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Home Affairs Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi provides an update on the partial re-opening of borders and services during Alert Level 1

04 October 2020

The Minister of Home Affairs Dr Aaron Motsoaledi convened an inclusive meeting involving senior immigration officials and ports of entry managers to address the challenges arising from the implementation of Regulations pertaining to travel into the Republic, including opening the tourism industry and promoting trade in order to stimulate economic recovery.

The Minister of Tourism, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, was consulted prior and during the meeting and fully endorses its outcome.

The visa free status of citizens of some countries and territories was temporarily suspended at the start of the lockdown period. In line with the commitment of Government to take urgent steps to address the economic and tourism stagnation brought about by the outbreak of Covid-19, the visa free status of citizens from the following countries and territories has been reinstated:

- South Korea;
- Spain;
- Italy;
- Germany;
- Hong Kong;
- Singapore;
- USA;
- UK;
- France;
- Portugal
- Iran

However, the visa free status does not alter the current Covid-19 Regulations.

The Minister has instructed officials to communicate this decision to the aviation industry, embassies and other stakeholders as a matter of urgency.

The port managers have been instructed to adhere to the SADC protocol and guidelines regulating the movement of essential goods under Covid-19 Regulations. The guidelines regulating truck drivers travelling across the border will continue to apply as has been the case for the past seven months.

In view of the confusion regarding the 72 hours negative test requirement, we reiterate that business persons providing services across the borders of SADC are allowed multiple entry subject to the following:

- Producing a certificate of negative Covid-19 test result not older than 72 hours from the time of departure. This certificate is valid for 14 days.

Minister Motsoaledi is fully aware of the issue of airline and maritime crews and he has been informed that the Minister of Transport is resolving the matter and a statement to that effect will hopefully be issued by the Minister of Transport today.

Immigration officers will be required to assess the movement and place of origin of the traveller and not the country of origin of the airline concerned.

Transit travellers through South Africa by air will be allowed to connect to their destinations, subject to them complying with applicable health protocols but need not produce the 72 hours negative certificate.

As communicated on 30 September 2020, visa services, including submission of applications through VFS Global, have resumed in the following categories:

Visitor's visas; study visa; treaty visa; business visa; crew visa; medical treatment visa; relative's visa; general work visa; critical skills work visa; intra-company transfer work visa; retired person visa; corporate visa; exchange visa; waiver of prescribed requirement, as contemplated in section 31(2)(c); and appeals or reviews contemplated in section 8 of the Immigration Act.

Any person from a country listed as having a high COVID-19 infection and transmission rate, who wish to undertake a business travel into South Africa, may, in writing, apply to the Minister of Home Affairs and demonstrate reasons for their request to enter the Republic for business purposes during the period of the national state of disaster.

Such applications must be directed to email Covid19BusinessTravel@dha.gov.za and supported by:

- a. a copy of passport and/or temporary residence visa;
- b. proof of business activities to be undertaken in the Republic;
- c. proof of travel itinerary; and
- d. proof of address or accommodation in the Republic.

The list of high risk countries as published on 30 September 2020 is:

Albania	Honduras	Oman
Argentina	Hungary	Palestine
Armenia	Iceland	Panama
Austria	India	Paraguay
Bahrain	Iran	Peru
Belgium	Iraq	Portugal
Bolivia	Ireland	Puerto Rico
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Israel	Qatar
Brazil	Jamaica	Romania
Chile	Jordan	Russia
Columbia	Kuwait	Slovakia
Costa Rica	Lebanon	Suriname
Croatia	Luxemburg	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Maldives	Ukraine
Denmark	Malta	UAE
Ecuador	Mexico	United Kingdom
France	Moldova	USA
Georgia	Montenegro	Venezuela
Greece	Nepal	
Guatemala	Netherlands	
Guyana	North Macedonia	

The list of these high risk countries will be updated fortnightly and can be accessed via this link >>> [Click here for the updated list](#)

Immigration officers have been instructed to apply the requirements with a measure of flexibility in order to allow applications for business travel to be lodged at the ports of entry if and when necessary and await the outcome before entry into the Republic is allowed.

All other categories of travellers from medium and low risk countries are required to produce a certificate of negative COVID-19 test result not older

than 72 hours from the time of departure. Any person who fail to submit the certificate will be required to quarantine at his or her own cost.

Enquiries:

Siya Qoza, 082 898 1657 (spokesperson for the Minister of Home Affairs)

David Hlabane, 071 342 4284 (media manager for the Department of Home Affairs)

Public Enquiries: 0800 60 11 90

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