



**COVID-19 LEAVE MANAGEMENT
GUIDELINES**

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Objectives

To provide for arrangements for leave dispensation for employees following the recent outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in South Africa which was declared a national state of disaster by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and announced by the President as a national state of disaster.

To assist SASSETA in complying with the legal obligation in accordance with section 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No.85 of 1993), as far as is possible, in providing and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of its employees.

Authorisation

These guidelines are issued in terms of regulations 10(8) of the Regulations promulgated in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No.57 of 2002) and published in the Government Gazette No 43107 of 18 March 2020, read with section 3 of the Public Service Act, 1994.

Definitions

'COVID-19' means the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov) which is an infectious disease caused by a virus, which emerged during 2019 and was declared a global pandemic by the WHO during the year 2020 that has previously not been scientifically identified in humans;

'Isolation' means separating an employee who is confirmed to be infected with the COVID-19 to prevent the spread of infection or contamination of the COVID-19;

'National state of disaster' means the national state of disaster declared by Government Notice No. R.313 of 15 March 2020;

'Quarantine' means separating an employee who is suspected of having been exposed to a person having COVID-19, or an employee who has returned from another country, from healthy individuals in such a manner as to prevent the spread of infection or contamination of the COVID-19; and

'Day' means a consecutive number of days, inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays as defined in the Public Holidays Act, 1994 (Act No.36 of 1994).

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Special Leave for COVID-19 for purposes of quarantine

The Chief Executive Officer shall, as a precautionary measure, grant an employee special leave for COVID-19 if such employees is screened or tested for COVID-19 because the employee:

- displays symptoms of respiratory illness, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever;
- travelled abroad and there is a reason to believe that the employee may be at risk of being infected with COVID-19;
- worked closely with or been in contact with a person confirmed to be infected with COVID-19;
- been exposed to a person suspected of having the COVID-19; or
- attended a health care facility where patients with COVID-19 infections were being treated.

The Chief Executive Officer may, as a precautionary measure, grant an employee special leave for COVID-19 who displays symptoms of COVID-19 but does not meet the requirements for testing for COVID.

1. In the event that it is determined that employees may have come into contact with an employee who tested positive for COVID-19, the Chief Executive Officer may determine that the closure of a unit/component/office/department is warranted and in those circumstances the employees of such unit/component/office/department may be granted special leave.

Eligibility criteria for special leave

2. An employee contemplated in paragraphs 1 may be granted special leave of no more than 14 days for COVID-19 if that employee underwent screening or testing in accordance with the protocols established by the National Department of Health and the National Institute of Communicable Diseases.
3. An employee contemplated in paragraph 2 may be granted special leave of no more than 14 days for COVID-19 if a head of department assessed the application taking into account the inherent risk to the workplace, the service delivery needs of the department and the decision taken is supported by reasonable proof.
4. An employee contemplated in paragraph 3 above, must be granted no more than 14 days special leave for COVID-19.
5. In the interest of the continuous service delivery and if circumstances permit, an employee granted special leave for COVID-19 as a precautionary measure may be requested to continue working remotely to perform specific functions while being quarantined.
6. Notwithstanding the previous paragraphs 5-6, special leave shall be terminated in the event that the employee tests negative for COVID-19.

Employee actions

7. An employee granted special leave for COVID-19 as a precautionary measure is required to-
 - remain at home and follow the advice from the advice from the National Department of Health or their medical practitioner

- avoid contact with other people in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 both in their home and in their community;
- stay home, avoid other people and contact the National Department of Health as soon as possible, if the employee develops symptoms of COVID-19, even if mild.

Sick leave for purposes of isolation

8. A head of department shall grant an employee sick leave if the employee:
- tested positive_for COVID-19 and presented with illness or symptoms and a medical practitioner has certified that the employee must be isolated to prevent the spread of COVID-19; or
 - is diagnosed for any other illness that is not COVID-19 related and a medical practitioner issued a medical certificate in this regard.

Eligibility criteria for sick leave

9. An employee may be granted sick leave if the employee:
- underwent a medical screening process in accordance with the protocols established by the Department of Health and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and is tested positive for COVID-19
 - Underwent a medical screening and is diagnosed with any other illness that is not COVID-19 and a medical practitioner has issued a medical certificate in this regard

Benefits

10. An employee may be granted sick leave or incapacity leave in accordance with the Policy and Procedure on Incapacity Leave and Ill-health Retirement processes if the employee has exhausted his/her normal sick leave for the duration of the isolation certified by the medical practitioner.

Employee Actions

11. Employees granted sick leave for COVID-19 are required to:
- (a) Stay at home for the duration of the period certified by the, medical professional until advised that the risk of spreading the virus to the others has subsided; and
 - (b) Avoid contact with other people to help prevent the spread of disease in their home and in their community, particularly people at high risk of severe illness outcomes such as older adults or medically vulnerable people.

An employee who refuses to report for duty

12. If an employee has not been granted permission to not attend work and refuses to attend, then such absence shall be regarded as unpaid and shall be dealt with in terms of the applicable Disciplinary Code.

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Official Sign-off

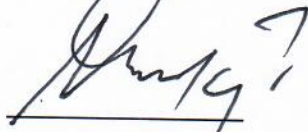
It is hereby certified that this Covid-19 Leave Management Guidelines:

- Was developed by the War Room Task Team of the Safety and Security SETA under the guidance of the SASSETA Management.
- Takes into account all relevant legislations and other mandates for which the Safety and Security SETA is responsible.



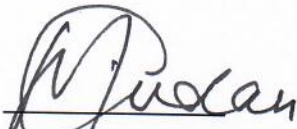
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