



South Africa's Response to COVID-19

On 15th March 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic was gaining ground in Africa, the South African government through the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, began the long process of combating the disease by initiating a declaration of a national state of disaster.

Having instructed a lockdown, the implementation process was designed to see to it that every person is confined to his or her place of residence, unless strictly for the purpose of performing an essential service, obtaining an essential good or service, collecting a social grant, pension or seeking emergency, life-saving, or chronic medical attention.

Every public gathering is also prohibited, except for those provided under special controlled circumstances such as funerals. Movement between provinces and between metropolitan and district areas is prohibited except for essential workers who have to travel to and from work. However, excluded is the transportation of cargo from ports of entry to their intended destination, on condition that necessary precautions have been taken to sanitise and disinfect such cargo.

To cushion the economy, the Cabinet member responsible for finance may by direction, designate services, excluding debt collection services and provide social grants by banks. Finally, all commuter transport services including passenger rail services, bus services, taxi services, e-hailing services, maritime and air passenger transport are prohibited. However, bus services, taxi services, e-hailing services and private motor vehicles necessary for purposes of rendering essential services, obtaining essential goods or services, seeking medical attention, funeral services and for collecting payment of grants and pensions are not prohibited.

The National Department of Health has been given a responsibility to develop and maintain a national database to enable the tracing of persons who are known or reasonably suspected to have come into contact with any person known or reasonably suspected to have contracted COVID-19.

