

RETURN TO WORK TOOLKIT

PRO FORMA DOCUMENTATION

Read together with this Return to Work Guideline, NEASA provided the following pro forma documentation to assist in the implementation of applicable regulations and policies.

1. RETURN TO WORK COMPANY POLICY

- Company policy
- Employee / Visitor History Report
- Employee Health Disclosure
- Risk and Hazard Assessment Guideline

2. COVID 19-READY WORKPLACE PLAN

- Structured Phasing-in Plan
- List of Employees Table
- Attendance Register

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING

- The minutes of the meeting must be utilised to implement all regulations.

4. COVID-19 READY CHECKLIST

- Will assist you to ensure proper compliance with the workplace plan requirements.

5. WARRANT AND COMPLIANCE OFFICER APPOINTMENT

- Will assist you to ensure proper statutory compliance.

6. DETAILED EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Will assist you to ensure compliance with employer responsibilities in the workplace.

SUMMARY PAGE

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A. PREPARING THE WORKPLACE

COVID-19 READY PLAN

According to the COVID-19 Direction on Health and Safety in the Workplace issued by the Minister in terms of Regulation 10(8) of the National Disaster Regulations and the regulations issued in terms of Section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, a COVID-19 ready workplace plan must be developed.

1. Small businesses (Less than 10 employees)

- a. The plan can be basic and reflect the size of the business.
- b. Utilise the COVID-19 ready plan, drafted by NEASA, and amend according to your business needs.

2. Medium and large businesses (10 employees and more)

- a. A more detailed plan should be developed.
- b. Utilise the COVID-19 ready plan, drafted by NEASA, and amend according to your business needs.

RISK AND HAZARD ASSESSMENT

It is advised that a daily risk and hazard assessment is done and that a written record of these analysis be kept:

- A representative should be appointed to ensure that a daily risk and hazard assessment is done.
- Appropriate risk analysis must be done at the premises before any work is resumed. Measures necessary to eliminate or control those risks must be identified and implemented.
- By utilising the 'risk and hazard' assessment template, the representative shall provide a copy of all documented information to the employer / Compliance Officer.
- The 'Risk and Hazard' assessment can be found in the NEASA Return to Work Policy.

B. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the COVID-19 Direction on Health and Safety in the Workplace issued by the Minister in terms of regulation 10(8) of the National Disaster Regulations and the regulations issued in terms of Section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, the following employer responsibilities are recommended:

- Utilise the provided documentation titled 'Detailed Employer Responsibilities' to implement all applicable employer responsibilities in the workplace.
- Make use of the 'Minutes of the Meeting' as drafted by NEASA, to ensure effective compliance with the responsibilities as indicated above.

SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES IN THE WORKPLACE

An employee showing symptoms of COVID-19 should be isolated at the workplace as soon as possible, unless the employee can remove him or herself safely from the workplace.

If a worker presents with symptoms, or advises the employer of symptoms, the employer must:

1. Not permit the employee to enter the workplace or report for work; or
2. If the employee is already at work immediately-
 - a. isolate the worker, provide the employee with an FFP1 surgical mask and arrange for the employee to be transported in a manner that does not place other employees or members of the public at risk either to be self-isolated or for a medical examination or testing;
 - b. assess the risk of transmission, disinfect the area and the employee's workstation, refer those employees who may be at risk for screening and take any other appropriate measure to prevent possible transmission; and
 - c. ensure that the employee is tested or referred to an identified testing site.
3. Place the employee on paid sick leave in terms of section 22 of the BCEA or if the employee's sick leave entitlement under the section is exhausted, make

application for an illness benefit in terms of clause 4 of the Directive issued on 25 March 2020 on the COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme under regulation 10(8) of the Regulations promulgated in terms of section of the Disaster Management Act;

4. Ensure that the employee is not discriminated against on grounds of having tested positive for COVID-19 in terms of section 6 of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998);
5. If there is evidence that the employee contracted COVID-19 as a result of occupational exposure, lodge a claim for compensation in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993) in accordance with Notice 193 published on 3 March 2020.

WHERE AN EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19

Where an employee has been diagnosed with COVID- 19, the employer must:

- inform the Department of Health and the Department of Employment and Labour;
- investigate the cause, including any control failure and review the risk assessment to ensure that the necessary controls and PPE requirements are in place; and
- give the administrative report to any contact-tracing measures implemented by the Department of Health.

C. WORKPLACE RULES AND MEASURES

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Utilise the 'Minutes of the Meeting' as drafted by NEASA, to ensure effective implementation of applicable recommendations.

- All employees should, prior to commencing work after the lockdown has been lifted, complete a Travel History report and Employee Health Disclosure and such documents must be kept on file.
- All employees should regularly wash their hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds and dry with the paper towel provided. Used paper towels to be discarded in a separate bin.
- Employees must ensure that all equipment, stationary, and tools are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised after using it.
- No handshakes or other physical contact is allowed between employees or employees and visitors/clients.
- Employees should sanitise their hands regularly with alcohol- based hand sanitizer, with an alcohol content of at least 70%, after contact with any person or after contact with frequently touched surfaces.
- Employees must cough into the fold of their elbow or into a tissue which must be discarded in a waste bin afterwards, and then wash their hands immediately thereafter.
- Where possible, employees should wear their face masks or other facial protective equipment and are not allowed to take it off.
- Face masks must always be worn correctly, ensuring that the nose and mouth are completely covered.
- Employees must immediately, or within a reasonable time, report any sign of illness, whether it be themselves or a co-employee.
- Employees must practice social distancing of at least 1.5 meters away from any other person, unless there is a physical barrier between them.

PREGNANT AND VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

1. Where possible, pregnant or vulnerable employees should be allowed to work from home.
2. Where possible, employers must ensure that a separate and isolated space will be created for any pregnant and vulnerable employees who are required to work from the office.

D. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND POLICIES

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. An easy way to implement policies and practices is by:
 - a. consulting with employees; and
 - b. have them sign an attendance register before the consultation.
2. Before consulting with employees, assign them into manageable groups. Ensure that all attendees practice social distancing.
3. Once employees are assigned within their groups, distribute hand sanitiser among them and if possible, provide them with personal protective equipment.
4. Be sure to print the minutes of the meeting. A template has been provided by NEASA.
5. Note the following on the minutes of the consultation:
 - a. the date;
 - b. the names of the employees present; and
 - c. the purpose of the meeting – to implement relevant policies and rules.
6. Discuss with your employees the recommendations listed in this guideline that you find applicable to your workplace.
7. At the start of the discussion, ensure that all employees sign the attendance register.
8. End of the meeting by declaring that the discussed policies and measures are now implemented with immediate effect.
9. When employees leave the consultation, ensure that hand sanitiser is distributed to them, clean all stationery used in the consultation with appropriate disinfectants.