

COVID-19 Orientation Guide: Overview

First published in 2020

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FOREWORD



MEC Polly Boshelo, MPL

In the first few months of 2020, the world witnessed unprecedented global pandemic due to the rapid spread of the corona virus which is a highly contagious virus that leads to life threatening respiratory disorders. A number of deaths have been recorded especially in Asia, Europe, UK and USA, and recently, in South Africa.

As part of the measures to contain the spread of this deadly virus, and protect learners and teachers who could be vulnerable due to the numbers and nature of interactions in a teaching and learning environment, schools had to be closed on 18 March 2020 ahead of the scheduled closure on 20 March 2020.

This was followed by a nationwide 21 day lockdown, which was scheduled to end on 16 April 2020 but had to be extended until the end of April due to the threatening impact of the virus if it were allowed to spread. Based on the risk adjusted assessment, the level of the lockdown was eased from level 5 to level 4.

The lockdown has impacted on various departmental programmes which were supposed to have been implemented by the end of the financial year. One of the key programmes that was impacted on is the management, administration and conduct of external examinations. The May/June 2020 examinations for Grade 12 learners have been merged with the November 2020 examinations.

Since the strength of the education sector is located in the classroom, the closure of schools during the lockdown impacted negatively on learning and teaching. Learners in all grades missed out on face-to-face teaching and other programmes such as enrichments classes and camps for Grade 12 learners. Those living in the rural areas were the most affected.

Nevertheless, the Department used the SABC and community radio stations to teach learners in their homes. Anecdotal evidence reveals the positive impact the radio lessons had on learners across all the grades in the primary schools. The Department also uploaded digitised Grade 12 materials such as previous questions papers and memoranda on its portal.

Life will never be the same. A new normalcy is emerging which would require all managers, teachers, learners and parents to learn to live in a world ravaged by COVID-19. This COVID-19 Orientation Guide has been developed to orientate all managers, support staff, educators and SGB members to minimise the spread and impact of COVID-19. The Guide is divided into the following five Units:

- **Unit 1:** Understanding corona virus and the disease it causes
- **Unit 2:** What to do when suspecting/suspected of having contracted COVID-19
- **Unit 3:** How to engage/interact with colleagues, learners and communities
- **Unit 4:** Managing spread of COVID-19 in classrooms
- **Unit 5:** Managing spread of COVID-19 in special and full-service schools

I invite all employees, community members, teacher unions, school governing bodies and professional bodies to work with Government in using this Guide to orientate all to arrest the spread and severity of COVID-19 in our education system.

ACRONYMS

CM	Corporate Management
CMD	Curriculum Management and Delivery
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
CPTD	Continuous Professional Teacher Development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoH	Department of Health
EMC	Executive Management Committee
IGCS	Institutional Governance Coordination and Support
LDoE	Limpopo Department of Education
NCOV	Novel Coronavirus
WHO	World Health Organisation
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SGB/s	School Governing Body/Bodies

GLOSSARY

It is important to know and understand the following key concepts that are used in this COVID-19 Orientation Guide.

The following concepts were gleaned from <https://intermountainhealthcare.org/> (downloaded on 02 May 2020) and World Health Organisation websites:

- **Endemic:** A disease or condition regularly found among particular people or country
- **Epidemic:** An epidemic is a disease that affects a large number of people within a community, population, or region.
- **Outbreak:** An outbreak is a greater-than-anticipated increase in the number of endemic cases. It can also be a single case in a new area. If it's not quickly controlled, an outbreak can become an epidemic
- **Pandemic:** A pandemic is an epidemic that's spread over multiple countries or continents.

The following concepts were gleaned from world and national bodies such as WHO, DoH, DBE and speeches by various members of the National and Provincial Command Councils as well as medical news today at the following address: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/>.

- **COVID-19**, is a disease that is caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2 and broke out in Wuhan in December 2019.
- **NCOV**, stands for novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus and was given the temporary name of "2019-nCoV acute respiratory disease".
- **SARS-CoV-2**, is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans and causes the disease, COVID-19.
- **Physical distancing**, refers to a physical space between people measured in metres.
- **Social distancing**, refers to a measure of distance across social boundaries.
- **Thermal scanner/screener**, refers to a high-accuracy camera that measures skin surface temperature as people pass by. A security alarm sounds on the device when it detects a temperature above the predefined target.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of institutions, organisations and individuals have contributed (directly or indirectly) towards the development of this COVID-19 Orientation Guide. It would not be possible to cover all of them in this space save to categorise them as follows:

- All Branches of the Limpopo Department of Education
- The Department of Basic Education
- The Limpopo Department of Health
- The Inter-institution Task Team on provincial integrated e-Education/ICT Strategy
- The Presidency
- The Limpopo Provincial Command Council

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Purpose of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

This COVID-19 Orientation Guide has been prepared to orientate managers, support staff, educators and SGB (School Governing Bodies) members on their roles and responsibilities about ways to prevent or reduce the spread and severity of the corona virus (SARS-CoV-2).

The audience targeted by the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

The audience who will be targeted by this programme are:

- The employees of the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE),
- Learners,
- Educators and
- Members of the SGBs

Duration of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

Different audiences will have varied durations. The following durations are for the audience targeted by this Programme.

- Learners: One day COVID-19 Orientation session
- Educators: Two days (one day for pre- COVID-19 Orientation reading activities and another day for the Orientation Session)
- Managers: Three days: (one day for pre- COVID-19 Orientation reading activities, second day for the Orientation Session and the third day for the administrative matters)
- Lead/Facilitators: Two weeks: (one day for pre- COVID-19 Orientation reading activities, second day for the Orientation Session, and the third day for application activities. Subject advisors will also participate in a week and two days of blended Induction Programme)

Pre-attendance activities

All attendants will be provided with pre-reading materials/activities which they must complete before they attend the COVID-19 Orientation Programme.

Attendance

Attendance of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme is compulsory.

Certificate of completion

Attendants will receive the certificate of completion signed by the LDoE Head of Department once they have met the following requirements:

- 100% attendance
- Completion of all activities

Implementing the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

A blended mode of delivery will be used to deliver the COVID-19 Orientation Programme to managers, educators and administrators. The materials to be used when delivering the Programme are:

- Hard and electronic copies of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme
- Supporting hard and soft documents in the form of clips, posters, brochures, pictures and illustrations; and
- Interactive video/s recording showing how to enact safe and prevention measures

Facilitating the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

Lead Facilitators and Presenters of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme will be appointed by the Limpopo Department of Education.

Scope and Outcomes of the COVID-19 Orientation Programme

Scope and outcomes of Unit 1: Understanding the disease, COVID-19

At the end of Unit 1, participants will be able to:

- define the concept Coronavirus, 2019-NCOV;
- define the disease, COVID-19;
- describe the causes of the disease, COVID-19;
- identify and describe the symptoms of COVID-19;
- explain why COVID-19 is a pandemic; and
- identify and describe the prevention measures that need to be followed before, during and when leaving the classroom, school, educational field/excursion and/or office.

Scope and outcomes of Unit 2: What to do when suspecting/suspected of COVID-19

At the end of Unit 2, participants will be able to:

- manage the suspected cases of the disease, COVID-19;
- describe the stipulated procedure to be followed in case an employee or member of the school community has come into contact with a suspected case of coronavirus or is infected by 2019-NCOV;
- identify and describe the health, psychological and wellness support services readily available in case of a suspected case; and
- mention important numbers to call in case of a suspected case.

Scope and outcomes of Unit 3: How to engage/interact with colleagues, learners and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic

At the end of Unit 3, participants will be able to:

- function in a manner that ensures social distancing in the staffroom, classroom, school yard, playgrounds and other educational grounds;
- encourage and apply appropriate PREVENTION MEASURES when greeting, socialising and sharing resources, e.g. photocopiers, computers, hard copies, equipment, etc. ;
- advocate for and follow appropriate prevention measures during interactions with colleagues, learners and parents in collective activities such as meetings, workshops and conferences; and
- ensure the availability and usage of appropriate hygienic essentials and practices when entering or in the educational field/excursion, school grounds, staffrooms, bathrooms, and classrooms.

Scope and outcomes of Unit 4: Managing COVID-19 in the classrooms

At the end of Unit 4, participants will be able to:

- identify and describe the hygienic essentials and practices required in the school and every classroom;
- encourage and apply safety measures during the rotation of periods and in the school grounds;
- allow a permissible number of learners in class at a time;
- describe and enact the standard procedures that learners and teachers must follow when entering and exiting the classroom and the school;
- arrange the class in a way that will promote adherence to social distancing requirement;
- ensure that learners follow the regulations during lessons in terms of sharing resources and knowledge;
- follow the appropriate procedure in the collection and return of learners' books and other educational materials or equipment; and
- ensure that social distancing is observed in the school grounds, during breaks, meal times, hostels and visits to the bathrooms.

Scope and outcomes of Unit 5: Managing COVID-19 in special and full-service schools

At the end of Unit 5, participants will be able to:

- describe the “special essentials” that are needed for special and full-service schools;
- know how employees at special and full-service schools should exercise social distancing in classrooms, hostels, dining rooms, restaurants and meeting places;
- support disabled managers, teachers, support staff and learners; and
- promote hygiene standards in special and full-service schools.

For more information on managing COVID-19 in institutions for the disabled, contact 0800 029 999

You can also WhatsApp 060 0123 456

Visit www.sacoronavirus.co.za

You can also visit Facebook Group: DisabilityRightsSA to get more information

Summary and Conclusion

This COVID-19 Guide is designed to orientate people of all ages and who are at different levels of employment and schooling about COVID-19 and how to prevent its spread and severity.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) advises all people to take steps to protect themselves from the 2019-NCOV by, among others, following good hand and respiratory hygiene. These steps also help to stop or reduce the spread of the 2019-NCOV to many people by those who are infected by it.

It is hoped that many will use the information and knowledge contained in this COVID-19 Orientation Guide to lead disciplined lives that will prevent both the infections and the spread of 2019-NCOV.

In order to lead these disciplined lives, we must know that COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a virus which does not have a vaccine. The research reports (see references section) reveal that the majority of people who become severely ill after contracting the virus are older people and those living with pre-existing chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes

and heart diseases. Although many have died after being infected with the virus, many recovered.

What is needed in order to avoid deaths, are precautionary and preventative measures such as those spelt out in this Guide. These include,

- cleaning hands often using soap and water or alcohol-based hand-rub sanitiser;
- avoiding touching of nose, mouth and eyes;
- covering nose and mouth with bent elbow or tissue when sneezing and throw the tissue into a dust bin afterwards;
- staying home if feeling unwell;
- seeking medical attention when experience difficulty in breathing;
- sanitising all surfaces regularly; and
- avoiding unnecessary visits to medical facilities to give space health care systems to function optimally.

More information on COVID-19 is available on www.nicd.ac.za ; www.health.gov.za and www.education.gov.za.

COVID-19 contact resources

In cases of emergencies, call or write to the following addresses:

- COVID-19 Hotline Number: 0800 029 999 (Presidency)
- COVID-19 WhatsApp Number: 0600 12 3456 (Presidency)
- COVID-19 online resources and news portal: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/> (Presidency)
- COVID-19 free website: <https://coronavirus.datafree.co/>
- COVID-19 online resources: <https://www.gov.za/coronavirus/>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/>

Below are the contact details of the Limpopo Provincial Health Department Communicable Diseases Directorates:

1. Marlene Freda Ngobeni
Email: Ngobeni@dhsd.limpopo.gov.za
Contact: 079 491 1909
2. Mashudu Prudence Mudau
Email: Prudence.Mudau@dhsd.limpopo.gov.za
Contact: 071 678 3864

The hospital designated to deal with those infected with the corona virus in the Limpopo province is Polokwane Hospital which is contactable at: (015) 287 5000

References

COVID-19 for Schools and School Communities. ***Circular No. 1 of 2020 Guidance for Childcare Facilities and Schools on COVID-19***

DBE, LDOE, DoH, DPISA and DoL Circulars

Department of Health COVID-19 Guidelines and Measures

www.health.gov.za (National Department of Health)

www.nhls.ac.za (National Health Laboratory Service)

www.nicd.ac.za (National Institute for Communicable Diseases)

[http:// www.nioh.ac.za /](http://www.nioh.ac.za/) (National Institute of Occupational Health)

www.education.gov.za.

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/covid-19-prevention/>

<https://www.worldhealthorganisation.com/>

