

# SIYANCUMA MUNICIPALITY



## COVID POLICY 2021

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## 1. Definitions

In this Policy, a word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act, has the same meaning as in the Act, unless the context indicates otherwise, and —

"Disaster Management Act" - means the Disaster Management Act, 57 of 2002);

"Council" - means the municipal council of the Siyancuma Municipality

"Municipality" means the Siyancuma Municipality,

"Municipal Manager" - means the Municipal Manager of the Siyancuma Municipality. .

" Regulations" - means the corona virus Regulations issued in terms of the Disaster Management Act.

"Covid-19" – means Coronavirus Disease 2019 as a result of infection of the SARS-CoV-2 virus

"O-HSA" – means Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993) Act no 85 of 1993)

"PPE" – means Personal Protective Equipment

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the policy and standard operating procedures for . managing the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in terms of prevention, detection and management of cases, continuous monitoring and maintenance of high hygiene levels within the Siyancuma Municipality

## 3. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all municipal employees, councillors, service providers, contractors and members of the public.

## 4. Background

The President of the Republic of South Africa announced a National Lockdown on the 23 March 2020 to contain the spread of the virus. The lockdown was enacted in terms of the Disaster Management Act and entailed, amongst others the following key provisions:

. (a) The categories of people who were exempted from the lockdown were essential workers in the public and private sectors, emergency personnel, those in security services e.g. police, traffic officers,

military medical personnel, soldiers and other persons necessary for the management of the response to the pandemic.

(b) Those responsible for the production and distribution and supply of food and basic goods, banking services, maintenance of power, water, telecommunication services, laboratory services and provision of medical and hygiene products may continue their operations.

(c) Residents were not allowed to leave their homes, except under strictly controlled circumstances e.g. to seek medical care, buy food and medicine or collect social grants.

- a) The country will begin a gradual and phased recovery of economic activity,
- b) There will be a national lockdown level and separate levels for each province, district and metro in the country to "ensure that the response to the pandemic can be as precise and targeted as possible".
- c) The national lockdown level 5, was a measure to contain the Covid-19 virus.
- d) This ended on the 30 April 2020; thereafter there was a transition to national lockdown level 4, which became effective from 1 May 2020.

This policy will cater for levels 5,4, 3, 2 and 1.

## 5. Preparing for COVID Compliance

Government will continue to monitor the prevalence of cases, and may adjust the alert levels up or down, guided by the risk-adjusted strategy.

- a) Municipalities are also expected to take the health and safety of its employees very seriously.
- b) Furthermore, a comprehensive, fully integrated Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment of each workplace will be completed to determine the appropriate intervention and the type of PPE that is applicable. This will ensure that there is maximum protection against the possible contraction of COVID-19.

## 6. High Risk Employees

In terms of the Regulations, the following categories of employees are deemed high risk, and may continue to work from home (with the same status and full benefits) until further notice:

- a) Employees who are 60 years and older;
- b) Employees with comorbidities, that is the presence of one or more additional conditions co-occurring with (concomitant or concurrent with) a primary condition.

These may be conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory systems disease, etc.;

- c) Female employees who are pregnant;
- d) Any person who is presenting fever, dry cough, and sore throat.

Any employee who has such co-morbidities must provide Human Resources with a medical certificate (Human Resources must treat such personal information as confidential)

A risk assessment form must be completed at HR, whereby the HR Officer will inform the Municipal Manager and Compliance Officer (who must treat the information given with confidentiality)

## 7. Employees who may return to work

- a) Initially as part of lockdown Alert level 4, a staff complement not exceeding a third (1/3) of the total workforce in accordance with the national guidelines, was allowed to report for duty, subject to the national and provincial alert levels;
- b) In terms of Alert levels 3, 2 and 1 a full municipal staff complement will report for duty on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020; except for employees, who are identified as high-risk employees including those with health comorbidities. (employees with comorbidities will be subjected to the terms of point 6).
- c) The municipality may continue working with a staff complement not exceeding a third (1/3) or rotation under levels 3, 2 and 1 after it assess the situation within the community.

## 8. Screening of staff and Services Providers / Public

- a) All employees and service providers who need to access the municipal workplace will be required to fill in a screening questionnaire.
- b) All members of the public will be screened before entering any municipal building.

## 9. PPE

While the correct use of PPE can help prevent some exposure, it should not take the place of other preventative strategies.

See also annexure A

## 9.1 Face Masks

All municipal employees will be issued with two (2) face-masks upon returning to the workplace.

Face masks must be used at all times and should only be considered as a complementary measure and not a replacement for established preventive practices, such as physical distancing, cough and sneeze etiquette, hand hygiene and avoiding face touching. It is essential that employees use face masks properly so that they are effective and safe.

In using face masks, the following should be taken into consideration:

- (a) It should fit properly, completely covering the face from the bridge of nose to the chin;
- (b) Clean hands properly before putting on the face mask or taking it off;
- (c) Only touch the cord or elastic at the back of the face mask when removing it, not the front;
- (d) If the mask is disposable, be sure to do so safely and put it in a proper container.

## 9.2 Sanitisers

Sanitizers will be provided as follows:

- (a) At all entry points into the premises; (all buildings)
- (b) At all entrances and lifts (if any);

## 9.3 Handling of Waste of PPE

- (i) All waste generated at the workplace by employees while conducting their normal daily tasks/functions is regarded as normal waste and must be disposed of in the general waste stream;
- (ii) Waste generated by health workers while performing duties e.g. contact tracing and/or investigations is regarded as High Care Risk Waste (HCRW);
- (iii) Accordingly, waste disposal must be done in accordance with the environmental health protocols and directives issued from time to time by the Municipality's Department of Environmental Health.

## 9.4 Disinfecting

All main offices will be disinfected at least once a week

- Fridays - Main Office Douglas / Griekwastad
- Tuesdays - Breipaal 1 and Stores
- Wednesdays - Breipaal 2
- Thursdays - Traffic
- Saturdays - (Campbell and Schmidsdrift)

Offices / buildings will close at 15:00 on the day of disinfecting, however this is subjected to change.

## 9.4 Municipal Vehicles

All drivers of municipal vehicles are to ensure that all workers riding or driving with (on) the bakkie wears a mask and that the vehicle is disinfected, spray bottles will be issued.

## 9.5 Office Cleaning

Regular routine cleaning (day to day) must be maintained upper surfaces to be cleaned with a detergent focusing on door handles, and counter tops, where public visits or likely have touched.

All workplace areas must be kept clean and hygienic at all times.

## 10 Workplace preparation Return to work

In the event of office close down or an outbreak at the office building, the office building will be closed for 24 hrs for disinfection and deep cleaning;

- a) A deep cleansing and decontamination of the affected facility /building will be performed before employees return to the workplace, as well as during regular intervals to maintain an acceptable level of cleanliness.
- b) Regular cleaning with detergents will be performed in-between the deep-cleaning and decontamination;
- c) The Health and Safety Committee with HR will ensure that there is inventory of cleaning chemicals, materials and consumable, aligned with building occupancy and that all cleaning equipment and tools are in proper working condition;
- d) After use, cleaning staff will properly dispose of or sanitize PPEs in accordance with health regulations;
- e) Increased frequency of cleaning at communal areas such as reception desks, desks, tables, light switches, door handles, toilets, board-rooms etc., will be performed.

## 11 Office Setup

The following procedures will be applied:

- a) There will be no sharing of desks;
- b) A distance of at least 1.5 meters has to be maintained between work stations;
- c) Where necessary, panels between desks will be installed;
- d) Employees are advised to disinfect their workstations on a daily basis.
- e) Space will be made at other buildings for staff to work from (treatment plant in Schmidtsdrift as base for technical department, garage at Traffic department)

## 12 Bathrooms and Canteens

Bathrooms and kitchens are areas that harbour germs and should be cleaned at least twice a day.

- a) When cleaning bathrooms and kitchens, focus should be on the cupboards and drawer knobs, pulls and fronts, handles and fronts of appliances, such as refrigerators, dishwashers, ovens and toaster ovens; coveralls will be provided.
- b) Kitchen will close at 15:00 daily.

## 13 Meetings and Trainings

Organizers of meetings, training and events need to think about the potential risk of COVID-19 because there will always be a risk that people attending meetings, training or events might unwittingly bring the COVID-19 virus to the meeting which might result in others being unknowingly exposed to COVID-19. Before the meeting or event, the following should be taken into account:

- a) Meetings, training or events must be strictly held in accordance with the government regulations and in compliance with the directives of the appropriate Alert Level;
- b) If the venue does not allow or provide for proper ventilation or cannot accommodate all participants the said meeting will be conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

## 14 Public Access

- (a) No member of the public may be allowed access to a municipal building if he/she is not wearing a face-mask and subject himself or herself to the stipulated compliance requirements, including screening, compulsory temperature check and hand-sanitation.
- (b) A visitor's book must be completed at all entrants for any appointments with any municipal official, the book will entail name, surname, address, contact number, temperature reading and with whom the appointment is.



## 15 Managing Employees

### 15.1 Rotational Plan

Staff will be placed on a rotational plan to curb a major outbreak of the virus.

- The rotational plan will be implemented as follows;
  - a) Technical department - Shift system
  - b) Office (finance & Cooperate) - Rotation

Employees on a rotation must be at the offices three (3) days a week, with two (2) days' work from home, however, employees may be called back to the office to perform certain duties.

The two (2) days from work does not mean an employee is off but mean that the employee is on standby, should an employee wish to take leave he/she must apply for leave.

Rotational and shift plans will be the responsibility of the Compliance Officer and must be approved by the Municipal Manager.

Rotational plans or shift plans can only be amended, with consultation with HR/Compliance Officer and approval from the Municipal Manager.

### 15.2 Worker obligation

It is the obligation of all employees to comply with the measures introduced by Siyancuma Municipality, as directed by the Minister of employment and labour.

## 16 File Management service providers

- a) A Safety File serves as proof of compliance to safety specifications in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations;
- b) All contractors and service providers must compile a Health and Safety File which must include, the directives published by the Department of Employment and Labour, and Occupational Health and Safety Measures in Workplaces COVID-19 (C19 OHS), 2020;
- c) It is the responsibility of all managers or supervisors who contract service providers or contractors, to ensure that such a Safety File is submitted to the Health and Safety Practitioner for it to be approved;
- d) The Safety File must be kept at the premises or the site of the service provider or contractor.
- e) Service providers will also complete a service providers screening book when performing any services in any municipal building.

## 17 Communication

- a) This Policy and Procedure on Covid-19 will be communicated to employees of Siyancuma Municipality

## 18 Case reporting

- a) All employees must report to their immediate supervisor/HR/ and Compliance Officer if and when they have tested or being in contact with a COVID-19 positive person.
- b) Such employees are advised to report the case through the Health Department to ensure that they are provided with the appropriate support in managing the virus;
- c) The Municipality is also obliged to report to both the Department of Health and the Department of Labour if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19. The case will then be investigated in terms of the cause of the infection, "including any control failure" in the workplace;
- d) HR must have a separate file for COVID-19 positive cases, and negative cases.
- e) Prove of testing or isolation must be send to HR (prescribed note from a testing facility or medical doctor)
- f) Employees who tested positive and knowingly visit or report for duty, may be charged
- g) Employees who test positive will be given 10 (ten) days to isolate (recover), employees awaiting results will quarantine for 3 (three) days (awaiting results) should the results be negative the employee will return and report for duty.
- h) Employees who tested positive and recovered and came into contact with a COVID19 positive person must quarantine and 10 days' sick leave must be taken.

## 19 Vaccine and side effects

Government is currently rolling out vaccine to South Africans, the roll out started in February 2021, employees will be encouraged to take the vaccine voluntarily, work place vaccine sites will be identified as per the directive or resolution from national government.

Employees will be granted paid leave on the day of vaccination, vaccination slip must be provided to HR

Voluntary three (3) days leave will be granted to employees who may suffer from vaccine side-effects to recoup, provided that they provide hospital or doctors not stating that they suffer from vaccine side effects, if more days are taken then the days will be deducted from the employee's sick leave days.

## 20 Breach of this policy

The following actions constitute misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the approved Disciplinary Procedure of the SALGEC

- a) Any person who fails to comply with the Policy and Procedure on Covid-19 will be guilty of an offence and disciplinary action will be taken against him/her;
- b) Any person who intentionally misrepresent that he or she is infected with the virus will be guilty of an offence and disciplinary action will be taken against him/her;
- c) Any person who intentionally exposes another to COVID-19, may be subjected to a disciplinary action;
- d) Anyone who publishes a statement through any medium including social media, with the intention to deceive any other person about COVID-19, COVID-19 infection status of any person, or any measure taken by government to address COVID-19 commits an offence and shall be liable to disciplinary action;
- e) Notwithstanding the above, any person who is in breach of government regulations, on the management of COVID-19 is liable for criminal charges.
- f) Employees who tested positive and knowingly visit or report for duty, may be charged

## 21 Monitoring and implementation

- a) The Municipal Manager or his delegate (Compliance Officer) will monitor the implementation of this policy and shall from time to time issue directives to improve implementation of the Disaster Management Act and the Covid-19 Regulations;
- b) Accordingly, the Policy and Procedures may be amended and approved by the Municipal Manager in accordance with the council delegated powers.

## 22 Review

This policy will be reviewed as and when required.

## ANNEXURE A: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC PLACES DISINFECTION

### 1. Recommended disinfection method for public places

There is currently no adequate evidence on the cost-effectiveness of air disinfection in outdoor environments, therefore;

- At this time, the recommended method of disinfection includes surface cleaning and disinfection and indoor spray disinfection.

#### ✓ Surface disinfection

Disinfection of frequently touched surfaces (as described rollout plan) in public places;

#### ✓ Spray disinfection

Disinfection of larger indoor spaces or environments/integrated disinfection, where surface disinfection is not feasible, such as communal facilities and larger transport facilities (prescribed in rollout plan).

### 2. Equipment requirements for cleaning and disinfectants

- ✓ Cleaning detergents with warm water;
- ✓ Disposable universal wipes which combine cleaning and disinfection are impregnated;
- ✓ Hand held spray disinfectants and wiping cloths, preferable disposable paper towels;
- ✓ Backpack sprayers, pest control methods or other approved methods.

### 3. Technical specifications of disinfectants

SABS approved detergents and disinfectants;

For smaller surfaces:

- Ethyl alcohol (70%);
- Peracetic acid and or hydrogen peroxide;
- Chlorine, hypochlorite (strength: 1000-10,000 ppm);

For larger surfaces:

- Sodium hypochlorite (household bleach) at 0.5% (equivalent to 5000 ppm);
- Hydrogen peroxide gas.

✚ NB Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for chemicals being used for cleaning and disinfecting must always be available on site.

✚ Sprayers to be equipped with skills and expertise to safely conduct spraying.

#### 4. Cleaning and Disinfection procedure for frequently touched surfaces

- Thoroughly clean surfaces using detergent and warm water.
- Apply disinfectant to surfaces using disposable alcohol wipes, paper towel or a disposable cloth. If non-disposable cloths are used, ensure they are laundered and dried before reusing.
- Ensure surfaces remain wet for the period of time required to kill the virus (contact time) as specified by the manufacturer's guide. If no time is specified, leave for at least 10 minutes.

#### 5. Procedure for cleaning and disinfection of larger indoor environments

- Floors and walls should be hosed down with water and cleaning detergent;
- Ventilate areas with fresh air for a minimum of 30 Minutes;
- Spray risk areas according to the equipment instruction manual.
- 0.5% peroxyacetic acid, 3% hydrogen peroxide, or 500mg/L chlorine dioxide can be adopted for air disinfection, by way of aerosol spray.

#### 6. Decontamination procedures where COVID-19 patients were handled

Where suspected or confirmed cases, or passengers with suspicious symptoms are found in public transportation or public gathering places, terminal disinfection should be performed by professionals; The following methods should be used for terminal disinfection;

- The area should first be well ventilated with fresh air for a minimum of 1 hour;
- Hydrogen peroxide gas sterilization devices can be used for integrated disinfection of the air and the environment. The specific operation can be performed according to the equipment instruction manual.
- 0.5% peroxyacetic acid, 3% hydrogen peroxide, or 500mg/L chlorine dioxide can be adopted for air disinfection, by way of aerosol spray;
- For key areas that are contaminated, 1000 to 2000mg/L chlorine disinfectant can be applied by spraying or wiping for reaction of more than 30 minutes.

#### 7. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The minimum personal protective equipment that must be worn by cleaners when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces

Surface disinfection:

- Water proof, impermeable disposable gloves;
- Plastic disinfection;
- Mask

Spray disinfection:

- A respirator, minimum of a FFP2;
- Eye protection, either goggles or face shield for sprayers and mixers;
- Plastic water boots;
- High utility gloves.

8. Employees responsible for disinfection must be trained on the following:

- The health risks posed by the disinfectants used;
- The type of PPE to be worn and the importance of wearing such during the application of the disinfectant;
- The first aid measures to be taken in case of accidental exposure to the disinfectant;
- The correct application of the disinfectants;
- The cleaning and disposal of PPE.

9. Waste disposal

- All waste generated including masks, gloves, paper towels, etc. shall be treated as general waste.
- The waste shall be placed in plastic rubbish bags and tied when full.
- These plastic rubbish bags shall be placed with the normal waste for collection, removal, transportation and disposal by the relevant municipality.