

COVID-19 adjusted alert-level 4

Members will recall that the President has put the country on alert-level 4 from 28 June 2021 after the country experienced an upsurge of COVID-19 infections. Subsequently, the DPSA issued *Circular 5 of 2021* to direct employers to implement safety measures commensurate with level 4. Amongst safety measures to be implemented, departments were directed to ensure reduction of the occupancy rate to not more than 30% at any given time, using shift work, rotation and remote working arrangements, amongst others.

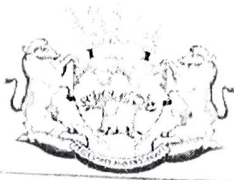
The Limpopo Department of Social Development issued *Circular 32 of 2021* on 30 June 2021 wherein employees are encouraged to work remotely, however, they must ensure conclusion of remote work agreements that will indicate clear deliverables. The eligibility of remote work by branches, districts and institutions should take into account nature of work schedule for office-based employees as well as availability of enabling systems. It must, however, be noted that scheduled disciplinary hearings will continue as planned and employees working in residential facilities are expected to continue following their daily rosters. SMS members are expected to be in the office at least twice a week.

Members are reminded that when engaging in remote work, the employer may call you to the office as and when there is a need and such requests must not be refused without just cause. The third wave of COVID-19 is a reality and members are urged to avoid unnecessary movements, crowded places and social gatherings, to constantly wear masks, sanitise or wash hands with soap and to observe social distancing.

For further information or to join the PSA, contact the PSA shop stewards: Nkhensani Maluleke: Nkhensani.ny@gmail.com and/or Locan Bonisiwe Sibiya: Sibiya.locs@gmail.com or the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500.

Members will be updated on developments.

GENERAL MANAGER



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DEPARTMENTAL CIRCULAR NO 37 OF 2021


SUBJECT : STATE OF DISASTER COVID-19: PUBLIC SERVICE ADJUSTMENTS TO RISK-ADJUSTED STRATEGY LEVEL 4 REGULATIONS

1. The Department of Public Service and Administration circular number 05 of 2021 with regard to State of Disaster COVID-19: Public Service adjustments to risk-adjusted strategy level 4 regulations refers (**see attached**).
2. The current surge of the third wave of COVID-19 infections has necessitated the President to place the country on risk-adjusted strategy level 4 with effect from 28 June 2021 to mitigate the ongoing spread of COVID-19. To minimize the number of employees within the workplace, the occupancy rate at any given time should not be more than 30%. This can be achieved by using rotational and remote working arrangements amongst others. Where possible, meetings, workshops, and conferences should be held virtually.
3. Employees are therefore encouraged to work remotely, and remote working contractual agreements should be in place to manage accountability, performance, and liabilities. The remote working contractual agreement can be done by putting in place clear deliverables that the manager and an employee agree on and that should be tracked and accounted for. The remote working and rotational arrangement should take into consideration the contractual agreement already agreed upon in the performance agreement.

This is to ensure that all key results areas and targets agreed upon during contracting are not affected.

4. When determining eligibility criteria, heads of districts/Institutions and Branches should consider the nature of the work schedule for office-based employees (e.g security, administrators, cleaners, SCM e.t.c) as well as the availability of enabling systems. This is to be done on a case by case after assessment of eligibility and the needs to support essential services.
5. Scheduled disciplinary hearings may not be canceled due to level 4. Disciplinary hearings should be conducted following strict adherence to all health protocols and social distancing measures.
6. Employees working within Residential facilities such as Children's Homes, Old Age Homes and Secure Care Centres are expected to continue following their work daily Rosters.
7. Members of Senior Management are expected to continue providing strategic leadership and ensure achievement of the department's plan and Government overarching plans. SMS members should be in the office at least twice a week due to the nature of their work. The enforcement of this clause should be applied on a case-by-case basis informed by the situation within the department.
8. The DPSA circular further directed Departments to ensure that the necessary administrative measures and tools are availed and put in place using relevant existing legal instruments to hold officials accountable for service delivery and lawful administrative practices whilst ensuring that they adhere to health protocols.
9. All employees working remotely (formal flexible working arrangements where employees are allowed to work away from the workplace) are regarded as being on duty and therefore are expected to be available as and when the need arises taking into account the fact that the audit processes are underway.

10. *This circular is meant to emphasise certain measures and must still be read together with the DPSA circular number 05 of 2021. The circular must be brought to the attention of all employees within the employ of the Limpopo Department of Social Development.*


Mr JM Mahopo
Head of Department

30/06/2021
Date