

A Summary of the President's latest measures to combat Covid-19

President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation for a second time on Monday evening following the rising numbers in Covid-19 cases in South Africa. He announced a range of new escalated measures to combat the Covid-19 epidemic which strives to support the vulnerable, our livelihoods and businesses that may be in distress. The most important measures to take note of are:

- The National Coronavirus Command Council has decided to enforce a nation-wide lockdown for 21 days with effect from midnight on Thursday 26 March until midnight on Thursday 16 April – all South Africans will have to stay at home.
- Individuals will not be allowed to leave their homes except under strictly controlled circumstances, such as to seek medical care, buy food, medicine and other supplies or collect a social grant.
- The categories of people who will be exempted from this lockdown are:
 - health workers in the public and private sectors;
 - emergency personnel;
 - security services such as the police, traffic officers, military medical personnel, soldiers;
 - other persons necessary for the response to the pandemic;
 - those involved in the production, distribution and supply of food and basic goods;
 - essential banking services;
 - the maintenance of power, water and telecommunications services, laboratory services, and
 - the provision of medical and hygiene products will also be exempt from the lockdown.
- All shops and businesses will be closed, except for
 - pharmacies, laboratories, banks, essential financial and payment services, including the JSE, supermarkets, petrol stations and health care providers;
 - companies that are essential to the production and transportation

of food, basic goods and medical supplies.

- Companies whose operations require continuous processes such as furnaces and underground mine operations will be required to make arrangements for care and maintenance to avoid damage to their continuous operations.
- Firms that are able to continue their operations remotely should do so.
- The South African National Defence Force will be deployed to support the South African Police Service in ensuring that the measures announced are being implemented.
- International flights to Lanseria Airport will be temporarily suspended.
- A Solidarity Fund has been created to which South African businesses, organisations and individuals can contribute in aid of the efforts to combat Covid-19 (solidarityfund.co.za).
- Regulations have been put in place to prohibit unjustified price hikes, to ensure shops maintain adequate stocks of basic goods and to prevent people from 'panic buying'.
- Tax compliant businesses with a turnover of less than R50 million will be allowed to delay 20% of their pay-as-you-earn liabilities over the next four months and a portion of their provisional corporate income tax payments without penalties or interest over the next six months.
- Lastly, the Government is exploring the temporary reduction of employer and employee contributions to the Unemployment Insurance Fund and employer contributions to the Skill Development Fund.

We are currently waiting for the new regulations to be formalised and published which should give guidance on how day-to-day life will work as we prepare for life in lockdown.