CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY

# SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993, states that every employer shall provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of its employees.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. To reduce the impact of COVID-19 outbreak conditions on businesses, workers, customers, and the public, it is important for all employers to put measures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This policy has accordingly been drafted to inform employees and the public of what measures have been instituted at the company.

This policy applies to all employees as well as all visitors while on the company’s premises.

# REGULATIONS TO ADHERE TO IN THE WORKPLACE

1. **Disclosure to Employer as a Risk Factor**

* If an employee or a family member of the employee travelled recently the employee must inform the employer;
* If an employee has been in contact with someone who has travelled recently or if he/she might have been exposed, he/she must inform the employer immediately;
* If an employee has a runny nose, dry cough, fever, body pain, respiratory problems or immune deficiencies, the employee must inform the employer;
* If any employee has a suspicion that a co-employee may be a health risk to the company or his/her co-employees, the employee must inform the employer;
* Should any employee fail to inform the employer of any of these concerns, the employee may face disciplinary action.

1. **Guidelines in the Event of a Reasonable Risk**

* An employee cannot merely stay at home and refuse to come to work;
* If the employee feels that there is a reasonable risk to his/her health, the employee must discuss that with the employer;
* If there is a confirmed infection in the workplace the employer will communicate the appropriate measures to be taken.

1. **Conditions for Doctor’s Consultation/Certificate**

* If the employer has a concern with regards to any employee’s health in the workplace, the employer will have the right to require the employee to produce a medical certificate confirming that the employee does not have the Coronavirus and is fit to work.

1. **Hygiene in the Workplace**

* Employees must ensure that they make use of the hand soap and hand sanitisers available, when they enter the workplace and after teatime, lunch time or use of toilet facilities
* Use a tissue or a bent elbow when you have to sneeze or cough, immediately dispose of the tissue, and wash your hands directly thereafter as described under the Handwashing Protocol below;
* Do not shake hands or give hugs, limit physical contact and maintain a distance of two metres from other people, as much as reasonably possible, and immediately wash your hands should it be unavoidable;
* Keep a clean and sanitary work environment, ie use a disinfectant to wipe your computer keyboard, telephone, cell-phone, door handles, taps, pens, crockery and cutlery, reading glasses, work surfaces, etc, regularly each day;
* Refrain from touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
* Minimise contact with other workers, clients, suppliers and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications, eg telephone, conference calls, Skype, WhatsApp, etc;
* Avoid non-essential local or international travel;
* Anyone with even a mild cough or fever (>37.30C) should stay at home for at least 14 days.
* Anyone who has taken medications such as paracetamol/acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin should stay at home as these may mask symptoms of infection.

1. **Handwashing Protocol**
2. Wet hands with clean running water;
3. Lather soap or hand sanitiser on hands, including under nails, between fingers and the backs of hands;
4. Scrub for at least 20 seconds;
5. Rinse hands;
6. Dry them with an air dryer or clean towel.
7. **Government Regulations**

The SA Government has introduced regulations which, if contravened, can result in prosecution:

1. Spreading fake news about COVID-19;
2. Intentionally infecting another person with Covid-19;
3. Allowing a gathering of more than 100 people, or more than 50 people where alcohol is served;
4. Anyone who refuses to quarantine or self-isolate after testing positive for Covid-19.
5. **Failure to Adhere to This Policy**
6. All employees are expressly informed that compliance with the provisions of this policy is of paramount importance and failing/refusing to adhere thereto may lead to disciplinary action and possibly dismissal after a fair procedure has been followed by the employer;
7. It is the employee’s duty to familiarise themselves with the content of the above as well as all other policies and rules of the company, including the employer’s disciplinary code. The employee is advised that failing to do so, will not exonerate them from being disciplined on account of a claim of ignorance;
8. Should any aspect of this or any other policy be unclear, or should an employee have any question relating to this or any other policy/rule in the workplace, such question or clarity must be obtained from the employee’s immediate supervisor/line manager, or even the employer directly;
9. This policy may be changed in the event that new information about the virus, its transmission, and impact, becomes available.

**CONTACT & HOTLINE**

* In the case of suspected exposure contact the coronavirus hotline: 0800 029 999;
* The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) provides the latest information about COVID-19. See: <http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/>.

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Managing Director