



MFSA: COVID-19 INFORMATION: PREPARE FOR LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY 24 April 2020



Dear MFSA Members

President Ramaphosa has made a statement on 23 April 2020 regarding economic and social measures in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. For the ease of reference, the president statement is attached below.

The latest big issue that is being dealt with is what does the economic and business landscape look like after the lockdown. Although there is still some uncertainty as to how exactly the landscape will look like, the following seems clear at this stage:

1. There will be a phased-in approach to opening of businesses doors.
2. Not all business will be able to resume immediately and there will be a risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity.
3. The Department of Health will prescribe standard rules prescribing to businesses what measures they must take in respect of combatting the virus in the workplace.
4. All economic sectors will have to look at rules how they will address COVID-19 within the workplace.
5. Industries that will return to work first must have acceptably low transmission risk or be able to achieve this through mitigation measures; and
 - be of critical value to the economy, or
 - be under severe near-term economic stress.

The President indicated that the country would move from a level 5 (High virus spread, and/or low readiness) to a level 4 (Moderate to high virus spread, with low to moderate readiness) as from 1 May 2020. It is clear that business after lockdown will not be business as usual and much may be dependent on micro lenders' compliance with regulations, rules and in particular with health protocols. Who will be able to open their doors when is not yet finalised and more certainty will be obtained next week.

The President's addresses on 21 and 23 April 2020 provides a broad framework and the devil is often in the detail. The MFSA is of the opinion that our members must start thinking what health protocols we would like to see in our industry. Attached is a document to get our members thinking about what these rules and health protocols may look like. It is by no means a final document but an initial attempt to make micro financiers think. The MFSA believe that the last few weeks have proved that the landscape is changing very quickly, and we anticipate that the same will happen in respect of the health rules to open doors.

We anticipate that next week will be a hectic week and that far more certainty will be obtained to give effect to the President's speech. Be assured that the MFSA will diligently and with care continue to present our members' interests to government. What we require of you is that you:

- Think about how to prepare your offices before business commences.
- Consider the draft health protocols and what can work and what not.
- Stay healthy.
- Consider all possible relief measures for your business.
- Keep in mind your staff members and their wellbeing.
- Consider the big picture, what you can do practically and understand that the next year or so will not be business as usual.

The MFSA will continue to communicate with you regarding this issue.

**Best wishes,
Hennie Ferreira
CEO | MicroFinance South Africa**

**23-04-2020 - C19 President's Message
Health Protocols**



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