are a fever, tiredness and a dry cough. Some individuals may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but do not develop symptoms and do not feel unwell. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness.

4.4 How does an employee get infected with COVID-19?

An employee can catch COVID-19 from other individuals or pets who have the virus. The virus can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets.⁵

4.5 What can an employee do to protect himself/herself and to prevent the spread of the virus?

³ <https://sacoronavirus.co.za>, accessed on 01 May 2020.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

- 4.5.1 Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, which is available on the websites and social media of the national Department of Health (www.health.gov.za), National Institute of Communicable Diseases (www.nicd.ac.za) and the WHO (www.who.int).
- 4.5.2 Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- 4.5.3 Maintain an adequate distance between yourself and anyone. Especially anyone who is coughing and sneezing.
- 4.5.4 Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as hands touch many surfaces that can potentially have the virus.
- 4.5.5 Avoid physical contact such as handshakes, touching and hugs.
- 4.5.6 Follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze and discard the tissue in a bin and wash your hands.
- 4.5.7 Ensure that work station surface and equipment are cleaned and disinfected with approved disinfecting sanitizing products or on a regular basis (at least every four hours).
- 4.5.8 Avoid crowds and gatherings as it is not permitted and if an employee finds themselves in a crowd or group, they should ensure that they are in a ventilated environment and maintain an adequate space.
- 4.5.9 During lunch breaks, employees need to maintain an adequate space from colleagues and other persons, while sitting employees must not sit face-to-face or opposite any person.
- 4.5.10 Ensure that employees wear their Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E) at all times while on duty. Should an employee not know what their P.P.E is, they are to ask the compliance officer to inform them what the employee is required to wear.
- 4.5.11 Ensure that their P.P.E is in good condition and should employees need to replace it, the employee will request such replacement from the compliance officer.
- 4.5.12 The employer will from time to time conduct a risk assessment to ensure that the workplace remains a safe environment. The employee will be expected to inform the employer should there be areas that pose as a risk in the workplace.
- 4.5.13 Employees should avoid sharing tools and equipment so far as it is reasonable and practicable to do so. Should an employee share equipment with another employee, they are to sanitize and disinfect the tool and equipment prior to use.
- 4.5.14 Employees should stay home if they feel unwell and inform the compliance officer.

5. TRADING HOURS DURING ALERT LEVEL 4:

The trading hours for all employees will be from 08h00 to 17h00.

6. PERMIT TO REPORT FOR DUTY:

Each employee will be given a permit by the company to carry with them at all times. Should an employee be stopped by an enforcement officer, the employee is to present their permit and identity document or passport (whichever is applicable).

7. SAFETY MEASURES CONDUCTED PRIOR TO EMPLOYEES REPORTING FOR DUTY:

The company has conducted a risk assessment to ensure that its premises are ready for employees to report for duty and this has been done in accordance to the Risk Assessment Guides published online by the National Department of Health.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES CONDUCTED BY THE COMPANY:

8.1 The company will regularly perform a risk assessment which will be enhanced to assess the risk of transmission of COVID-19 at the workplace. The risk assessment will do the following:

- 8.1.1 Identify health or safety hazards associated with any work performed by the company;
- 8.1.2 Analyze and evaluate each hazard and the associated health, safety and environmental risks;
- 8.1.3 Design and implement a control framework that precautionary measures are taken with respect to risks;
- 8.1.4 Monitor and review the effectiveness of the control framework and control measures; and
- 8.1.5 Design and establish strong internal and external reporting and escalation mechanisms.

8.2 A risk assessment will be reviewed at each stage of the lockdown and as new risks emerge and/or as new knowledge on science develops on the COVID-19 virus.

8.3 The following activities or tasks will be done during Alert Level 4:

- 8.3.1 _____
- 8.3.2 _____
- 8.3.3 _____
- 8.3.4 _____
- 8.3.5 _____

8.3.6 _____

8.4. The following are hazards and are the measures that each employee is to adhere to at the company in order to minimize their risk:

8.4.1 _____

8.4.2 _____

8.4.3 _____

8.4.4 _____

8.4.5 _____

8.5 The employer will ensure that employees that are 60 years old or have underlying medical conditions work from home or the employees work independently and isolated with limited interaction with other employees. The following conditions are considered underlying medical conditions:

8.5.1 Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;

8.5.2 diabetes;

8.5.3 serious heart condition;

8.5.4 severe obesity (Body Mass Index of 40 or higher);

8.5.5 chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis;

8.5.6 liver disease;

8.5.7 Immunocompromised, this includes cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV/AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids or other weakening medications.

8.6 Employees with underlying medical conditions will be required to submit their medical records to the compliance officer within 3 days from the commencement date of work.

8.7 There will be a restriction on visitors at the company premises, except if it is an employer critical visitor, supplier, customer or delivery service which may need to attend on site. A controlled access process will be in place including adherence to sanitization processes and full personal contact details of the visitor.

8.8 The company will avoid employees attending to client or supplier premises in so far as it is possible. In the event, where such attendances are critical to the employer operating a controlled risk mitigation process should be in place.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND MATERIAL PROVIDED BY THE COMPANY:

9.1 The company will provide paper towels for employees to dry hands after washing their hands. The employees must only use the paper towels provided to dry their hands after washing hands and fabric toweling must not be used.

- 9.2 Disinfectant will be provided and this will be for use on surfaces that employees and members of the public come into contact with, including reception desks which must be routinely disinfected and cleaned (where appropriate).
- 9.3 Sanitizer will be provided at each main entrance and this will be for use for all employees.
- 9.4 Ablution facilities are to be sanitized regularly.
- 9.5 If an employee interacts directly with the public, the employee will be given hand sanitizer for their workstation, sufficient for both the employee and person whom the employee is interacting with.
- 9.6 The company will ensure that the workplace is sufficiently ventilated.
- 9.7 The company will provide the employee with two cloth masks at any one time. The general requirement for employees to wear masks does not take away from the fact that, where a risk assessment indicates that P.P.E is required, those categories of employees should be provided with the accredited P.P.E in accordance with the Department of Health guidelines and the applicable industry.
- 9.8 Employees who are passengers on public transportation must wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based sanitizer before embarking on public transportation and immediately after disembarking.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY EMPLOYEE TRAINING:

- 10.1 The company will implement suitable training and awareness for all employees in respect of:
 - 10.1.1 the dangers of the COVID-19;
 - 10.1.2 the manner of its transmission;
 - 10.1.3 the measures to prevent transmission, such as social distancing, personal hygiene practices, P.P.E requirements and utilization (including cloth masks), social etiquette greeting, respiratory; and
 - 10.1.4 symptom monitoring, screening and confirmatory testing.

11. SCREENING, TESTING AND RESPONDING TO POSITIVE RESULTS OF EMPLOYEES:

- 11.1 The company will have measures to screen any employee, at the time that they report for work, to ascertain whether they have any observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);
- 11.2 The company requires every employee to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, weakness or tiredness. The employee will immediately report these symptoms to the compliance officer.

- 11.3 The company will not permit the employee with COVID-19 symptoms to report for work.
- 11.4 If the employee is already on duty, the employee will be requested to immediately be isolated and provided with a surgical mask. The employer will arrange for the employee to be transported in a manner that does not place other employees or members of the public at risk, for a medical examination, for testing or to be self-isolated.
- 11.5 If the employee does not need hospital admission and is sent home, the employee is to ensure that he/she undergoes self-isolation at home if appropriate, or at a designated isolation accommodation identified by the employer, in line with the National Department of Health guidelines.
- 11.6 The company will immediately assess the risk of transmission and if appropriate, may require temporary closure to disinfect the area and workstation.
- 11.7 Refer other employees who may also be at the risk of symptoms for screening at a medical practitioner.
- 11.8 The employee will be placed on paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act⁶(BCEA), or if the sick leave is exhausted, make application for illness benefits from the U.I.F in terms of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020.
- 11.9 If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and isolated in accordance with the Department of Health Guidelines, the employee may only return to work if:
- 11.9.1 the employee has undergone a medical examination confirming that he/she has been tested negative for COVID-19 after at least 14 days of isolation;
 - 11.9.2 the employee wears the minimum of a surgical mask at all times for the remaining period of 21 days from date of initial testing;
 - 11.9.3 the company will ensure that the employee adheres to social distancing hygiene and cough etiquette; and
 - 11.9.4 the company will closely monitor the employee's symptoms on return to work.
- 11.10 The company will report all alleged, presumed and confirmed cases of COVID-19 to Occupational Disease to the Compensation Commissioner in the prescribed format using the relevant documentation as required in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases⁷ (COIDA) in order to facilitate procedures for all employee's compensation benefit available to employees:
- 11.10.1 leave for temporary disability;
 - 11.10.2 assessment by occupational medicine specialist in case of complex disease that may result in permanent disability;

⁶ Act 75 of 1997.

⁷ Act 130 of 1993.

- 11.10.3 cover of medical expenses for treatment and testing, as well as permanent disability;
- 11.10.4 cover of medical expenses for treatment and testing, as well as permanent disability assessments; and
- 11.10.5 compensation to dependents in cause of death.

12. ROTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND NUMBER OF PERSONS ALLOWED ON COMPANY FLOOR SPACE:

- 12.1 Based on the area of the company floor space only ____ number of employees and customers may be inside the premises and such persons are to maintain an adequate space between each other.
- 12.2 The company will operate on a reduced capacity of not more than 50% of employees per weekly roster. Employees will be rotated in accordance to a timetable which will be given to the employees.
- 12.3 All employees are required to fill-in an attendance register prior to beginning their shift.
- 12.4 Employees will be informed by means of an email, SMS or telephonic liaison that they will report for a specific shift.

13. DISCRIMINATION OF EMPLOYEE COVID-19 STATUS:

- 13.1 The company will ensure that it does not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19.
- 13.2 Should an employee be discriminated against the employee should immediately inform the compliance officer of such discrimination as per a grievance procedure.
- 13.3 The compliance officer will ensure that an investigation is conducted on the grievance and the disciplinary procedures are instituted.

