

FOR PSA MEMBERS: SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY (SASSA)

06-05-2020

Update: Western Cape – Alert Level 4

SASSA serves the most vulnerable. SASSA Officials returned to work on 4 May 2020 in response to the Alert Level 4 Lockdown Regulations of the *Disaster Management Act, 2002*.

Labour then had a meeting with the employer on 4 May 2020 where the following issues were discussed regarding SASSA's readiness to open;

COVID-19 Checklist : SASSA Readiness

The employer proposed that a checklist be drafted and circulated to labour for input. The checklist will determine if the Western Cape Region/local offices will be ready to commence with social assistance services on Monday, 11 May 2020.

2. Office Deep cleaning / sanitation (disinfectant)

The employer updated labour that all offices and official vehicles in Western Cape were deep cleaned and sanitised with the exception of Caledon (vehicles still to be done) and Khayelitsha (office and vehicles still to be done) office. The employer are engaging the local offices to determine a suitable time within which to finalise the disinfectant project. The employer indicated that this would last for 30 days. When labour enquired on the specification of the sanitisation, the employer committed to provide compliance certificates at the next meeting.

3. Hand Sanitizers

Labour requested the employer to provide sanitisers with a 70% alcohol composition as recommended by the Department of Health. The employer is committed to at least provide each employee with a 500ml bottle of sanitizers. Sanitising practice must be applied to both clients and staff.

4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The employer informed labour that PPEs have been dispatched and are on the way to Cape Town. The employer mentioned that it will use the Record Management Centre in Epping for the storing and distribution of the PPEs

4.1 Masks

Labour raised their unhappiness with the employer when the employer indicated that they can only issue fifty (50) cloth masks per District at this moment. The employer also indicated that they have

surgical masks but labour informed the employer that the recommended mask is the N95 mask or masks with specific recommended specification.

4.2. Gloves

Each district was issued with five hundred (500) pairs of gloves.

5. Thermometers and Scanners

The recording of temperatures of officials when they arrive in the morning and when they leave in the afternoon.

6. Glass shields

Labour proposed glass shields on the desk as barriers as well as individual shield masks (there are those that can't breathe when wearing a regular mask). The employer noted the proposal but cautioned labour that Treasury has a specific Covid-19 procurement list from which departments can procure. The employer will provide feedback on the next meeting.

7. Disposable Bins

Labour requested that the lids are "automated" so that colleagues do not touch them. Labour proposed that guidelines on the "know how"/understanding on the disposal of this medical waste be developed, as medical waste will now be deemed hazardous.

8. Ventilation

Issues around ventilation/air circulation and the cleaning of air conditioners remains a priority in order to ensure that SASSA employees don't become carriers of the airborne virus. The employer will look into the issue and revert to labour.

9. Checklist: Clients/beneficiaries/persons when visiting the offices

A checklist template to be used when clients arrive at the office - particulars of the client will be declared. A questionnaire regarding whether the person has left the country; has been in contact with an individual that has left the country; has worked or stayed with a person that has been exposed to the virus; has the person been symptomatic lately, *etc.* An Observation Room and its apparatus will be identified at the various offices.

10. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Training to be scheduled for OHS representatives and they will be responsible for the observation room. The selection of these representatives will have to follow a fair process.

11. Working arrangements and Logistics

It is unclear how many 3G cards, printers *etc.* are available for people with comorbidities; 60-year olds and pregnant colleagues. It is also unclear how their performance will be monitored and evaluated as no proper performance assessment plan was presented regarding the outputs expected from the various local offices. The employer indicated that they will prepare a plan for the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7 May 2020 at 10h00 Cape Town local office.

GENERAL MANAGER